

Russian Foreign Policy: Chronology

October-December 2000

October

1 October 2000 Vladimir Putin and Bill Clinton have a telephone conversation. Clinton asks if Putin could mediate in the Yugoslav political crisis. Putin says that Milosevic has refused Russian mediation.

1 October 2000 The fourth meeting of the interior ministers of Russia, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia, (the Borzhomi Four) opens in Sochi.

1 October 2000 Vladimir Putin and German Chancellor Gerhardt Schroeder discuss the situation in Yugoslavia in a telephone conversation.

1 October 2000 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov condemns the provocative actions by extremists which have resulted in a flare-up of violence in the Palestinian territories and "can have negative consequences for the present difficult stage of the negotiating process between the Israeli and Palestinian sides." He speaks by telephone with Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee and head of the Palestinian National Authority Yasir Arafat and acting Israeli Foreign Minister Shlomo Ben-Ami.

1 October 2000 Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Vasily Sredin visits South Africa.

2 October 2000 It is announced that Vladimir Chizhov and Aleksandr Tolkach, director of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Third European Department, will have a series of meetings in Belgrade.

2 October 2000 Konstantin Kosachev, deputy chairman of the State Duma Committee on International Affairs, who led the Russian delegation, has said there were no serious violations in the Yugoslav presidential election.

2 October 2000 Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation Yevgenny Gusarov has consultations with Araz Azimov, the deputy foreign minister of Azerbaijan. The consultations focused on issues of the preparation for a session of the OSCE Foreign Ministers Council, slated for 27th-28th November 2000 2000 in Vienna.

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2 October 2000 Russian First Deputy Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Trubnikov and his Kyrgyz counterpart Erlan Abdyldayev hold talks on the CIS Collective Security Council session due to be held in Bishkek on 11 October.

3 October 2000 Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat discuss by telephone the situation in East Jerusalem and the occupied Arab territories in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

3 October 2000 The MOD says Defence Minister Igor Sergeyev will not attend the informal NATO defence ministers' meeting opening in Birmingham, England, on 11 October, as he will be taking part in a Collective Security Treaty summit in Bishkek.

3 October 2000 Vladimir Putin visits India. He signs an agreement on strategic partnership.

3 October 2000 Vladimir Chizhov, a special envoy of the Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry (MFA) visiting Yugoslavia, presents Vladimir Putin's initiative for a meeting within the next few days with the two candidates for president of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia - Vojislav Kostunica and Slobodan Milosevic.

Deputy head of presidential administration Sergey Prikhodko says the issue of a trip to Moscow by presidential candidates Slobodan Milosevic and Vojislav Kostunica is "under consideration at present".

4 October 2000 Sergey Lavrov, Russia's permanent representative at the UN, speaks at an official meeting of the Security Council on the Middle East situation and the Palestinian issue. He condemns the violence in Jerusalem. "We welcome the upcoming meeting in Paris between Prime Minister Ehud Baraq and President Yasir Arafat and sincerely are interested in the success of that meeting. We proceed from a principle that the meeting should put an end to the current cycle of violence and get the sides back to the negotiating table."

4 October 2000 Russia's permanent UN envoy, Sergey Lavrov, says Russia is ready for a further reduction of its nuclear weapons on a bilateral basis with the USA and on a multilateral basis with other nuclear states. He addresses a meeting of the UN General Assembly's First Committee which is considering disarmament issues. He says Russia proposes an ever deeper reduction of strategic warheads, "which was earlier agreed by the Russian and US presidents - down to 1,500 warheads instead of 2,000-2,500 warheads."

5 October 2000 The MFA calls on the Israeli and Palestinian sides to halt violence and resume talks.

Israeli ambassador to Russia Natan Meron says Israel would welcome Russia's assistance to the Middle East peace process.

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6 October 2000 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov visits Belgrade. He congratulates Vojislav Kostunica on his victory in the Yugoslav presidential elections and hands him a message from Vladimir Putin.

State Duma Chairman Gennadiy Seleznev says the democratic opposition has seized power in Yugoslavia through a coup backed by NATO countries.

Foreign minister Igor Ivanov questions the need for the Hague Tribunal on war crime for former Yugoslavia.

Chairman of the Duma International Affairs Committee Dmitry Rogozin says Milosevic should be granted immunity.

6 October 2000 The MFA expresses concern over the steps taken by the USA to restrict Russian-US trade, economic and scientific ties.

6 October 2000 Russian Science, Industry and Technologies Minister Aleksandr Dondukov says that US claims that Russia continues to provide Iran with military technology are "purely political games".

6 October 2000 Chairman of the Belarusian Border Troops' Committee Alyksandr Pawlowski and Director of the Russian Federal Border Service Konstantin Totskiy sign a joint directive on protection of the Union of Belarus and Russia border in 2001. The board of the Russo-Belarusian Border Committee meets in Minsk to discuss international cooperation and the draft of a joint border programme for 2006-2015.

6 October 2000 At a meeting in Astana the prime ministers of the Customs Union countries (Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) approve a treaty setting up the Eurasian Economic Community on the basis of the Customs Union.

Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov proposes at the meeting that the signatory states of the Customs Union, composed of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, sign an agreement on visa-free travel.

7 October 2000 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov says that "it is not expedient right now" to convene the Contact Group at the level of foreign ministers.

7 October 2000 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov visits Algeria.

7 October 2000 Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov meets Russian and European industrialists to discuss economic cooperation between Russia and the EU.

7 October 2000 Raisa Vdovichenko, an official of the Russian Security Council, says emissaries of the Afghan Taliban movement have been trying to get access to

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nuclear technologies. She is speaking at an international conference on nuclear nonproliferation.

7 October 2000 Russian Public TV reports that Russian forces on the Tajik-Afghan border have been increased.

8 October 2000 Igor Ivanov gives a press conference in Algiers. He says Russia is "deeply worried about the tragic events in the Palestinian territories", and says Russia has always played an active role in the Middle East, particularly as cosponsor of a Middle East settlement and now intends to play an even more active role.

8 October 2000 Russian President Vladimir Putin speaks by telephone with Syrian President Bashar al-Asad.

Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov arrives in Syria.

9 October 2000 Russian President Vladimir Putin has sends congratulations to President Vojislav Kostunica of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in connection with his official inauguration. He invites Kostunica to visit Moscow.

9 October 2000 The head of the Russian State Duma international affairs committee Dmitry Rogozin says it is not in any party's interests, including the West's, to pressure the new Yugoslav administration into handing former President Slobodan Milosevic over to the Hague tribunal in exchange for the possible lifting of the European Union sanctions.

9 October 2000 Newly re-elected Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski invites Russian leader Vladimir Putin to visit Warsaw.

11 October 2000 The CIS Collective Security Council (Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan) meets in Bishkek. A document is signed setting up a collective security system for Central Asia. The presidents also sign a plan of main steps to form a system of collective security for the period between the years 2001 and 2005. The document notes that the aim of the plan is to complete the second stage of forming the system of collective security of the CST member countries and expanding their cooperation in the sphere of counteracting challenges and threats to national, regional and international security. The document adopted also includes other main tasks such as creating regional systems of collective security as organic components of a unified collective security system of the CST countries, forming joint military systems (along with the united air-defence system) in order to ensure collective security and creating, within the framework of collective security, a united control system on the basis of the Collective Security Treaty. The plan envisages drawing up, implementing and coordinating joint practical steps to counter new challenges and threats, paying special attention in this to fighting international terrorism and extremism. The signatories to the CST are planning to increase the effectiveness of the mechanism of regular consultations at all levels and on all aspects of military and political

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integration within the treaty, including geopolitical problems of regional and international security and stability.

At the meeting in Bishkek, Putin urges the international community to pay more attention to Afghanistan.

11 October 2000 Putin says it should be possible to reach a compromise on the Middle East.

11 October 2000 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov visits Cyprus.

11 October 2000 Igor Ivanov meets his Iranian counterpart Kamal Kharrazi in Damascus to discuss the situation in the Middle East and the Palestinian-Israeli crisis.

11 October 2000 President Putin and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Baraq speak by telephone at the Israeli prime minister's initiative.

11 October 2000 South Korean Prime Minister Lee Han-dong visits St Petersburg.

11 October 2000 Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat attends a conference in Moscow on the Holy Land and Russian-Palestinian relations.

Deputy Russian Foreign Minister Aleksandr Avdeyev says at the conference that Russia "resolutely condemns any provocative actions aimed at disrupting the peace talks" between Israel and Palestine. Avdeyev says that Russia supports the aspiration of the Palestinian people to gain statehood. "We are convinced that Palestine will be a peace-loving state, a fully-fledged member of the European community." He discusses the prospect for a Palestinian state and the status of Jerusalem.

11 October 2000 The chief of staff of the North Caucasus directorate of the Federal Border Guard Service, Maj-Gen Valery Putov, says the construction of barracks for border guards stationed at the mountainous Chechen section of the Russian-Georgian border since the end of 1999 has not been completed due to insufficient financing. The border guards will have to spend the forthcoming winter in dug-outs.

12 October 2000 Igor Ivanov visits Greece.

12 October 2000 The MFA criticises the US State Department for meeting Chechen rebel envoy Ilyas Akhmadov.

12 October 2000 The Russia-European Union cooperation council holds its fourth sitting in Moscow.

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12 October 2000 The MFA denies US allegations that the joint statement on strategic stability made by the Russian and US presidents in Moscow on 4 June contains a provision stating that the threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, missiles and rocket technologies must be opposed, including by considering changes to the ABM treaty. The allegation is contained in a document released by the US delegation to a disarmament conference in Geneva.

12 October 2000 Russian State Duma deputy Viktor Chernomyrdin describes as indecent and insulting the statements which US presidential candidate George Bush junior made about him during a TV debate on 11 October. Bush criticized the leadership of the International Monetary Fund, as well as Viktor Chernomyrdin and other prominent Russian politicians.

12 October 2000 The MFA says Moscow is "extremely concerned" about the new sharp exacerbation of the situation on the Palestinian territories.

12 October 2000 Igor Ivanov in Greece says Russia welcomes the EU decision to lift economic sanctions from Yugoslavia.

12 October 2000 First Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Avdeyev visits Hungary.

12 October 2000 Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov and his South Korean counterpart, Lee Han-dong, discuss the construction of the Russian-Korean industrial centre Nakhodka and cooperation in the development of the Kovyktinskoye gas condensate field.

12 October 2000 A spokesman for Vnukovo Airlines (VAL), a big domestic air carrier, says the company is expected to send three humanitarian flights to Iraq in October and November. This is later denied by the MFA.

12 October 2000 Putin says at a meeting of the State Council that countries of the former Soviet Union are "our closest allies."

