

Russian Foreign Policy: Chronology

January-March 2001

January

3 January 2001 Russian first deputy foreign minister Aleksandr Avdeyev meets Israeli prime minister's senior adviser Dani Yatom.

3 January 2001 The press service of the Baltic Fleet rejects a report published in the USA's *Washington Times* newspaper claiming Russia has deployed tactical nuclear weapons in the Baltic area. The MOD also denies these claims.

3 January 2001 The MFA expresses surprise at the Ukrainian authorities' decision to demand that all Ukrainian TV and radio channels broadcast only in the Ukrainian language.

4 January 2001 *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* reports Mikhail Serov, chief of the Moscow Internal Affairs Department, as saying that it will be harder for foreigners to obtain Russian citizenship.

4 January 2001 Foreign Ministry (MFA) spokesman Aleksandr Yakovenko accuses the USA of directly violating the provisions of the START 1 treaty on the disposal of MX intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Yakovenko says at present Russia does not see a need to advance its own plans for the peace settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as an alternative to the American plan. He says Moscow intends to work actively with the sides concerned on the rapprochement of their positions.

4 January 2001 The Moscow Military District says Russia will renew withdrawal of armament and property of its army group from the Dnestr republic in Moldova in 2001.

4 January 2001 Russian forces within the CIS Collective Peacekeeping Forces in the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zone open a new observation and control post in the village of Shamgon in Abkhazia's Gali district.

5 January 2001 Vasily Sredin, Russian deputy foreign minister and presidential Middle East envoy, calls on Palestine and Israel to make the most of their chances

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to reach "a framework agreement on the permanent status of the Palestinian territories". He says, "It is in this context that Russia views Palestine's and Israel's agreement to accept the proposals by US President Bill Clinton as the basis for negotiations."

5 January 2001 The MFA says Moscow believes that the problem of the consequences resulting from NATO forces using depleted uranium ammunition in the Balkans "requires an international expert assessment." Russian forces in KFOR will undergo medical checks.

5 January 2001 ITAR-TASS reports that a Kremlin source says Moscow is ready to coordinate its defence doctrine with that of the EU.

5 January 2001 Russian First Deputy Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Trubnikov says Russia will step up its policy in Central Asia.

6 January 2001 German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder arrives in Moscow on a private visit.

7 January 2001 A delegation of the Russian Emergencies Ministry led by chief of the ministry's international cooperation department Vyacheslav Vlasenko leaves for Lebanon to discuss the possibility of Russia helping to clear South Lebanon of mines under the aegis of the UN.

8 January 2001 Belarusian foreign minister Mikhail Khvastow visits Russia.

8 January 2001 Igor Ivanov says Russia is open to close cooperation with the leadership of the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

8 January 2001 Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov calls for an independent international inspection in Kosovo to ascertain whether it is in danger from the use of uranium-containing bombs by NATO.

9 January 2001 The Russian MOD says that only an independent international commission can determine the extent of radioactive contamination in Kosovo (Yugoslavia) caused by NATO's use of ammunition containing depleted uranium.

9 January 2001 Chairman of the Russian State Duma's International Affairs Committee Dmitry Rogozin says in an interview in *Vesti* that a Russian peacekeeping contingent under UN aegis might be able to disengage the parties involved in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Rogozin said that Russia supports the idea of establishing a Palestinian state on territories now controlled by Israel, which, in simpler terms, means "territory occupied by Israel".

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9 January 2001 Vladimir Putin visits Azerbaijan. Putin and Aliyev issue a declaration on strategic cooperation. Putin offers to mediate over Nagornyy Karabakh. Russia and Azerbaijan agree to divide the Caspian region on the seabed by keeping navigation on the entire water surface free. Putin and Alyiev support the Turkmen leader's initiative to hold a summit of the Caspian states.

9 January 2001 The chairman of the Russian State Duma International Affairs Committee, Dmitry Rogozin, says an international expert examination must be organized in connection with the revealed consequences of NATO's use of weapons containing depleted uranium during its operation in Yugoslavia.

9 January 2001 Russian Security Council Deputy Secretary Oleg Chernov expresses concern over US plans to deploy a National Missile Defence (NMD) system.