12 October 2000 The MFA condemns attempts by Latvia to introduce a ban on wearing decorations issued by foreign countries before 1991.

13 October 2000 Igor Ivanov issues a statement in the Duma on Russia's role in the Balkans and Middle East. He says Putin has asked him to prepare a peace plan for the Middle East. He says that Russia and the USA should act in concern in the Middle East, and that Israel and Palestine have "in principle" agreed to a plan for an urgent summit.

The Duma passes a resolution calling on Israel to halt its armed attacks and on the Palestinian autonomy to refrain from terrorism, in a statement passed by 275-1 votes with no abstentions.

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13 October 2000 The Duma sends a message to the European parliaments on the European states' policy towards the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It says Yugoslavia must in the near future become a full member of the stability pact of southeast Europe.

13 October 2000 Russian presidential aide Sergey Yastrzhembskiy says Chechen separatists intend to meet members of Afghanistan's Taleban movement to urge them to begin hostilities in Central Asia proper.

Chairman of the Russian Security Council Sergey Ivanov plays down the Taleban threat in Afghanistan.

13 October 2000 Vladimir Putin holds telephone conversations with Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev and Turkmen President Niyazov.

14 October 2000 Duma International Affairs Committee chairman Dmitry Rogozin meets the ambassadors of Arab countries in Moscow to discuss the Israel-Palestinian crisis. Rogozin says the USA is trying to squeeze Russia out of the peace process.

Rogozin says that Russia would be justified in resigning as co-sponsor of the Middle East peace process if planned Israeli-Palestinian talks on 16 October produce no results. "If the negotiations on Monday are held without the participation of Russia and prove fruitless ... we consider ourselves in a position to relieve ourselves from responsibility for further co-sponsorship and it is the United States and naturally Israel that will be to blame for the failure ... On no occasion has Israel sent the Russian leadership any specific proposals concerning the Russian role in this process."

16 October 2000 Security Council Secretary Sergey Ivanov visits Iran.

16 October 2000 Chief of the General Staff Army General Anatoly Kvashnin visits Mongolia.

16 October 2000 Vladimir Putin has talks with Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma in Sochi. Putin says that Russia "understands that Ukraine cannot pay in full for fuel supplies with cash ... The difference between what Ukraine can pay and what it has to pay should be made part of the Ukrainian state debt to Russia."

16 October 2000 Azerbaijani counterpart Vilayat Guliyev visits Moscow. He discusses trade and economic relations, the Karabakh settlement, the status of the Caspian Sea, the fight against terrorism and organized crime.

17 October 2000 A meeting of the Russian-US working group for the prevention of terrorist threats emanating from Afghanistan begins in Moscow. The Russian delegation at this meeting is headed by Vyacheslav Trubnikov, first deputy foreign

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minister and former director of the Foreign Intelligence Service, and the US side by Thomas Pickering, undersecretary of state for political affairs and former US ambassador to Russia.

17 October 2000 Russian emergencies minister Sergey Shoygu visits Ukraine.

17 October 2000 Russian Defence Minister Igor Sergeyev speaks out in favour of increasing military cooperation with Belarus. Sergeyev says the Security Council will consider military reform at its November session. He says that Russia intends to develop relations with NATO.

17 October 2000 Putin praises attempts to resolve the crisis in the Middle East.

Foreign minister Igor Ivanov says the meeting in Sharm al-Shaykh on a Palestinian-Israeli settlement are "the best that it was possible to achieve at this stage".

The MFA issues a statement on the Middle East summit in Egypt at Sharm al-Shaykh.

17 October 2000 A CIS HQ spokesman says CIS military cooperation coordination headquarters drafts the federal bill "Concerning the status and protection of air space of the Russian Federation."

18 October 2000 Col-Gen Leonid Ivashov, head of the Russian Defence Ministry's Main Directorate for International Military Cooperation, says that Russia believes that the establishment in Asia of a US-Japanese system for antimissile defence of the theatre of military action would promote destabilization of the situation in the Asia-Pacific Region and would lead to regional "bloc confrontation". He says Russia's more vigorous military cooperation with China, which has the purpose of creating a regional balance of forces, could act as a "certain counterbalance" to the Japanese-US plans to develop such a system of antimissile defence. He says that contacts with the People's Republic of China are not directed at setting up a military alliance.

18 October 2000 US Under Secretary of State Thomas Pickering states that he hopes that American businessman Edmond Pope, charged in Russia with espionage, will be released as soon as possible.

Pickering states in Moscow that Russia and the USA have a common view of the Taleban in Afghanistan. Pickering criticises the Taleban for their support for the international terrorist Usamah Bin Ladin.

Pickering also says the US administration invited Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov to the negotiations in Sharm El-Shaykh.

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18 October 2000 Deputy Foreign Minister Georgy Mamedov and US Deputy Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security John Holum have talks on strategic stability.

Mamedov says Moscow believes there are no objective political or military obstacles to the US and Russia reducing the number of their nuclear warheads to 1,500 under START-3.

18 October 2000 Belarusian defence minister Aleksandr Chumakov visits the Military Academy of the General Staff in Moscow.

19 October 2000 At an emergency session the Duma adopts a resolution on the situation in the Middle East.

19 October 2000 The MFA says it will not hold talks in adapting the ABM treaty.

19 October 2000 Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka and Vladimir Putin hold a summit in Sochi.

19 October 2000 A protocol on commercial, economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation between Rostov Region and the Republic of Belarus is signed on an official visit to Rostov by Belarusian Prime Minister Uladzimir Yarmoshyn.

19 October 2000 Security Council Secretary Sergey Ivanov visits Iran. He says that Russian-Iranian cooperation in nuclear energy is fully in keeping with the international norms and requirements of the IAEA. He also says Russia will supply Iran with defensive arms.

20 October 2000 Igor Ivanov calls for international support for Yugoslavia's new government and says that Kosovo is not yet ready for elections.

20 October 2000 Igor Ivanov visits Romania for a meeting of the council of foreign ministers of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization.

20 October 2000 The Russian and US presidents, Vladimir Putin and Bill Clinton, discuss the situation in the Middle East by telephone.

20 October 2000 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov calls for an end to US and British bombings of Iraq.

20 October 2000 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Losyukov says that Russia welcomes North Korea's bid for better US, UK ties following the visit of US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's trip to Pyongyang.

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20 October 2000 Russian Atomic Energy Minister Yevgenny Adamov and Bulgarian State Power Engineering and Energy Resources Chairman Ivan Shilyashki discuss peaceful use of atomic energy.

21 October 2000 Vladimir Putin sends a message to the Cairo summit of Arab states.

21 October 2000 The MFA issues a statement on the Middle East.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Baraq's special envoy Roman Bronfman visits Moscow to deliver a message from Barak to Putin. He says the Israeli leadership is interested in Russia's active participation in the Middle East peace process.

22 October 2000 Igor Ivanov is interviewed on the Middle East crisis. He says Russia will soon propose a major revamp of the peace process. He says alongside the USA, Russia and the EU should play a more active role as intermediaries.

22 October 2000 Georgian foreign minister Irakli Menagharishvili criticizes Russia for guarding its border inefficiently. Georgia claims that Chechen gunmen have crossed the border into Georgia.

The Russian Federal Border Guard Service denies Georgian claims that an armed group of gunmen was deliberately permitted to penetrate into Georgia from Russian territory.

23 October 2000 A Duma delegation headed by the chairman of the Committee on Industry, Construction and High Technologies, Yury Maslyukov, visits Iran.

23 October 2000 Vladimir Putin chairs a meeting addressing Russian-Ukrainian relations attended by Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and Ukrainian foreign minister Anatoly Zlenko in Moscow.

23 October 2000 Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov visits Turkey.

23 October 2000 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov meets Israeli Minister for Regional Cooperation Shimon Peres in Moscow to discuss the situation in the Middle East.

23 October 2000 US citizen Edmond Pope, who has been charged with spying for the USA, "admits everything said during the investigation about him gathering information in Russia" but claims that he was "gathering it as a private businessman, not a spy".

24 October 2000 The MFA pledges Russian commitment to the Middle East peace process.

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Putin telephones Yasir Arafat.

Roman Bronfman, Israeli prime minister's special envoy, says now that he has met Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov there are no more doubts about Russia's position as a mediator in the Middle East peace process. Bronfman says statements by Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov in Syria and Russian Security Council Secretary Sergey Ivanov in Iran, "cause doubts as to the objectivity of Russia's standpoint in the Middle East peace process". "We are glad that Russia considers itself a friend of the Arab nation. But we want also to feel that Russia considers itself a friend of the Jewish nation as well".

24 October 2000 Former Russian Prime Minister Yevgenny Primakov criticises US presidential candidate George Bush Jr for making accusations against former Russian leaders. Primakov also criticises the USA for a refusal to consider a START III treaty other than in a package with a revision of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Defence (ABM) treaty and blocking Russia from involvement in Middle East peace talks.

24 October 2000 Russian interior minister Vladimir Rushaylo visits Spain.

24 October 2000 The MFA calls on Georgia for full-scale cooperation to foil terrorist activities in connection with an attempt by an armed group of terrorists to break through to Russian territory on the Ingush sector of the Russian-Georgian border between 15-18 October.

Russian military sources accuse Georgia of caving in to Chechen rebels. They claim Chechen rebels are receiving medical treatment in Georgia.

24 October 2000 Vladimir Kalamonov, the Russian president's special envoy for human rights in the Chechen republic meets US Ambassador in Russia James Collins and members of the US State Department for human rights.

25 October 2000 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov meets former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Moscow.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Baraq gives a telephone interview to *Ekho Moskvy* radio. He says Russia, Europe and the USA "must tell Arafat immediately to stop the violence."

25 October 2000 The MFA issues a statement on Yugoslavia. It calls upon all political forces in Yugoslavia - both at the federal and republican levels - to contribute to the consolidation of society and preserve civil peace and accord.

25 October 2000 The Security Council considers the position of the Russian language abroad. Oleg Chernov, deputy secretary of the Russian Security Council, says the spread of the Russian language abroad is a major plank in Russia's international policy. He says that the "attempts in several CIS and Baltic states to

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displace the Russian language from the system of education, cultural activity and media are particularly alarming".

25 October 2000 UN High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata visits Moscow and discusses the situation in Northern Caucasus.

25 October 2000 Russian Defence Minister Igor Sergeyev categorically denies some media reports to the effect that Moscow and Washington have allegedly struck a deal over the disaster of the Kursk nuclear submarine, where the USA would supposedly give Russia "a multimillion sum" in exchange for its silence over the fact that it was the US submarine that had rammed the Kursk.

26 October 2000 Putin is interviewed in *Le Figaro*. He says Russia sincerely wants the Middle East conflict to be settled and is ready to contribute to this cause.

The MFA issues a statement calling on Israel and Palestine to take immediate and specific steps to halt the violence and bloodshed.

Israel requests that Russia "repeat the mediation attempt" between Israel and the Shi'ite group Hezbollah on the release of three Israeli soldiers from the hands of the Hezbollah. Israeli Regional Cooperation Minister Shimon Peres conveyed this request to Igor Ivanov.

Yevgenny Primakov says the USA cannot monopolize a mediatory mission in the Middle East and will have to ask Russia for assistance.

26 October 2000 Aeroflot general director Valery Okulov says Aeroflot plans to soon open an office in Iraq.

26 October 2000 Putin says Russia is "against NATO's enlargement" and that he is unclear over NATO's role. He urges NATO countries to help rebuild Yugoslavia. He also speaks out in favour of the 1972 ABM treaty. He says that "a global system of control and a joint military-technical effort" might be an alternative to the US plans. He says: "We think the position of Europe, a position of principle, on preservation of the foundations of the international security system, may play a very positive role," Putin said.

26 October 2000 Putin says Russia cannot yet be a member of the EU, but Moscow "work will to unify our legislation, to harmonize it with European legislation" and to "promote our cooperation in all areas".

26 October 2000 Chairman of the Duma international affairs committee Dmitry Rogozin says that Russia expects the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe to restore its voting rights in January, but is not pressing on that. "We are not pushing the process. The events in the Middle East and Yugoslavia have shown that Europe will choke without Russia. Therefore, everyone realizes that it is extremely necessary to unfreeze the status of the Russian delegation."

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26 October 2000 The Russian Security Council discusses Russo-Ukrainian relations.

26 October 2000 The Taliban movement warns Russia that its interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs and support for the Northern Alliance will lead to "dangerous consequences." The statement followed the meeting between Russian Defence Minister Igor Sergeev and leader of the Northern Alliance Ahmad Shah Masud in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, on 25 October.

26 October 2000 Georgian State Security Minister Vakhtang Kutateladze says the Georgian authorities will hand over the Chechen rebels that have been declared wanted criminals on the territory of the Russian Federation to Russian law-enforcement bodies. He is referring to 25 militants of the unit that entered Georgian territory in the area of the Asa Gorge on the Ingush section of the Russia-Georgia border on 20 October.

26 October 2000 Russian presidential human rights envoy to Chechnya Vladimir Kalamonov says he is surprised and disappointed at the latest report from the international organization Human Rights Watch (HRW) on Chechnya.

26 October 2000 Andrey Nikolayev, the chairman of the Duma defence committee, expresses regret that Washington and London have turned down an offer to jointly examine the NATO submarines that could have been at the site of the Kursk sinking.

27 October 2000 Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica visits Russia. Putin urges lifting of sanctions against Yugoslavia. Putin and Kostunica stress Kosovo's status as Yugoslav province. They discuss Russian gas supplies to Yugoslavia.

27 October 2000 A Vnukovo Airlines aircraft delivers a Russian trade-and-economic delegation to Baghdad. A spokesman said that Vnukovo Airlines plans to make four regular flights a week from Moscow to Baghdad after it receives permission from the Russian MFA, which depends on the UN lifting the international sanctions against Iraq.

27 October 2000 *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* reports that Russian Defence Minister Igor Sergeev and the commander of the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance in Afghanistan, Ahmad Shah Masud, have held "unofficial" talks in Tajikistan.

27 October 2000 Defence ministers of the CIS member states appoint Maj-Gen Nikolay Sidorychev to the post of commander of the Collective Peacekeeping Forces in the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict zone.

28 October 2000 Igor Ivanov meets Mahmud Abbas, secretary of the Executive Committee of the PLO. Ivanov calls for a resumption of the Arab-Israeli dialogue.

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29 October 2000 Putin says Russia welcomes EU to its borders, not NATO. Putin is interviewed on French TV. He expresses concern over NATO widening. He emphasises the importance of the EU to Russia. The EU currently accounts for 35% of Russia's trade turnover, and if you add to this the potential of potential members, new members of the European Community, then it will be a controlling share - 51% of Russia's trade turnover will be with a united Europe.

29 October 2000 Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka expresses satisfaction with the accords reached during a visit to Minsk by the head of Gazprom, Rem Vyakhirev. He says "the construction of a new gas pipeline via Belarus to deliver Russian gas to Europe will allow the republic to defray the cost of all the gas it consumes through transit charges."

30 October 2000 Putin appoints Maj-Gen Vladimir Kazantsev, the head of combat training of the Russian Airborne Troops as the new commander of the Russian troop contingent in Kosovo.

31 October 2000 Putin attends the EU-Russia summit in Paris. He discusses economic and financial cooperation, plus the ABM treaty Chechnya and the Middle East.

31 October 2000 The MFA denounces the local elections in Kosovo.

The MFA says that the UN should readmit Yugoslavia.

31 October 2000 Igor Ivanov meets his Israeli counterpart Shlomo Ben-Ami in Paris.

The Russian president's special representatives for a Middle East settlement and deputy foreign minister, Vasily Sredin, leaves for Qatar. He will also visit Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Oman.

Vladimir Putin in Paris says Russian and French positions on the Middle East are close, but there are differences over Kosovo.

31 October 2000 A Vnukovo airlines flight carrying a Russian delegation that includes State Duma Deputy Chairman Petr Romanov, a number of other Duma members, and top managers from the oil company Slavneft led by company president Mikhail Gutseriyev lands in Baghdad.

31 October 2000 Yevgenny Primakov has talks in China with Chinese President Jiang Zemin. They criticise US policy over the ABM treaty.

31 October 2000 Azeri TV reports that the Russian government has repaid the main part of its debt to Azerbaijan for its renting of the Gabala radar station. \$2.2m of the debt, which totals \$2.5m has been paid.

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31 October 2000 Security Council secretary Sergey Ivanov visits Britain. He discusses terrorism, in particular Afghan Taleban terrorism. Ivanov says all Chechen information centres abroad should be closed.

November

1 November 2000 The MFA condemns British and US airstrikes against Iraq.

1 November 2000 The secretary of state for trade and industry of Great Britain, Stephen Byers, visits Moscow.

1 November 2000 Russian Deputy Minister for Economic Development and Trade Maksim Medvedkov says Russia seeks to join the World Trade Organization (WTO) as soon as possible, "but not at all costs." He is leading a Russian delegation at informal consultations on Russia's accession to the WTO in Geneva.

2 November 2000 The Russian government approves a draft agreement with former Soviet republics in the CIS on drug-trafficking.

2 November 2000 Vladimir Putin meets Japanese Foreign Minister Yohei Kono in Moscow.

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Viktor Khristenko and Japanese Foreign Minister Yohei Kono sign in Moscow a memorandum on the results of the fourth session of the Russian-Japanese intergovernmental commission for trade and economic relations.

2 November 2000 The MFA condemns the terrorist attack in Western Jerusalem.

2 November 2000 The presidents of Russia and Yugoslavia, Vladimir Putin and Vojislav Kostunica, discuss the Kosovo situation by telephone.

2 November 2000 Russian presidential envoy and Deputy Foreign Minister Vasily Sredin arrives in Kuwait. He delivers a message from Vladimir Putin.

3 November 2000 The MFA expresses surprise at a briefing at the US State Department that expressed concern that the transfer of Russian military hardware from Georgia to Armenia violates CFE. This is denied by the MFA.

3 November 2000 Qatari Foreign Minister Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabr Al Thani visits Russia. Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov calls for developing cooperation between Russia and Qatar in natural gas production.

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Vladimir Putin meets Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabr Al Thani. They discuss the situation in the Middle East and Iraq and also Chechnya. Qatar will soon chair the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

3 November 2000 Prime minister Mikhail Kasyanov visits China. He discusses economic cooperation, and the possible sale of early warning aircraft to China. He affirms Russia's position on Taiwan. A commercial agreement for 2001-2005 is signed. A total of 14 documents are signed during the visit.

Kasyanov says Russia is prepared to back the creation of a strategic Moscow-Beijing-Delhi axis "should China and India express the desire for one".

After a meeting with the chairman of the Chinese National People's Congress Li Peng and the Chinese president, Jiang Zemin, Kasyanov says that Russia and China intend to fulfil their agreement to sign a friendship and cooperation treaty.

Kasyanov says Moscow and Beijing are discussing the possibility of signing agreements on the construction of two gas pipelines from Russia to China. The first pipeline would start in western Siberia and end in China's western provinces. The second would carry gas from the Kovykta field in Irkutsk Region of Russia to China and onwards to South Korea. Kasyanov also says he is confident of a "significant increase" in trade between Russia and China in the next few years.

3 November 2000 It is reported that US citizen Edmond Pope has been found fit to continue to stand trial in Moscow for espionage.

3 November 2000 Chairman of the Duma Committee on International Affairs Dmitry Rogozin says the international community must unconditionally abandon all sanctions against Yugoslavia.

Montenegrin President Milo Djukanovic and the new Russian consul in Montenegro, Yury Bychkov, meet.

3 November 2000 A source in the airborne troops headquarters says that redeployment of an additional unit for the Russian military contingent, part of KFOR, is to start. The redeployment is to be conducted on the orders of Chief of the General Staff Anatoly Kvashnin. The first 150-strong group of paratroopers and 50 tonnes of loads will be taken by a military transport from the Dyagilevo airfield in Ryazan, central Russia, to the Slatina airfield in Pristina, Kosovo. The peacekeeping unit redeployment is to be completed by 8 November.

4 November 2000 The MFA condemns US and British bombing in the no fly zones in Iraq.

4 November 2000 Dmitry Rogozin, chief of the Duma International Affairs Committee, says he believes that Russia will not cut back on cooperation with the US, no matter who wins the presidential elections there. He says both Gore and Bush are hawks.

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Interfax reports that a Russian diplomatic source says Moscow will continue to have a dialogue with Washington on NMD. However Russia does not plan to engage in talks with the USA on the adjustment of the 1972 ABM treaty. Anti-Missile Defence Treaty.

4 November 2000 The MFA denies media reports that the United States and Russia are planning joint strikes at targets in Afghanistan where the prominent international terrorist Usamah Bin Laden may be hiding.

4 November 2000 Deputy Finance Minister Vladimir Chernukhin, with Mikahil Kasyanov in China, says Russia will repay the USSR debt of \$1.2 billion to China with arms supplies by 2002.

4 November 2000 Russian MFA spokesman Aleksandr Yakovenko says "even talking about Kosovo's independence may generate dangerous illusions in Kosovo Albanians." He says that, if Washington supported the independence of Kosovo, it "would be a gross violation of the spirit and letter of the UN resolution".