9 January 2001 Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov says there will be no Soviet-era debt payment at least before May 2001.

10 January 2001 The Defence Ministry's main military medical department orders the Military Medical Academy to research into depleted uranium's effects on human health.

10 January 2001 The director of the MFA's department for international cooperation and human rights Teymuraz Ramishvili says the Russian language must be given the status of a second official language or at least an official status in countries where Russians make up one-third or more of the population. Russian speakers form one-third or more of the population in only three former Soviet republics apart from Russia - Latvia, Estonia and Kazakhstan.

11 January 2001 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov has talks in Moscow with OSCE Secretary-General Jan Kubis.

11 January 2001 Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov says Russia would like to continue dialogue with the new US administration "without any pause".

11 January 2001 Russia and Germany sign an intergovernmental agreement on joint modernization, standardization and logistic supplies for Russian MiG-29 jets intended for third countries.

11 January 2001 Putin is interviewed in *Komsomolskaya Pravda* on his visit to Azerbaijan.

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12 January 2001 It is reported that Russian MOD officials are holding talks with the NATO military command on the formation of a Russian cell in the new command structure of the alliance's peacekeeping forces in Kosovo and Bosnia.

12 January 2001 Russian President Vladimir Putin and his French counterpart Jacques Chirac discuss by telephone regional conflicts.

12 January 2001 Foreign minister Igor Ivanov visits Italy and Hungary.

13 January 2001 A delegation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) arrives in Russia. The delegation will travel to Chechnya on a fact-finding mission to prepare a report for the upcoming PACE session.

14 January 2001 Russia's special envoy and leader of the working group for the Caspian Sea Andrey Urnov visits Iran. He says Russia considers it necessary to hold a working meeting of the Caspian deputy foreign ministers at the end of January or the beginning of February.

14 January 2001 Igor Ivanov is interviewed in *Corriere della Sera*. He says, "Russia does not view NATO as an enemy and threatens no-one. If, however, NATO's further expansion begins to pose a direct threat to our security, Russia will be forced to protect its interests and take appropriate countermeasures." He also says EU enlargement "does not in the least alarm Russia, since it is a natural process of integration... The only thing Russia is asking for is that EU enlargement should not have an adverse effect on our economic relations with the EU's new members."

14 January 2001 Tatarstani Prime Minister Rustam Minnikhanov visits Iraq.

15 January 2001 First Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Avdeyev says Moscow regards the responsibility of any persons in Yugoslavia, including formerly high-ranking officials, for illegal actions as an internal Yugoslav affair.

15 January 2001 Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov attends a meeting of the Russian-Indian intergovernmental commission on trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation. He says India will soon sign documents on its participation in the Sakhalin-1 project to recover shelf oil off Sakhalin Island.

15 January 2001 The Russian Foreign Intelligence Service says it does not know anything about whether Richard Tomlinson, a former British spy, is planning to publish his memoirs in Moscow or not.

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15 January 2001 Foreign minister Igor Ivanov on his visit to Italy says Russia is prepared to agree to a further considerable reduction in strategic offensive weapons on condition that the ABM treaty of 1972 is retained.

15 January 2001 Chairman of the Duma International Affairs Committee Dmitry Rogozin discusses on TV relations with the USA.

15 January 2001 Diplomatic sources deny Western press reports that China and Russia are holding negotiations to sign a bilateral defence treaty.

15 January 2001 Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka visits Russia.

16 January 2001 Russian Defence Minister Igor Sergeyev and Japanese Vice Defence Minister Ken Sato discuss in Moscow plans to develop bilateral military cooperation in 2001.

16 January 2001 French Defence Minister Alain Richard visits Russia.

16 January 2001 President Putin meets visiting Moldovan Prime Minister Dumitru Braghis in Moscow.

17 January 2001 Japanese Foreign Minister Yohei Kono visits Russia. He meets Deputy Prime Minister Viktor Khristenko. Japan is concerned about Russia's refusal to pay part of its official debt. In 2000, Russian-Japanese trade turnover jumped 20% against 1999 and amounted to \$5bn.