5 November 2000 145 Russian peacekeepers fly out to Kosovo. The Russian paratroops are being sent in as part of the process of bringing up to prescribed strength the Russian military contingent in Kosovo. Another 120 paratroops are to be sent in to Pristina by another flight on 8 November. According to Maj-Gen Aleksandr Popov, deputy commander of Russian Airborne Troops, no pull-out of the Russian military contingent from Kosovo is planned this year.

6 November 2000 Vladimir Putin sends a message to his United Arab Emirates counterpart Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan. The message is delivered by the Russian president's special representative on the Middle East settlement, Deputy Foreign Minister Vasily Sredin.

Sredin meets Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faysal al-Saud in Riyadh. They call for "energetic international efforts towards stopping the violence at once, decreasing the tension of the Israeli-Palestinian showdown, normalizing the situation, and, as a next step, resuming the negotiating process on all tracks of the Middle East settlement, Syrian and Lebanese included."

7 November 2000 Sergey Prikhodko, deputy presidential chief of staff, says the Russian leadership is "ready for the continuation of active dialogue with the new US administration and does not anticipate any pause in it." He says the Kremlin hopes that the "continuity of the line towards cooperation with Russia" will be preserved "to build on the positive potential which in the course of the past few years has been created by the US and Russian leadership". He also says "We proceed from an understanding that there are many spheres in which international stability depends on relations between Russia and the USA."

7 November 2000 The *Gazeta.Ru* website reports that an interdepartmental row has broken out in Moscow. In the night of 3rd-4th November 2000, Igor Ivanov

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cancelled an official visit by a Russian Federation government delegation to Baghdad. According to unofficial information, a delegation headed by Industry, Science and Technology Minister Dundukov was to fly out to Iraq on 3-4 November.

8 November 2000 The new commander of the Russian military contingent in Kosovo, Maj-Gen Vladimir Kazantsev, leaves for Kosovo.

8 November 2000 The MFA says Russia thinks the idea of sending a peacekeeping force into the Palestinian territories is unrealistic.

8 November 2000 CGS Anatoly Kvashnin attends the session of the Russia-NATO Permanent Joint Council at the level of chiefs of general staffs. He says relations between Russia and NATO have become more dynamic. He commented "I am very glad to note that Russian military representatives to NATO not only exchange information with their Western partners but also give a joint assessment of the situation, make joint decisions, plan operations and carry them out jointly." The session also focused on the situation in the Balkans. The sides continued to exchange views on NATO's strategic concept and Russia's military doctrine. The Russian delegation confirmed its country's concern about NATO's expansion to the east. Kvashnin held several bilateral meetings, including with Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) Joseph Ralston, chairman of the NATO Military Committee Adm Guido Venturioni, and his counterparts from the United States, Canada, Britain and Turkey.

8 November 2000 Russian First Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Avdeyev says Russia welcomes the first visit to the Council of Europe by Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica.

9 November 2000 Russian Security Council Secretary Sergey Ivanov is interviewed in *Komsomolskaya Pravda* on his recent visit to Britain. He discusses North Korea, Iran and the Caspian Sea.

9 November 2000 Vladimir Putin says Russia is calling for an early lifting of sanctions against Iraq. He says Moscow believes that a settlement can be achieved "only by political and diplomatic means". Putin said that relations of "close and multi-faceted cooperation" have formed between Russia and Iraq.

9 November 2000 Russian Security Council Secretary Sergey Ivanov says he opposes any negotiations with the Taleban administration in Afghanistan.

9 November 2000 The fourth session of the Russian-Libyan intergovernmental commission on scientific, technical, trade and economic cooperation ends in Tripoli. A concluding protocol of the session is signed by the chairmen of the commission - Russian Federation Emergencies Minister Sergey Shoygu and Secretary of Libya's General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation (Foreign Minister) Abd-al-Rahman Muhammad Shalqam. The document specifies a

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number of measures to step up bilateral cooperation in the oil, gas, financial and industrial fields.

9 November 2000 Belarusian KGB Chairman Uladzimir Matskevich and Russian Foreign Intelligence Service Director Sergey Lebedev meet in Minsk.

9 November 2000 The Council of Defence Ministers of the CIS says a plan augmenting the southern part of the CIS Unified Air Defence System has been approved. The plan envisages modernization of the air defence command and control systems in Central Asia, intelligence and air traffic control in southern areas, surface-to-air protection of administrative and political centres and military and industrial installations on the territory of the CIS, as well as training of specialists in Russian colleges and centres. This plan is to be fulfilled by 2005.

10 November 2000 IAEA Director General Mohamed El Baradei and Vladimir Putin meet in Moscow. They say an agreement should be drafted shortly on the establishment of nuclear-free zones in the Middle East.

10 November 2000 Igor Ivanov meets in Moscow the chairman of the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission for Iraq, Hans Blix. Ivanov says Russia has agreed to a serious compromise in working out the UN Security Council's resolution 1284 on Iraq. He says, "not everything suited us in this resolution."

A Yedinstvo delegation led by deputy chairman of the party's political council and deputy leader of the Yedinstvo Duma faction Nikolay Loktionov, visits Iraq.

10 November 2000 Deputy Foreign Minister Vasily Sredin meets Israeli Ambassador Natan Meron in Moscow. He says Russia is prepared to do all in its power to promote a comprehensive and just peace settlement in the Middle East.

10 November 2000 The MFA issues a statement says it hopes that Washington will begin lifting the economic blockade against Cuba to implement a UN General Assembly resolution.

10 November 2000 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov calls for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) to come into force as soon as possible.

10 November 2000 Igor Ivanov meets Portugese foreign minister Jaime Gama in Moscow. He says Russia is prepared to continue a dialogue with NATO. He also says Russia "is committed to developing a constructive dialogue with the European Union".

10 November 2000 The MFA condemns the unveiling of a Latvian war memorial to Latvian SS legionnaires. Latvian President Vaira Vike-Freiberga is also criticised.

11 November 2000 The Command of Russia's Federal Border Service Group in Tajikistan says it might be forced to destroy Taleban weapons in areas adjacent to the Afghan-Tajik border if fire attacks in the direction of Tajik territory are not stopped.

11 November 2000 Viktor Chernomyrdin says he is still seeking an apology from George Bush Jr. Bush accused Chernomyrdin of lining his pockets with loans from the IMF.

12 November 2000 A Russian Tu-154 aircraft belonging to Dagestan Airlines en route from Makhachkala to Moscow is hijacked to Israel. It is later returned. Putin thanks Israeli premier Ehud Barak by telephone for help in arresting the hijacker.

12 November 2000 Vladimir Putin sends a message of greeting to the participants of the ninth session of the leaders of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) in Doha, Qatar.

12 November 2000 Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz receives Yury Shafranik, head of the Russian committee of international, scientific, cultural and business cooperation with Iraq, who is participating in the fourth meeting of the coordination and follow-up committee of the Baghdad Conference for Solidarity with Iraq.

Iraqi Vice-President Taha Yasin Ramadan receives Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the Russian Liberal Democratic Party.

12 November 2000 German Gref, minister of economic development and trade, says talks about joining the WTO are "proceeding with difficulty" for Russia with a number of WTO member countries. Gref refuses to forecast a specific time when Russia may join the WTO.

13 November 2000 Russian President Vladimir Putin visits Mongolia.

13 November 2000 Col-Gen Valery Manilov, first deputy Chief of the General Staff, has talks in China with his Chinese counterpart Lt-Gen Guangkai Xiong. They discuss cooperation against international terrorism.

13 November 2000 Vladimir Putin proposes to the USA long-term radical and mutual cutbacks in nuclear weapons. The full text of the proposal is:

At the intersection of two millennia, the world stands at an important moment for nuclear disarmament, nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction and preservation of strategic stability. Without doubt, there have been recent achievements: exceptionally important decisions have been taken at the review conference on implementation of the Treaty on Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, a substantial dialogue on disarmament took place at the Millennium Summit in New York and a

number of significant resolutions have been approved at the First Committee of the UN General Assembly. Russia has contributed to this process by ratifying the Treaty on Further Strategic Arms Reductions (START-2), a package of accords on antimissile defence reached in New York in 1997 and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. The consensus in the international community is that there should no pause in nuclear disarmament and that the disarmament process should be intensified. Radical progress is required in this field. Russia is ready for it.

We see nothing in the way of further deep reductions to strategic offensive weapons. It is known that we have suggested to the USA, including at the very highest level, that our countries aim for radically reduced levels of nuclear weapons of 1,500 each, which is entirely achievable by 2008. But that is not the limit - we are willing to subsequently consider further cutbacks. We agree with an opinion also being voiced in the USA, that such an agreement will not require protracted talks or a fresh beginning - we have a substantial amount of experience and we have the treaty and legal mechanisms from START-1 and START-2. We hope that the US Senate will follow the example set by the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation and complete ratification of START-2 and antimissile accords. But most importantly now, Russia and the USA should start to smoothly move forward jointly or in parallel towards radically lower ceilings for nuclear warheads.

This goal should be achieved along with the retention and strengthening of the ABM Treaty of 1972. We are told that in the past three decades the situation in the world has changed significantly - there are now new missile threats and therefore the ABM Treaty needs adjustment. The situation has indeed changed, but not so much as to wreck the existing system for strategic stability by emasculating ABM. Action can be taken against proliferation of missiles and missile technology, especially through political and diplomatic means, without stepping beyond the bounds of the ABM Treaty. The intensive dialogue on missiles between the USA and DPRK is a clear example of this. Ways of enhancing political and legal mechanisms for nonproliferation are being actively discussed in a multilateral format and work is in hand on a new code of conduct in this sphere and the creation of a Global Missile and Missile Technology Control System.

For those countries that raise the issue of a military and technological "safety net", we again propose wide-ranging cooperation in antimissile defences for theatres of military operation. The technical procedures for this already exist. The Moscow centre for data exchange on missile launches, now being established by Russia and the USA, could become a component of such cooperation and should in future be open to all interested countries. We have already invited Europeans and others to join in this work. I hope that the new administration in the USA will not object to the centre's use for strengthening regional and global stability.

That aside, Russia is willing to continue without interruption the ABM talks that were begun with the USA more than a year ago and in which there are disagreements between us. The obligation to examine all issues affecting the ABM Treaty was written into the treaty itself in 1972.

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Accordingly, we are willing to continue discussions at the Standing Consultative Commission negotiating forum, which has been functioning successfully since 1973, and to agree if necessary to raise the level at which the sides are represented. Implementation of Russia's pragmatic and timely programme for real nuclear disarmament will make it possible in practice to strengthen strategic stability and international security on the threshold of the new, third, millennium.

Sources in the The MFA say Vladimir Putin's proposal that Russia and the USA radically cut down their nuclear arsenals is "an absolutely clear and public signal given by Russia to the future US administration. The sources say that Putin's proposal "will naturally put pressure" on the future US administration in decision-making regarding the ABM Treaty and strategic offensive weapons. The sources say if Democrat Al Gore becomes president, Russian-American consultations and talks on strategic stability "will also have a future."

13 November 2000 Foreign minister Igor Ivanov visits Iraq. He will also visit Egypt, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. In Iraq he says it is time to get practical about lifting the embargo from Iraq in the context of the monitoring of its forbidden military programmes. He criticises US-UK bombing in no fly zones.

13 November 2000 A group of Russian State Duma deputies announce their intention to form an inter-faction deputy group to be called European Club.

14 November 2000 Putin, in Mongolia, says Russia hopes that the new US administration will preserve "elements of continuity" in Russian-American relations.

14 November 2000 Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov signs an executive order to start talks with the US Department of Defense on the financial support Russia could gain from the USA for the utilization (sic) of the chemical warfare agents. All the 40,000 tonnes of chemical weapons should be eliminated by the end of 2009.

14 November 2000 Igor Ivanov visits Egypt. He says Egypt's role in the Palestinian-Israeli peace process is important. He says Russo-Egyptian bilateral cooperation is expanding. In 1999, trade turnover reached about 5bn dollars, while three years ago it stood at 1-1.5bn [dollars]."

14 November 2000 The Council of Ministers of the Russia-Belarus Union State meets in Moscow. It confirms the Russia-Belarus Union will introduce a common monetary system from 1 January 2005, and a single currency from 2008.

14 November 2000 First Deputy Chief of the Russian General Staff, Col-Gen Valery Manilov, visits China for the fourth round of the Russian-Chinese command-staff talks. He says Russia and China are discussing the US plans to build up national and regional antimissile defence systems and their effect on the security of the two countries. He says that Beijing was disturbed by the plans to set up a

theatre antimissile defence system. "There are some points on which our efforts should be coordinated."

15 November 2000 Putin attends the APEC summit in Brunei. He meets Clinton and discusses the Middle East. At the summit he says: "Our legislative initiatives are aimed at making our economy more transparent and creating more favourable conditions for its integration into the world economy. This will make it possible not only to significantly speed up our economic growth, which is already visible today, but also to increase Russia's attractiveness to foreign investors." He says that Russia is a Eurasian country and the development of such large Russian regions as Siberia and the Far East is impossible without close cooperation with APEC countries. He says Russia is on course to join the WTO.

Putin says US President Bill Clinton has welcomed Russia's initiative on strategic arms reduction. Clinton told Putin that he instructed the State Department and the experts of his administration to study seriously and analyse Moscow's initiatives.

The MFA says Moscow "has taken note of the constructive reaction" of a representative of the US State Department to Vladimir Putin's proposal on urgent and radical cuts in strategic offensive weapons.

15 November 2000 Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Losyukov says a Russo-Japanese peace agreement draft is unlikely this year. Losyukov says the problem of anti-ballistic missile defences, specifically, the ABM theatre of operations system, is the main difference between Russia and Japan in international affairs.

Losyukov says, "Russia believes that North Korea should take part in all the international processes and forums".

15 November 2000 Igor Ivanov visits Israel. He hands over a message from Putin to Baraq.

15 November 2000 Interfax reports that sources have said that Russia has demanded that the United States end tests and destroy its stocks of the Hera ballistic missile. Moscow regards the testing of the Hera "as a direct and significant violation of the 8th December 1987 treaty on the elimination of medium- and short-range missiles."

15 November 2000 Defence Minister Marshal Igor Sergeyev says that Vladimir Putin's proposals to the USA on reducing the number of nuclear warheads to 1,500 or less can only be implemented if the 1972 ABM Treaty is retained. Sergeyev says he also believes that in the long term other members of the nuclear club - China, France and Britain - should join the strategic offensive weapons reduction process.

15 November 2000 Russian Air Force Commander-in-Chief General Anatoly Kornukov says Russian warplanes in the Sea of Japan have carried out an

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operation to break through the air defence shield of a US aircraft-carrier strike group led by the USS Kittyhawk.

16 November 2000 Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov meets Palestinian leader Yassir Arafat in Gaza. He says Russia is "seriously worried about the escalation of tension on Palestinian territories."

Ivanov says following talks with Israeli Prime minister Ehud Baraq that Russia will not support the UN decision on the deployment of peacekeeping forces in Palestine if Israel opposes it. Ivanov says Russia is ready to expand cooperation with Israel in various fields, including the security sphere. Putin is to visit Israel in 2001.

Igor Ivanov visits Jordan.

Igor Ivanov gives a press conference in Cairo.

16 November 2000 Deputy Foreign Minister Yevgenny Gusev says Moscow regards as "somewhat early" the discussion of the resumption of Russia's involvement in the NATO PFP programme. Gusev also states that Russia will continue to participate in NATO EAPC programmes.

16 November 2000 Kazakh Prime Minister Kasymzhomart Tokayev says Kazakhstan is prepared to extend Russia's lease on the Baykonur cosmodrome for another ten years. Russia has been leasing the cosmodrome since 1994 under a 20-year agreement for an annual rent of \$115m.

16 November 2000 The commander-in-chief of Russia's Strategic Missile Troops, Army Gen Vladimir Yakovlev, says that the scale of their reform will depend on the progress of Russian-US talks on the reduction of strategic offensive weapons. It is planned that the Strategic Missile Troops will be cut by 60,000 men by 2006, as per a resolution by the country's Security Council. Five Topol-M missile systems are to be put in service in Tatishchevo in Saratov Region by the end of 2000. However, financial difficulties may prevent this.

17 November 2000 It is announced Russia will in 2001 launch a humanitarian mine-sweeping operation in Libya where hundreds of thousands of mines remain from WW2 and the war against Chad.

17 November 2000 Deputy Prime Minister Valentina Matviyenko meets the Israeli ambassador to Moscow, Nathan Meron, to discuss the problem of anti-Semitism in Russia.

17 November 2000 Ukrainian prime minister Viktor Yushchenko visits Moscow for talks on Ukraine's gas debt. Russia reckons that Ukraine owes 1.7bn dollars. Ukraine claims the debt is \$1.36bn.

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17 November 2000 Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Avdeyev and Abkhaz leader Vladislav Ardzinba hold talks on the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict. Avdeyev informs Ardzinba about the upcoming international inspection of the Russian military base in Gudauta.

18 November 2000 Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev visits Moscow for talks.

18 November 2000 Vladimir Putin sends a message to participants in the 10th Ibero-American summit of Latin American and European leaders in Mexico.

18 November 2000 Vladimir Putin signs a decree on the line-up of the commission for military cooperation between Russia and foreign countries. Putin will head the commission.

18 November 2000 First deputy CGS Col-Gen Valery Manilov visits China. He says that Russia and China have "full understanding" in their approach to international terrorism. "We have a convergence of views and approaches to the threat of international terrorism in all its manifestations. We coordinate our actions both on a bilateral basis and within the framework of the Shanghai Five."

19 November 2000 Igor Ivanov arrives in Saudi Arabia. He puts forward an initiative for a Middle East settlement. He says: "Our initiative presupposes creation of a system of understandings with appropriate international guarantees ... The matter in question is to abandon the use of force in interstate relations, to respect territorial integrity and sovereignty as well as not to interfere in the home affairs of one another ... equal security of all countries in the Gulf necessitates drafting clear-cut criteria for reasonable sufficiency in armed forces and armaments for each state in the region, taking into account legitimate interests in the sphere of defence for all its states."

Ivanov rules out the introduction of various sanctions and restrictions on Palestinian territories. He says this does not help normalize the situation in the region. "It is important to refrain from any steps that would increase tension. It is necessary to fulfil the agreements reached in Sharm Al-Shaykh." Ivanov says he and his Saudi counterpart agreed to coordinate efforts towards a Palestine-Israel settlement.

19 November 2000 Vladimir Putin calls for the earliest possible ratification of the adjusted Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). He says: "We are completing preparations for submitting this document to the State Duma for ratification. We have no doubts that it will receive the deputies' support." Putin reaffirms Russia's "adherence to all its treaty obligations, including the flank limitations", to which Russia will of necessity return after the counterterrorist operation is wrapped up.

His statement runs as follows:

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The 10th anniversary of signing the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty, a document that plays a key role in strengthening European security, is marked on 19th November 2000.

An efficient regime of control over conventional armaments and an unprecedented openness in the military sphere came into being across the continent for the first time ever. The treaty made possible a quick and balanced reduction of a large quantity of superfluous armaments and hardware inherited by its signatories from the Cold War era. It helped them to live without shocks through momentous changes in the military and political scenery of Europe in the past decade.

It won't be an exaggeration to say that there have been threats to the very existence of the CFE Treaty in the past decade. They remain now. It is important that the signatories display concern, in the future too, for preserving the regime of control over conventional weapons and do not subject it to dangerous tests. I have in mind attempts to hamstring stability in the sphere of nuclear weapons, poorly thought-out bloc policy, use of force bypassing the UN Security Council or other actions running counter to security interests of OSCE partners.

Due account for these interests will enable the participants in the treaty to find a way out of the most difficult situations. The events in Chechnya are one of the latest examples. Russia values the understanding displayed for our forced measures to counter the large-scale terrorist aggression, which resulted in a temporary topping of flank limits.

Alas, the situation in the North Caucasus still remains complicated. Under these conditions and taking into account the obligations taken a year ago, we are doing our best to ensure maximum transparency in our actions to protect Russia's state interests. They are not aimed, in any way, at infringing upon the national security of countries in the region. On the contrary, they are aimed at gradual reduction of weapons and materiel (temporarily stationed in the region) which are covered by treaty limitations.

We reaffirm the adherence of Russia to all obligations taken under the treaty, including the flank limitations, and state that we will obligatorily return to them after the end of the antiterrorist campaign.

The problem of pulling out Russian troops from the territories of Georgia and Dnestr is being solved in compliance with the bilateral accords reached in Istanbul and with the interested support of our partners in the CFE Treaty.

I am confident that the soonest entry into force of the agreement on CFE adaptation will strengthen the treaty's vitality and make it an efficient instrument in the provision of continental security in the 21st century. There are no reasons to drag out the process of ratification of the adapted CFE accord. This is our firm stand. We are finalizing preparations to submit the document to the State Duma of the Russian Federal Assembly for ratification. I do not doubt that it will enjoy the support of deputies.

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Several weeks from now, mankind will enter a new millennium. I would like to wish peace and accord to our partners in the CFE Treaty, and a lasting existence to the treaty for the sake of strengthening security in Europe."