17 January 2001 Yugoslav Foreign Minister Goran Svilanovic arrives in Moscow.

17 January 2001 Former presidential business manager Pavel Borodin, the State Secretary of the Union of Russia and Belarus, is arrested in the USA in connection with a request from Swiss prosecutors. The MFA demands his release.

17 January 2001 Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov urges the revision of the current military-technical agreement concluded between NATO and Yugoslavia, on the occasion of the visit of Yugoslav foreign minister Goran Svilanovic.

17 January 2001 Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov and French Defence Minister Alain Richard reach an agreement on the preparation of a long-term programme of cooperation between their defence industries.

17 January 2001 The heads of the Security Councils of Russia and Georgia, Sergey Ivanov and Nugzar Sajaia, meet in Moscow.

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18 January 2001 First Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation Aleksandr Avdeyev visits Albania.

18 January 2001 Latvian Foreign Minister Indulis Berzins visits Moscow. He calls on the Russian government to sign a border treaty with Latvia. The reason why the treaty has not been signed is because the Russian State Duma has not ratified the treaty.

19 January 2001 Vladimir Putin denies that Russia is refusing to pay its debts to the Paris Club. Putin says, "Russia has never refused and will not refuse to meet its obligations before creditors".

19 January 2001 Igor Ivanov has talks with the member of the European Commission responsible for foreign economic activities, Christopher Patten, in Moscow. Patten says the European Union is ready to pool efforts with Russia for normalization in the Caucasus.

19 January 2001 Japanese Foreign Minister Yohei Kono says that Tokyo intends in the near future to ask Russia why Moscow proposed to postpone for a month the Russian-Japanese summit in Irkutsk that was earlier scheduled for February.

19 January 2001 First Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Avdeyev attends the opening of the Russian consulate general in Podgorica, Montenegro.

19 January 2001 Russian defence minister Igor Sergeyev visits Ukraine. He discusses the use of the early warning radars at Sevastopol and Mukacheve.

19 January 2001 The MFA says Russia regards as insufficient the assistance in the disposal of chemical weapons it receives from the international community.

21 January 2001 Kaliningrad Region governor Vladimir Yegorov denies a report in the *Daily Telegraph* that he has received "instructions from President Vladimir Putin" on granting preferences to German businesses.

21 January 2001 Russian Deputy Prosecutor-General Vasily Kolmogorov flies to Spain to hand over materials on the criminal case of Media-MOST chief Vladimir Gusinskiy.

21 January 2001 Secretary of the Russian Security Council Sergey Ivanov visits Armenia.

22 January 2001 The MFA welcomes the restoration of diplomatic relations between Yugoslavia and Albania.

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22 January 2001 The MFA says Russia will continue weapons cuts under a decision by Vladimir Putin to reduce military personnel numbers in the North Caucasus and under the adjusted Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaty.

23 January 2001 Israeli President Moshe Qatzav visits Russia, and has talks with Putin.

23 January 2001 The MFA says Russia confirms its principal position supporting Kuwait's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

23 January 2001 Iraqi Health Minister Umid Midhat Mubarak says a protocol on supplying Russian medical equipment to Iraq has been signed. Mubarak meets Russian Emergencies Minister Sergey Shoygu in Moscow to discuss humanitarian aid and radiation security.

23 January 2001 MFA spokesman Aleksandr Yakovenko, says that "another heightening of propaganda confrontation between Baghdad and its neighbours proved once again the need for the settlement of the Iraqi problem through the resumption of international monitoring in Iraq in exchange for the suspension, and then lifting of sanctions".

23 January 2001 Security Council secretary Sergey Ivanov has talks in Moscow with Chairman of the Israeli National Security Council Uzi Dayan. Ivanov says that "Israel has amassed vast experience in combating terrorism which would not hurt to borrow".

24 January 2001 Finnish Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen says one of the priority economic projects for Russia and Finland is a plan by Gazprom and the Finnish energy company Fortum to build a gas pipeline from Russia to Europe, through Finnish territorial waters along the floor of the Baltic Sea.

24 January 2001 The MFA says the Kaliningrad Region, Russia's Western enclave, "is an inalienable part of the Russian Federation, has never been and cannot be an object of any bargaining".

24 January 2001 One of Pavel Borodin's deputies, Igor Selivanov, is appointed acting secretary of the Union of Russia and Belarus.