20 November 2000 Putin addresses the Russian military leadership. He says there are people in the West who continue to live by Cold War principles and still regard Russia as a geopolitical adversary. The West regards today's federal actions in Chechnya as a relapse of imperial policy. "We should reject this interpretation categorically." He says the purpose of this interpretation is to isolate Russia from the rest of the world and cast it into a quagmire of constant internal and regional conflicts. "To us, it is not the formal status of the Chechen republic that's important. What is important is that this territory should never be used as a launch pad for an attack against Russia."

20 November 2000 The Russian MFA welcomes "a quick and interested response from wide political circles in the USA" to President Putin's proposals to drastically cut the strategic offensive arms of Russia and the USA to 1,500 nuclear warheads and below by keeping the ABM Treaty intact and building it up. A MFA report says that "recent remarks by Governor George Bush's foreign policy adviser Condoleezza Rice have come into focus in this connection." "Judging by incoming reports, Ms Rice welcomed the Russian side's readiness to bring the nuclear arsenals of Russia and the USA down to a level that better suits present conditions. Rice also spoke in favour of continuing the Russian-American dialogue on a whole spectrum of strategic issues."

20 November 2000 British Prime Minister Tony Blair arrives in Moscow for talks with Putin.

20 November 2000 Vladimir Putin meets Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov to discuss the results of Ivanov's trip to the Middle East and the Persian Gulf.

20 November 2000 The MFA condemns the bombing in Gaza that killed Israeli citizens.

20 November 2000 Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Vasily Sredin and Iranian Ambassador to Russia Mehdi Safari have talks at the MFA.

20 November 2000 Igor Ivanov says that members of the UN Security Council must show an example by implementing all of the Security Council's international norms and resolutions instead of breaking them. He says Russia "has always called for the implementation of the UN Security Council's resolutions on Iraq along with a concrete time for lifting the blockade and sanctions on that country." He also says Russia "has always opposed the no-fly zones and the ongoing bombardment of Iraqi territory by the United States and Great Britain, as it thinks that these actions violate the UN Charter and international legal norms, and complicate settlement of the Iraq problem."

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20 November 2000 Russian First Deputy Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Trubnikov attends the first session of the Russian-Indian joint working group on Afghanistan, in Delhi. He says that a real threat of terrorism stems from Afghanistan and, in order to neutralize this danger, including that posed by Usamah Bin Ladin, there are "broad opportunities for cooperation" between Russia, India and the USA.

20 November 2000 Igor Ivanov confirms that visas will be required for travel between Russia and Georgia from 5 December.

It is reported that border guards of the Nazran border detachment have completed measures to reinforce the Ingush section of the Russian-Georgian border.

20 November 2000 The MFA welcomes the ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty by the Ukrainian Supreme Council.

21 November 2000 Vladimir Putin says that "Russia's position on preserving the ABM Treaty has not changed".

21 November 2000 The MFA says that Russia regards as "extremely important" the results of voting on a resolution on the ABM treaty at UN General Assembly. The resolution was submitted by Russia, Belarus and China and called for the preservation and implementation of the ABM treaty. The document was supported by 88 states, and only five voted against.

21 November 2000 Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says Russia and the IMF "made very serious concessions to each other."

21 November 2000 The chief of the General Staff of Russian armed forces, Army Gen Anatoly Kvashnin, and Chief of Staff of the National People's Army of Algeria, Mohamed Lamari, signed a military cooperation agreement between the defence ministries of the two countries.

22 November 2000 Palestinian authority head Yasir Arafat sends a message to Russian President Vladimir Putin. The message contains a request to Russia as a co-sponsor of the Middle East settlement to take urgent measures to stop the Israeli aggression against the people of Palestine.

Foreign minister Igor Ivanov has telephone discussions with the UN Secretary-General, the US Secretary of State, and the foreign ministers of Great Britain, France and Israel on 21st-22nd November to discuss the Middle East.

22 November 2000 Russian chief envoy to the UN Sergey Lavrov expresses "deep concern over persisting serious imbalance" in the operation of the International Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia. He says the tribunal is politicised. Lavrov accuses the tribunal of understandings with NATO, which run counter to resolutions of the

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UN Security Council and, in actual fact, authorize special operations by the NATO contingent in Bosnia to manhunt the accused.

The MFA issues a statement calling for Yugoslavia to become involved in the OSCE.

22 November 2000 Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov visits Poland. He is interviewed in *Gazeta Wyborca*. He reaffirms Russia's categorical opposition to Latvia's, Lithuania's and Estonia's admission to NATO.

22 November 2000 A study by Yevgenny Myasnikov, entitled "START-3 and high precision weapons", expresses concern over the acquisition of high precision weapons by NATO.

22 November 2000 The MFA confirms that a visa regime will be introduced with Georgia as of 5 December.

22 November 2000 Russian ombudsman Vladimir Kalamonov says members of the migration, refugees and demography committee under the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) marked improvements in the sphere of human rights in Chechnya. A PACE delegation visited two refugee camps in the town of Sernovodsk and another one in the village of Znamenskoye.

22 November 2000 The Federation of Russia's Jewish Communities issues a statement condemning anti-Semitic manifestations in Kursk. The new governor of Kursk, Aleksandr Mikhaylov, has made anti-Semitic remarks and been reprimanded by the presidential plenipotentiary representative in the Central Federal District, Georgy Poltavchenko.

23 November 2000 The MFA calls on Palestine and Israel "not to give in to provocations and to display extreme restraint and composure" following the terrorist act in the Israeli town of Hadera.

23 November 2000 INTERFAX reports that sources in the Russian power structures state that Russia intends to come out of the 1995 Gore-Chernomyrdin accord and to resume military and technical cooperation with Iran. Under the Gore-Chernomyrdin memorandum of 30th June 1995, Russia pledged to complete the fulfilment of contracts related to military and technical cooperation with Iran and not to conclude any new ones.

Minister Igor Ivanov says that Moscow is strictly fulfilling all its commitments towards Iran rejects calls for sanctions made in US Congress. Ivanov says Russia is rigorously abiding by nonproliferation arrangements applying to weapons of mass destruction.

23 November 2000 Deputy Foreign Minister Georgy Mamedov says that Russia is ready to seek new limits in strategic armaments of 1,500 nuclear warheads or lower

jointly or in parallel with the United States while observing and strengthening the ABM Treaty. He says that Russia was offering Europe, the United States and other interested countries a series of pragmatic measures for cooperation in the sphere of approved missile defence systems.

23 November 2000 The MFA expresses approval of the elections in Bosnia.

23 November 2000 Defence Minister Igor Sergeyevev says that "religious extremism, separatism and international terrorism" are the biggest threats to Russia's security. "The greatest threat to Russia's security comes from the North Caucasus and Central Asia ... today's international terrorist centre is Afghanistan." He says that Moscow has decided to station more armed forces in southwest Russia and the regions bordering Central Asia. He also says it is planned to start arming the Russian armed forces with fifth generation weapons between 2020 and 2025.

24 November 2000 Leader of the Palestine National Autonomy Yasir Arafat visits Moscow and has talks with Putin. Putin also talks by telephone with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Baraq.

First Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Avdeyev says Russia has put forward a proposal on an Israeli-Palestinian agreement to go beyond the framework reached in Sharm al-Shaykh. This idea was put forward during the talks between Putin and Yasir Arafat as well as during the telephone conversation with Ehud Baraq. Avdeyev says that "Russia's unique situation as a friend of the Arabs and a country which Israel continues to have confidence in" should be used in order to "lead both sides out of this dangerous confrontation and reach peace between Israel and Palestine".

24 November 2000 Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov says Russia intends to begin talks with Iran shortly on concluding new contracts in the sphere of military and technical cooperation.

24 November 2000 Vladimir Putin meets Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia Aleksey II, Catholicos of all Armenians Garegin II and Azerbaijani mufti Sheykh ul-Islam Allahshukur Pashazade. The spiritual leaders of Russia, Armenia and Azerbaijan adopt a joint declaration on Nagornyy Karabakh.

25 November 2000 Igor Ivanov visits Germany. He says Russia is in principle ready to cooperate with the EU in the field of defence and security.

Igor Ivanov says Russia backs an international presence in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict zone, provided it is approved by both sides. "Active international consultations are currently being conducted on this issue and for the moment it is difficult to say what form an international presence will take and what it will be made up of."

Igor Ivanov calls for tripartite talks between Russia, the EU, and the USA to focus on nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation.

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26 November 2000 Igor Ivanov visits Germany. Federal Chancellor Gerhardt Schroeder is to visit Moscow in January 2001 and St Petersburg in April 2001.

26 November 2000 The first meeting of the joint commission of the Russian and South Korean governments on cooperation in the military sphere and munitions industries takes place in Seoul.

27 November 2000 Igor Ivanov attends the meeting of OSCE foreign ministers in Vienna. He has separate talks with US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.

27 November 2000 Russian Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov says Russia is prepared for negotiations with Iran on supplying conventional weapons. "We are ready to supply to Iran everything that does not contradict Russia's international obligations."

27 November 2000 Italian President Carlo Ciampi visits Russia. Vladimir Putin discusses the Middle East with him. Putin says there should be international monitoring in the Middle East under international agreement. He says that Russia has not changed its stance on the resolution of the Middle East problem and creation of an independent Palestinian state. "The former USSR consistently and as a matter of principle supported, as Russia continues to do now, the efforts of the Palestinian people aimed at resolving the situation in the region and creating an independent state. Our stance on this remains unchanged."

Putin says Russia has a positive attitude towards the future expansion of the borders the European Union, in talks with President Ciampi. He says the process of the expansion of the European Union "does not upset the balance in the humanitarian sphere". "All principles of international humanitarian law must apply to the countries which are joining the European Union, so that a reliable mechanism is set up to protect the rights of the Russian-speaking communities in the new members of the European Union."

27 November 2000 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov criticises the OSCE for reviewing only humanitarian and human rights issues and only in the eastern part of the Euro-Atlantic space. He criticises the OSCE for not sending its observers to Belarus' elections.

27 November 2000 Interfax reports that diplomatic sources are saying that Moscow does not consider the permanent inclusion of a Russian unit in the EU's future rapid-deployment force. Sources state: "Russia may probably only share in some operations staged by the European forces ... our contingent cannot be included in the European corps simply because Russia is not a member state of the European Union." The sources also state that Russia "is not convinced that the new European force will not be closely related to NATO".

27 November 2000 Col-Gen Leonid Ivashov, head of the Russian Defence

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Ministry's international department, expresses his support for Yugoslav demands for a 5 km demilitarized buffer zone between Serbia and Kosovo.

27 November 2000 Russian Defence Minister Igor Sergeyev says Russia desires to develop military and technical cooperation with Japan. He says: "We are prepared to consider any proposals by the Japanese side regarding the supply of Russian armaments and military hardware, including air defence systems." He departs for Japan.