24 January 2001 MFA spokesman Aleksandr Yakovenko says relations with Central and East European countries remain a top priority of Russian foreign policy.

24 January 2001 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and the chairman of the Cypriot House of Representatives, Spyros Kyprianou, hold talks in Moscow.

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25 January 2001 Aslan Maskhadov's emissary Akhiyad Idigov says at PACE that Maskhadov is ready to negotiate with Russia.

25 January 2001 The MFA welcomes the PACE decision confirming the full powers of the Russian delegation, including the right to vote.

26 January 2001 Putin gives a major speech on foreign policy at a conference at the Foreign Ministry. He says Russia must become integrated into the global community. He says Russia must have frank relations with NATO. "The fabric of our relations with NATO is gradually being restored". He calls for cooperation in fighting terrorism and says the 1972 ABM treaty must be preserved.

26 January 2001 Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Aleksey Kudrin says at the World Economic Forum that Russia has no intention of refusing to make its foreign debt payments.

26 January 2001 Sergey Kovalev says the restoration of the voting rights of the Russian delegation to PACE is a "mere intrigue" rather than a decision based on real facts testifying to positive changes in Chechnya.

28 January 2001 Russian Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin and World Bank President James Wolfensohn meet in Davos.

29 January 2001 Vladimir Putin welcomes the decision of Belarus to introduce export duties for oil products that correspond to the duties that exist in Russia.

29 January 2001 The MFA accuses the USA of trying to obstruct at the Disarmament Conference debate on preventing the space arms race.

29 January 2001 A delegation led by Energy Minister Aleksandr Gavrin visits Iraq. A second delegation led by the president of Kalmykia, Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, also visits Iraq.

30 January 2001 Russian Security Council Secretary Sergey Ivanov meets German Defence Minister Rudolf Scharping in Moscow. He criticises NATO widening.

30 January 2001 Deputy Chief of the Russian General Staff Col-Gen Valery Manilov criticises US plans to modify the 1972 ABM Treaty and develop a national missile defence system. He says: "The exclusive invulnerability the United States has in mind in the planning of national missile defence means absolute vulnerability for all other countries".

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29 January 2001 Russian President Vladimir Putin has a telephone conversation with his Azeri counterpart, Heydar Aliyev.

29 January 2001 Russia and Belarus sign an agreement to create a single system of customs regulations within their union state.

29 January 2001 Dmitry Rogozin, chairman of the Russian State Duma Committee on International Affairs, says Russia should develop contacts with the Belarusian opposition.

29 January 2001 Armenian defence minister Serzh Sarkisyan says the presence of Russian troops and border guards in Armenia is necessitated by a threat from Turkey.

30 January 2001 Russian and German Defence Ministers Igor Sergeyev and Rudolf Scharping approve a plan of contacts between the two defence ministries in 2001. Scharping says that Germany would like the process of NMD to "develop on the basis of the existing international agreements, specifically the 1972 ABM Treaty".

Sergeyev says Russian MOD continues to insist on the preservation of the 1972 ABM Treaty.

Rudolf Scharping says NATO is to open its information bureau in Moscow in accordance with the NATO-Russia Fundamental Act.

30 January 2001 Deputy Finance Minister Sergey Kolotukhin holds talks in Germany on Russia's debt to Germany. Germany says it will not write off some of Russia's debts.

30 January 2001 A Duma delegation headed by Gennady Seleznev visits Slovenia.

30 January 2001 Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov says practical integration between Russia and Belarus is "difficult and painstaking work scheduled for several years".

30 January 2001 Kyrgyz president Askar Akayev visits Moscow on his way back from Davos. He discusses terrorism with Putin's representative in the CIS and first deputy foreign minister, Vyacheslav Trubnikov.

31 January 2001 The MFA accuses the Taleban in Afghanistan of violating the human rights of minorities.

31 January 2001 Putin and US President George Bush speak by telephone.

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31 January 2001 Army General Andrey Nikolayev, chairman of the State Duma defence committee, warns Russia may return to heavy ICBMs if the US deploys the NMD.

31 January 2001 Igor Ivanov visits Slovakia.

31 January 2001 Russian air force commander-in-chief Anatoly Kornukov meets in Moscow the chief of staff of the Japanese Air Self-Defence Force, Gen Shoji Takeguchi.

February

1 February 2001 A Duma delegation headed by Gennady Seleznev visits Croatia.

1 February 2001 Russian Energy Minister Aleksandr Gavrin visits Iraq. He discusses joint cooperation in developing Iraqi oil reserves. In 1997, three Russian oil companies signed a contract for the development of oilfields in the south of Iraq to the tune of \$3.5bn.

1 February 2001 Igor Ivanov speaks at the UN Disarmament conference in Geneva. He says Russia is ready to start talks with the USA on drafting a START-3 treaty. Russia is proposing that the new treaty should envisage more radical cuts in the number of strategic warheads than previously agreed: down to 1,500 warheads instead of 2,500. Ivanov proposes as an alternative to NMD a whole complex of constructive political-diplomatic measures. Their aim is to remove the possible concerns which the USA and other countries, may have regarding the so-called new missile threats, while preserving the ABM Treaty. Such steps could be the setting up of a Moscow centre for exchange of information on missile launches, a Russian-proposed global system for control of proliferation of missiles and missile technologies, and "broad international cooperation, open to all states, in the sphere of Theatre Missile Defence, the start to which has been given by a whole number of agreements achieved between Moscow and Washington in 1997-2000." Ivanov also calls for the ratification of the Universal Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

1 February 2001 The MFA criticises a major command-and-staff exercise in the USA, which has simulated Star Wars scenarios. Those scenarios envisaged the use of anti-missile weapons, strategic missile defence and on-ground combat lasers to hit targets in space.

1 February 2001 The Russian Procurator-General submits documents to the Spanish authorities requesting that they impound Media-Most chief executive Vladimir Gusinskiy's property in Spain.

1 February 2001 Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Losyukov tells Pakistan's ambassador to Moscow, Iftikhar Murshed, that Russia wants Pakistan to

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use its influence with Afghanistan's ruling Taleban militia to stop action undermining stability and security in the region.

1 February 2001 The MFA welcomes a UN Security Council resolution extending the mandate of the UN observer mission in Georgia until July 2001.

2 February 2001 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov visits the Czech Republic.

3 February 2001 Putin has a telephone conversation with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Baraq.

3 February 2001 US citizen Kenneth Gluck, who works for the international humanitarian organization Médecins Sans Frontières, and who was taken as a hostage in Chechnya, has been released.

4 February 2001 Secretary of the Russian Security Council Sergey Ivanov speaks at the 37th International Security Conference in Munich. He condemns US plans to create a national missile defence system. He says Russia will gradually resume contacts with NATO.

4 February 2001 Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Losyukov visits Iran.

5 February 2001 Polish Foreign Minister Wladyslaw Bartoszewski arrives in Moscow.

5 February 2001 The Swiss embassy in Washington officially requests the US State Department to extradite Pavel Borodin.

5 February 2001 The Russian defence minister, Marshal Igor Sergeev, says Russia does not seek to drive a wedge between the European Union and NATO, following talks with the Swedish defence minister.

5 February 2001 The MFA says the completion of the legal proceedings against two Libyans charged with involvement in blowing up a Pan Am plane over Lockerbie (Scotland) "opens up prospects for lifting the sanctions from Tripoli".

5 February 2001 Kazakh Foreign Minister Yerlan Idrisov visits Russia.

6 February 2001 Russian Defence Minister Igor Sergeev visits Bosnia. He praises the peacekeeping forces. He says Belgrade must be involved in the settlement of Kosovo.

6 February 2001 President Vladimir Putin appoints Maj-Gen Nikolay Sidorychev commander of the CIS coalition peacekeeping force in the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict zone.

7 February 2001 The heads of mass media outlets coming under the Media-Most holding company send an open letter to President Putin, asking him to intervene in the actions by power-wielding departments, which has stopped the economic activities of NTV, TNT and *Ekho Moskvyy*.

7 February 2001 The Duma adopts the draft federal law "On political parties" submitted by Putin by a majority of votes in the first reading.

7 February 2001 Vladimir Putin gives an interview to three Ukrainian TV channels. He says recent protests in Kiev are Ukraine's internal affair.