27 November 2000 The MOD criticises the USA's modernization of Minuteman-3 ICBMs. It says the modernisation will create additional opportunities for the production of the Hera missile which is banned by the 1987 USSR-USA treaty on the elimination of their medium-range and shorter-range missiles.

27 November 2000 Russian Federal Security Service director Nikolay Patrushev visits Azerbaijan.

28 November 2000 The head of the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Aleksey II, tells Italian President Carlo Ciampi that he has not ruled out the possibility of a meeting with Pope John Paul II.

28 November 2000 Defence Minister Igor Sergeyev criticizes US-Japanese plans for developing a regional missile defence system, on his visit to Tokyo.

28 November 2000 The first trainload of Russian armaments leaves Tiraspol in Transdnestr for Russia.

28 November 2000 A US Congressional delegation visits Moscow and has talks with Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov.

28 November 2000 Putin sends a message to Yasir Arafat urging an end to bloodshed.

Igor Ivanov discusses the Middle East situation in a telephone conversation with his Israeli counterpart Shlomo Ben-Ami.

29 November 2000 Russian defence minister, Marshal Igor Sergeyev, says in Japan that Russia supports any positive moves that would bring about a reduction of tension on the Korean peninsula and normalize relations between South Korea and North Korea. He says, "the absence of effective security safeguards and the presence of large groups of military forces, including the US force, on the peninsula hamper the process of reducing the level of military confrontation on the Korean peninsula." Sergeyev has talks with Prime Minister Yoshio Mori. It is announced that the Russian and Japanese navies will set up a hotline.

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Head of the MOD department for international military cooperation Col-Gen Leonid Ivashov is in Japan with defence minister Igor Sergeyev. He says that Russia's military-technical links with North Korea are at a low level at present but Moscow has been conducting "expert consultations with Pyongyang" and offering its weapons.

29 November 2000 Igor Ivanov holds talks with Iraqi foreign minister Tariq Aziz in Moscow.

29 November 2000 The MFA says Russia does not agree with recommendations published by OSCE foreign ministers in the final communique of their Vienna meeting.

29 November 2000 The Russian president's aide Sergey Yastrzhembskiy says the threat of penetration of militants into Russia is behind the decision to impose a visa control regime on the border between Russia and Georgia from 5 December. Yastrzhembskiy says: "In the verbal form we have been repeatedly assured of a joint struggle against terrorism and that our concern over the terrorist problems is understood, but this is unfortunately not confirmed by deeds at all."

29 November 2000 Defence Minister Igor Sergeyev rules out troop cuts in Central Asia.

29 November 2000 Deputy Foreign Minister Vasily Sredin says Russia supports an independent Palestinian state and calls for an Israeli-Palestinian settlement.

30 November 2000 Vladimir Putin and Belarusian President Aleksandr Lukashenko hold a meeting of the Russo-Belarusian Higher State Council in Minsk. Vladimir Putin has said there should be no hurry or artificial boost of the integration process in forming the union of Russia and Belarus.

The CIS Council of Heads of State meets in Minsk.

The CIS Council of Heads of Government meets in Minsk. The prime ministers of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan sign an agreement on visa-free trips of citizens of these CIS states.

A meeting of the council of foreign ministers of CIS members is held in Minsk. They agree to extend for six months from 31 December 2000 the mandate of the collective peacekeeping forces in Abkhazia and Georgia. They also agree to create a structure to provide assistance in the fight against terrorism on CIS conditions. This is a Commonwealth anti-terrorist centre, whose situation and personnel were approved today.

30 November 2000 Vladimir Putin and Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze discuss bilateral economic and financial relations and cooperation in the energy

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sector. They also agree to give their countries' foreign ministers from one to two months to draft a new framework Russian-Georgian treaty.

30 November 2000 Sergey Stepashin and US Comptroller General David Walker decide that the Russian Audit Chamber and the US General Accounting Office should tackle the problem of money-laundering and capital flight as well as misallocation of loans.

30 November 2000 Russia submits to the UN Security Council a draft resolution on lifting the arms embargo imposed on Yugoslavia by resolution No 1160 in 1998.

30 November 2000 Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Losyukov says, "Russia has not offered to hand over Habomai and Shikotan to Japan."

30 November 2000 Russia and Moldova sign an agreement on visa-free travel.

30 November 2000 A Ministry of Defence spokesman says Russia is to withdraw its heavy combat equipment from the 50th base in Gudauta, Abkhazia, in early December 2000. The withdrawal will be conducted in line with the 1999 OSCE Istanbul summit decisions and in conformity with the Russian-Georgian military agreements, the spokesman said. As many as 89 items of equipment will be moved to Russia by three trains. The bulk of the equipment consists of the BMD-1 and BMD-2 fighting vehicles designed for airborne troops, as well as self-propelled artillery of the 10th separate airborne regiment of the airborne peacekeeping forces that make up the backbone of the 50th base.

December

1 December 2000 Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Losyukov starts consultations with his North Korean counterpart Li In Kyu, in Moscow.

1 December 2000 Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov agrees to grant Ukraine a 10-year deferment on its debt for natural gas. This follows talks in Minsk between Putin and Kuchma and the Russian and Ukrainian prime ministers.

1 December 2000 The CIS antiterrorist centre will have 60 staff and take measures against international terrorism and extremism with the assistance of special task forces from participating countries. The document was signed by 11 CIS leaders, except Turkmenistan. The Turkmen president was absent from the Minsk summit. Azerbaijan said it would give an analytical, information and consultative support to the centre and regarded its operations with due account to the national constitution, laws and interests. Georgia signed the resolution with a reservation that it would come into force in the republic after appropriate interstate procedures. Ukraine also made a reservation that it would submit the document to parliament for ratification.

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1 December 2000 Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov and secretary of the Security Council Sergey Ivanov visit Germany.

1 December 2000 A delegation of the Iraqi Arab Socialist Ba'th Party arrives in Moscow. It is headed by a regional leader, Abd-al-Baqi Abd-al-Karim al-Sadun. It will attend the 7th CPRF Congress.

2 December 2000 A delegation of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine headed by Fahd Sulayman leaves Damascus for Moscow. The delegation plans to have talks in Moscow with representatives of the Russian parliament and other officials.

2 December 2000 *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* reports that a delegation headed by deputies belonging to Yedinstvo - Abdul-Vakhid Niyazov and Kurban-Ali Amirov - they are part of the Refak Moslem grouping which is part of Yedinstvo, are to visit Iran.

3 December 2000 Russian First Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Avdeyev writes in *Lietuvos Rytas* that the MFA regards the bill, adopted last June by the Lithuanian parliament on "the Soviet occupation regime" as "an unfriendly document to Moscow."

4 December 2000 Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov orders that the Russian Foreign Ministry continue its talks with Georgia on the border-crossing procedure. The subject of the talks is the signing of a Russian-Georgian intergovernmental agreement on their citizens' trips between the two countries, as well as the intergovernmental protocol for a simplified procedure for crossing the border by those dwelling in territories located near the border, the release said. It has been ordered that the current practice for crossing the border be kept in place on the Abkhaz and Southern Ossetian sections of the Russian-Georgian border.

4 December 2000 The MFA denies reports that the smaller Kurile islands may be handed over to Japan.

4 December 2000 The Russian president's representative in the Far Eastern Federal District, Konstantin Pulikovskiy, signs an agreement with Tokyo to create "a hot line" between his office and the Japanese Maritime Safety Agency (MSA) to raise efficiency of the struggle against transnational crime on the Russian-Japanese border.

4 December 2000 The Chairman of the Duma Defence Committee Gen Andrey Nikolayev says that mutually profitable cooperation with Iran has very good prospects. He says, "within the next few years Iran will be able to buy 7bn dollars worth of hardware from Russian military-industrial enterprises."

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5 December 2000 Deputy Foreign Minister Vasily Sredin plays down Palestinians' negative answer to the latest Israeli peace initiative.

5 December 2000 Croatian foreign minister Tonino Picula visits Moscow.

5 December 2000 Defence minister Igor Sergeyev attends NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council (PJC) in Brussels. He says that the NATO liaison mission in Moscow can be re-opened.

5 December 2000 At a meeting in Berlin of a trilateral commission that includes the heads of the international affairs committees of the Russian, French and German parliaments, Leonid Slutskiy, deputy head of the international affairs committee of the Russian lower house, says Russia would "immediately" withdraw from the START-2 Treaty if the United States renounces the ABM Treaty.

5 December 2000 The World Bank's vice-president for Europe and Central Asia, Johannes Linn, says the World Bank is planning to grant Russia from 600m to 1bn dollars in the coming 12 months within the framework of a renewed strategy of cooperation.

5 December 2000 Russia's First Deputy Interior Minister Vladimir Kozlov says the introduction of visa control on the Russia-Georgia border will help stop the flow of foreign mercenaries heading for Chechnya and put an end to criminal gangs operating in the area. He says: "Georgia sees two advantages in the preservation of tension in the North Caucasus. The first is related to the Baku-Supsa oil pipeline: the more unstable the situation in the neighbouring republics gets, the more oil will go through Georgian territory. Besides, hostilities in Chechnya distract highlanders from participation in Abkhazia's and North Osetia's drive for independence."

6 December 2000 Moscow City Court finds American businessman Edmond Pope guilty of spying for the USA and gives him the maximum sentence of 20 years' imprisonment in a strict regime prison.

6 December 2000 Deputy Foreign Minister Georgy Mamedov in Canada says Russia favours allowing international inspectors to come to Iraq and make sure the country does not have weapons of mass destruction.

6 December 2000 Defence minister Igor Sergeyev visits NATO HQ. He talks of raising the level of mutual trust with NATO. Sergeyev brought to NATO "studies on architecture, tasks and procedure for holding consultations, at the initiative of Russian President Vladimir Putin, on creating a regional theatre missile defence system".

Igor Sergeyev meets US defence secretary William Cohen in Brussels. He says Russia is not violating international agreements or the standards of international law through its military-technical cooperation with Iran.

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Igor Sergeyev visits Britain. A military cooperation agreement is signed. Sergeyev attacks plans to deploy part of the US NMD system in Britain.

6 December 2000 Russian presidential aide Sergey Yastrzhembskiy rules out the possibility of any kind of unilateral use of force by Russia against the Chechen fighters who have taken refuge in Georgia. Yastrzhembskiy says some 1,500-2,000 Chechen militants are concentrated in the Pankisi gorge of Georgia's Akhmeta district bordering on Chechnya. Yastrzhembskiy says Moscow may reverse its decision to introduce a visa regime on the border with Georgia if Georgia clamps down on Chechen forces in the Pankisi gorge.

The MFAs of Russia and Georgia reach agreement on preferential visa regime for servicemen and civil personnel of the Russian Defence Ministry stationed in Georgia.