7 February 2001 Tajik Defence Minister Col-Gen Sherali Khayrulloev visits Moscow.

7 February 2001 Foreign minister Igor Ivanov says Russia wants an "improvement" in the activities of OSCE. He says Russia has put forward proposals to this effect. He discusses OSCE with visiting Romanian foreign minister Mircea Geoana.

7 February 2001 Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov says Russia is planning to discuss the situation in the Balkans with the new US administration. Ivanov says Moscow "is not going to push anybody out" of the Balkan region, as, in Moscow's opinion, the Balkans "should not be a battlefield for spheres of influence".

7 February 2001 Russian Defence Minister Marshal Igor Sergeyev visits Yugoslavia. He and the Yugoslav defence minister sign a protocol on the results of their talks and a plan for cooperation of the defence ministries of the two countries for 2001.

8 February 2001 Vladimir Putin say he hopes to find a common language with US President George Bush, including on the ABM issue. He says:

"I think there is such a danger but the last signals we have heard from our American partners make us confident that we will be able to work positively on joint decisions and not get into deadlocks but together look for ways out of these situations ... we have made a number of proposals on this issue, including the creation of regional ballistic missile defence systems ... we also invite our European and US partners to work together on the rocket launch information centre. We suggest working together on the problem of the demilitarization of space."

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8 February 2001 Russian Press Minister Mikhail Lesin criticises *Radio Liberty's* decision to start broadcasting in numerous North Caucasian languages, including Chechen.

8 February 2001 Vladimir Putin sends congratulations to Ariel Sharon on his election to the post of Israeli prime minister.

8 February 2001 Putin visits Austria. President Putin says he believes the main threats to European security are "nonmilitary by nature today". He gives an interview to Austrian newspaper *Neue Kronen-Zeitung*. Putin says he sees "a real threat" for Europe in "the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, international terrorism, aggressive separatism, organized crime, drug trafficking and ecological disasters, which might seriously upset strategic stability as a whole".

Putin states at a meeting with Austrian businessmen that Russia is not refusing to pay the debts of the former USSR. However he feels it was a mistake for Russia to take on the debts of the USSR.

9 February 2001 It is reported that Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and US Secretary of State Colin Powell have had a recent telephone conversation. They discuss the possibility of a meeting without any specific agenda in the near future.

9 February 2001 Dmitry Rogozin, the head of the Duma international affairs committee, says he does not rule out that the State Duma may suspend contacts with the parliaments of Switzerland and the US until Pavel Borodin, state secretary of the Union State of Russia and Belarus, who was arrested in the US on 17 January, has been released.

9 February 2001 Russian Deputy Prime Minister Viktor Khristenko meets Yugoslavian Deputy Prime Minister Miroljub Labus. They discuss trade ties.

9 February 2001 Yevhen Marchuk and Sergey Ivanov, the secretaries of the security councils of Ukraine and Russia, hold talks in Kiev.

10 February 2001 Putin meets Slovak President Rudolf Schuster in Austria. He also meets Slovene premier Janez Drnovsek.

10 February 2001 Russian military diplomatic sources says Moscow welcomes the new US administration's intention to reduce strategic offensive nuclear arsenals but will insist that the 1972 ABM treaty remain intact.

10 February 2001 Vladimir Putin says he will not discuss the production of ICBMs with Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma when he visits Ukraine on 11 February.

11 February 2001 Putin holds talks with Latvian President Vaira Vike-Freiberga in Austria.

11 February 2001 Putin arrives in Ukraine. 13 accords are signed on 12 February.

12 February 2001 Russian debt talks take place at the German finance ministry. The Russian delegation is led by Deputy Finance Minister Sergey Kolotukhin. He says Russia will meet its financial obligation for the current year.

12 February 2001 German foreign minister Oskar Fischer visits Russia. He discusses NATO, European security, NMD. There will be a Putin-Schroeder summit in St Petersburg on 9-10 April. Fischer and Sergey Ivanov say Fischer will not be a mediator over NMD.

12 February 2001 Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon meets Aleksandr Saltanov, director of MFA Middle East and North Africa department.

12 February 2001 Russo-Pakistani talks take place in the MFA. They discuss Afghanistan.

12 February 2001 The MFA says Latvian persecution of anti-fascist veterans is affecting Russo-Latvian relations.

13 February 2001 Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov says extra revenues expected in second quarter will be spent on servicing the foreign debt.

German Gref says in Berlin that Moscow will service Russia's foreign debt in full.

14 February 2001 Igor Ivanov meets Eytan Bentzur, special representative of the Israeli prime minister, in Moscow. They discuss the Middle East peace process. Ivanov says Israel should resume talks with Syria and Lebanon as soon as possible.

13 February 2001 Interior minister Vladimir Rushaylo visits Turkey and signs a protocol on terrorism.

14 February 2001 An EU delegation arrives in Russia. The delegation includes Swedish Foreign Minister Anna Lindh, Chris Patten, the European Commission member responsible for external relations, and Javier Solana, the EU's foreign policy chief.

14 February 2001 NATO Secretary-General George Robertson confirms NATO's intention to continue the process of enlargement eastwards.

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14 February 2001 Defence minister Igor Sergeyev says the possible withdrawal of the United States from the ABM Treaty threatens the security "of the whole world, not just Russia". Sergeyev says that with the beginning of the deployment of the US National Missile Defence system the treaty will cease to exist.

14 February 2001 The director of the Russian Foreign Ministry's department for Middle East and North Africa, Aleksandr Saltanov, visits Egypt. On 15 February Saltanov goes to Lebanon.

14 February 2001 Israeli envoy Eytan Bentzur says Russia is prepared to seek new approaches to an Israeli-Palestinian settlement, following talks with Igor Ivanov. Ivanov says he believes Israel, the United States and Moscow share the view that the Middle East situation must be reassessed and new approaches explored.

14 February 2001 Pavel Borodin, the state secretary of the Union of Belarus and Russia, who was arrested in the United States, says the Swiss charges against him are "unsubstantiated and absurd."

14 February 2001 The head of the Saeima faction For Human Rights in a United Latvia, Janis Jurkans, meets representatives of the Duma in Moscow.

15 February 2001 Sergey Ivanov says "Russia is ready for dialogue with the EU and NATO on parallel tracks, to prevent unnecessary duplication".

15 February 2001 Col-Gen Valery Manilov, first deputy Chief of the General Staff says Russia holds a firm and principled stance regarding the preservation of the 1972 ABM Treaty, which cannot be the subject of modernization. He says: "We have no intention of softening our stance, but we are willing to seek paths for dialogue and discussion of the problem and to find a compromise".

15 February 2001 Sergey Ivanov says Moscow and Washington will have "a calm dialogue" on all issues pertaining to US plans to build and deploy a NMD system. Ivanov says the issue of strategic stability is the first order of business in dialogue between Russia and the USA, and the NATO and EU countries would like to know in what direction this dialogue moves and be kept completely updated. He says he views US President George W Bush's recent statement concerning the development of new weapons systems as the new Republican administration's intention "to adapt to new conditions for the development of their own armed forces".

15 February 2001 MFA spokesman Aleksandr Yakovenko confirms Russia's adherence to the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction following US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's recent interview, in which he called Russia an active proliferator.

15 February 2001 NATO Secretary General George Robertson says NATO and Russia have more than fulfilled his expectations of improved relations since his visit to Moscow a year ago.

15 February 2001 Security Council Secretary Sergey Ivanov discusses European security with the visiting EU delegation. They also discuss Kaliningrad Oblast's role in promoting Russia-EU cooperation.

16 February 2001 The chief of the international military cooperation department of the MOD, Leonid Ivashov, says that if the USA deploys a NMD system, it will be virtually spearheaded at the Russian and Chinese rocket potentials. He says the USA has no justification for NMD.

16 February 2001 Leonid Ivashov says the rhetoric of the US president's new administration is beginning to acquire an anti-Russian nature. He refers to National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice's interview with *Le Figaro*, where she described Russia as a threat.