6 December 2000 The MFA calls for sanctions against Iraq to be lifted.

6 December 2000 Vladimir Putin has a telephone conversation with Polish leader Aleksander Kwasniewski.

6 December 2000 The CIS Unified Air Defence System says it will continue strengthening the southern borders of the Commonwealth next year. About 10 collective exercises will be held in 2001 to improve functioning and co-operation of the system's on-duty forces.

7 December 2000 MOD sources claim the Russian withdrawal from military bases in Georgia is on schedule.

7 December 2000 Russian presidential aide Sergey Yastrzhembskiy says he believes it is possible to carry out joint operations together with Georgian law-enforcement bodies to combat crime in the Pankisi gorge.

7 December 2000 Minister of the Interior Vladimir Rushaylo denies reports by a number of Western media that Russian and American security services ostensibly agreed on joint actions to smash the bases of Usamah Bin Ladin.

7 December 2000 Experts from the Russian Foreign Ministry and US State Department conclude a working meeting on the arms trade. They discuss Russia's plans to resume its military-technical cooperation with Iran.

First deputy head of the Russian General Staff Col-Gen Valery Manilov says the resumption of arms exports to Iran is "Russia's internal affair" and that threatened sanctions on this score are inadmissible.

7 December 2000 Russian Justice Minister Yury Chayka visits Germany.

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7 December 2000 Kuwait's minister of state for foreign affairs, Sulayman Majid al-Shahin, visits Moscow.

7 December 2000 Security Council Secretary Sergey Ivanov says it will take at least 10 years to reform Russia's military organization.

8 December 2000 The first deputy chief of the Russian General Staff, Valery Manilov, says that 2,000 militants in Georgia pose a threat to the national security of that country and could "completely destabilize" the situation there.

9 December 2000 Vladimir Putin says he cannot ignore the recommendation of the clemency commission under the head of state with regard to pardoning US citizen Edmond Pope.

9 December 2000 Defence Minister Igor Sergeyev attends a PJC meeting in NATO. He says that Russia is ready "to gradually unfreeze its relations with NATO and strengthen cooperation with the alliance in the military sphere."

9 December 2000 Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ordzhonikidze says Russia is "not against" an international presence being present in Palestine, "but only on condition that both sides - Palestine and Israel - agree to it." He goes on to specify that "international presence" means international observers and not peacekeeping forces.

9 December 2000 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Losyukov says Moscow believes that "the search for ways in which to resolve the territorial problem between Russia and Japan must be based upon the inviolability of Russia's sovereignty over its territory."

9 December 2000 A PACE delegation visits Moscow.

9 December 2000 The 16th plenary session of the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly, under the chairmanship of Russian Federation Council chairman Yegor Stroyev, ends in St Petersburg.

9 December 2000 The Russian government approves an agreement between the governments of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan on visa-free travel.

11 December 2000 The first train of 23 open special wagons carrying Russian weaponry leaves Abkhazia. Russia plans to finish the withdrawal of its armaments from the military base in Gudauta by 26 December 2000.

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12 December 2000 Vladimir Putin proposes to the Federation Council that it extend the Russian peacekeeping force's mission in Kosovo until 10 June 2001.

12 December 2000 The head of the Media-Most holding company, Vladimir Gusinskiy, is arrested in Spain.

12 December 2000 Dmitry Rogozin says at a meeting of the political committee of the PACE in Riga that there will be no cooperation with the Council of Europe without the restoration of full powers of Russian representatives in that organization.

12 December 2000 In Palermo Secretary of the Russian Security Council Sergey Ivanov signs the UN Convention Against Transnational Crime and a related protocol.

12 December 2000 The director of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Middle East and North Africa Department, Aleksandr Saltanov, tours the Middle East.

12 December 2000 The chief of Russia's general staff, Army Gen Anatoly Kvashnin and the chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen Henry Shelton, sign a programme at a meeting in Moscow for exchanges of military delegations and joint military exercises. They also discuss the ABM treaty.

13 December 2000 A Russian delegation headed by director of the MFA's security and disarmament department Yury Kapralov visits Iran for talks on regional security. Both sides called for supporting the creation a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East.

13 December 2000 A UN delegation visits Chechen refugee camps in Ingushetia.

14 December 2000 Putin visits Cuba.

14 December 2000 Vladimir Putin signs a decree pardoning US citizen Edmond Pope who was sentenced by the Moscow municipal court to 20 years in prison for espionage.

14 December 2000 President Vladimir Putin sends a congratulatory telegram to George Bush Jr on his victory in the US presidential elections.

Dmitry Rogozin, Duma International Affairs Committee chairman says, "The first thing for us to do is to convince the Republican administration that the ABM Treaty is the cornerstone of international security, and its giving up may only lead to the isolation of the United States in the international arena".

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Sergey Karaganov, the head of the Russian Council for Foreign and Defence Policies and deputy director of the Russian Academy of Sciences' Institute of Europe, predicts that Washington will tighten its position on the deployment of a national missile defence system following the victory of Republican George Bush Jr in the presidential elections.

14 December 2000 First Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Avdeyev says Russia is ready to start talks with European countries on creating a non-strategic ABM system. Avdeyev praises many European countries for their backing of Russia's position on plans to create a US theatre missile defence system. He says the modern world is living through a period of globalization, and it is now difficult to forecast how the structure of European security will develop. He says there should be further cooperation between Russia and the EU, OSCE and other European structures. Avdeyev says Russia believes that the EU "can become a more promising partner for cooperation in the sphere of security than NATO."

14 December 2000 Russian Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov attends a session of the Russian-French council for economic, financial and trade issues in Paris. He says Russia is expected to take part in equipping European defence forces which are being created by EU countries.

14 December 2000 The MFA says that Russia and other UN Security Council members support the activity of the UN mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina. It warns against any revision of Dayton.

14 December 2000 The head of the CIS antiterrorist centre, Lt-Gen Boris Mylnikov, says the centre will be based in Moscow. Mylnikov says there are no plans so far to set up the anti-terrorist centre structures in the Central Asian region and in the North Caucasus.

15 December 2000 Igor Sergeyev gives an interview in *Krasnaya Zvezda* on ABM. He rejects any idea of a compromise.

17 December 2000 Mikhail Kasyanov visits France.

18 December 2000 Vladimir Putin visits Canada.

18 December 2000 Russian State Duma Defence Committee Chairman Dmitry Rogozin visits Japan. He expresses concern over US-Japanese research on ABM.

19 December 2000 Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov says Russia would like to see European companies taking part in the development of its Shtokman gas condensate deposit.

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19 December 2000 Igor Ivanov has talks with Moldovan foreign minister Nicolae Cernomaz in Moscow.

20 December 2000 Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov says Russian and EU experts "will start work in the near future on specific proposals to draft a cooperation programme between Russia and the European Union in the sphere of energy."

20 December 2000 The Federation Council has given its consent "to use the Russian troops numbering up to 3,616 people in Kosovo until 10 June 2001".

20 December 2000 Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt visits Moscow.

20 December 2000 Russian Foreign Ministry special envoy Nikolay Kartuzov completes a four-day visit to Iraq.

20 December 2000 Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation Yevgenny Gusev and Deputy Chief of Staff of the French armed forces for international cooperation, Vice-Admiral Alain Coldefy, discuss European security in Moscow. The sides speak for widening and making more concentrated a dialogue on issues of security and defence between Russia and the EU.

21 December 2000 The Council of CIS Defence ministers meets in Moscow. They will discuss preparations for the coalition's military training exercises Southern Shield of the Commonwealth 2001, a plan for military cooperation in the period up to 2005 and other issues aimed at improving interaction. Azerbaijani, Armenian, Belarusian, Georgian, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Russian, and Tajik defence ministers and the Ukrainian military attache in Moscow are participating in the session. The Russian defence minister Igor Sergeyev urges closer cooperation between CIS states in the anti-terrorist struggle.

Russian Defence Minister Igor Sergeyev holds a series of bilateral negotiations under the auspices of the CIS Defence Ministers Council session in Moscow. Sergeyev and his counterparts Serzh Sarkisyan of Armenia, Sat Tokpabayev of Kazakhstan, Esen Topoyev of Kyrgyzstan and Shirali Khairuloyev of Tajikistan sign plans for co-operation in 2001. Sergeyev and Sarkisyan also sign an intergovernmental agreement on the activity of Russia's 102nd military base in Armenia.

21 December 2000 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov welcomes the resumption of talks by Israel and Palestine in Washington. He says Russia is ready to play a more active role.

21 December 2000 The head of the MOD's international cooperation department Col-Gen Leonid Ivashov says Russia will take every measure to ensure its national security if the US withdraws from the Russian-American ABM treaty of 1972.

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21 December 2000 Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov says that Russia is counting on the IMF for easing the Russian debt burden.

21 December 2000 The Duma adopts a statement on Russo-Yugoslav relations.

21 December 2000 The chiefs of the Russian and Japanese border services approve a cooperation protocol. Russian Federal Border Guard Service director Lt-Gen Konstantin Totskiy and Japanese Coast Guard chief Shogo Arai meet in Tokyo at the conference of border service chiefs of Russia, the USA, South Korea and Japan.

21 December 2000 Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma visits Russia. An agreement on cooperation between Russian and Ukrainian defence enterprises is signed.

22 December 2000 Russian military hardware withdrawn from Gudauta, Abkhazia, arrives in the Moscow Military District. The withdrawal of military hardware will be completed before 31 December.

22 December 2000 Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Vasily Sredin says Moscow thinks that it is too earlier to try to forecast the new US administration's line on Iraq.

26 December 2000 Igor Sergeyev in Baku says Russia's military leadership has drawn up a package of measures in case the USA pulls out of the ABM treaty of 1972. He expresses concern over the attitude of George Bush on National Missile Defence (NMD). He says Clinton was more prepared to take into account the views of Russia and China on NMD. He says Russia has so far not had any contact with representatives of the incoming Bush administration.

27 December 2000 Russian defence minister Igor Sergeyev visits Iran. He discusses regional security and arms exports.

27 December 2000 The MFA says it has begun preliminary unofficial contacts with the Bush team on ABM and START.

Russian Strategic Missile Troops C-in-C Vladimir Yakovlev says any American steps aimed at deployment of the national ABM system would face a counteraction from Russia.

27 December 2000 The MFA says Russia, Georgia, Bulgaria, Turkey, Romania, and Ukraine will set up a multinational navy operational interaction group BLACKSEAFOR on the basis of their navy forces.

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28 December 2000 A Duma delegation visits Yugoslavia.

28 December 2000 Russia and India sign a contract in Irkutsk to launch batch production of Su-30-MKI jets in India.

29 December 2000 RIA reports that Russian and Chinese missile defence experts have completed regular consultations in Beijing on missile defence.

29 December 2000 Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright have a telephone conversation. They mainly discuss the Middle East.

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