16 February 2001 Leonid Ivashov says Russia has no reasons or plans to move its tactical nuclear weapons towards its western borders. "We hope that further NATO enlargement to the east will not take place." If NATO does continue to expand, "Russia reserves the right to draw the corresponding conclusions and take steps to guarantee its own security." He says the security of the Baltic states "can be guaranteed by other peaceful means without them joining NATO ... Russia is prepared to offer such guarantees, probably along with other European countries".

Ivashov says "specific proposals on creating European nonstrategic missile defence" have been drawn up by Russia. They will be presented to NATO Secretary-General George Robertson when he visits Moscow 19-21 February.

Ivashov says the American bombing of Baghdad "leaves Russia in no doubt that the USA is taking upon itself the role of global policeman".

16 February 2001 The MFA says Russia views with "regret and concerns" media reports that Australia has supported US plans to set up a NMD.

16 February 2001 MPs of the Latvian parliament's leftist faction For Human Rights in a United Latvia (PCTVL) meet Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov in Moscow.

17 February 2001 Putin criticises US and British bombing of Iraq.

17 February 2001 The director of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Middle East and North Africa department, Aleksandr Saltanov, visits Syria.

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17 February 2001 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Losyukov and the chairman of the Iranian-Russian parliamentary friendship group, Ealheh Koulaie meet in Moscow. Iranian President Seyyed Mohammad Khatami will visit Russia on 12 March. Leonid Ivashov states that Iranian Defence Minister Admiral Ali Shamkhani plans to visit Russia in spring at the invitation of Russian Defence Minister Marshal Igor Sergeev.

17 February 2001 The Estonian newspaper *Postimees* website reports on a speech made in Tallinn on 16 February by the chairman of the Duma Committee on International Affairs, Dmitry Rogozin. He warns against Estonia entering NATO.

18 February 2001 The chairman of the Russian Audit Chamber, Sergey Stepashin, visits Kuwait.

18 February 2001 In an interview on *Zerkalo* TV programme. Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov reiterates that there can be no question of Russia refusing to pay its foreign debts.

19 February 2001 The chairman of the Duma's committee for international affairs, Dmitry Rogozin, says in view of the unprovoked use of force against Iraq by the United States, "we will raise the question with the president of Russia unilaterally abandoning the regime of sanctions against this Arab country".

19 February 2001 The governments of Russia's Jewish Autonomous Region and China's Heilongjiang province sign an agreement on cooperation.

19 February 2001 NATO Secretary-General George Robertson visits Moscow. Russia presents proposals for a European non-strategic missile defence system.

19 February 2001 The MFA says Russia is not planning to unilaterally drop out of the international sanctions against Iraq.

19 February 2001 A delegation of US Congressmen visits Moscow with an official message from Bush to Putin on ABM.

19 February 2001 The Duma Foreign Affairs Committee says it will ask Vladimir Putin to give Kaliningrad Region special status because Lithuania's accession to the Schengen Agreement will close transit routes for Russian goods and passengers to the Region.

20 February 2001 The head of the State Duma Committee on International Affairs, Dmitry Rogozin, says that the NATO Secretary-General does not exclude the possibility of Russia joining NATO.

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20 February 2001 Igor Ivanov holds talks with NATO Secretary-General George Robertson and says Moscow sees relations with NATO "as a key element in the future architecture of European security".

The NATO information centre in Moscow re-opens.

Emergency Situations Minister Sergey Shoygu invites NATO to join a programme for the environmental rehabilitation of Yugoslavia.

Russian Security Council Secretary Sergey Ivanov says that in the distant future Russia might join NATO. Robertson invites Putin to visit NATO HQ.

The head of the Russian Defence Ministry's Chief Administration for International Cooperation Leonid Ivashov says that "as of now, they can only hypothesize about Russia joining NATO". Ivashov says the practical prospects of the idea would depend upon the way the North-Atlantic Alliance was going to transform. "It will become possible only on condition that NATO is an institution of international security and not a war tool."

20 February 2001 Russian minister for atomic energy Yegveny Adamov meets a delegation of US congressmen. He says Russia strictly observes the international regime of control over nonproliferation of missile technologies.

20 February 2001 The Russian MFA describes the European Parliament resolution on Chechnya, dated 15 February 2001, as "too sharp by its form and not very convincing by its content".

20 February 2001 Russia pays the Paris Club of creditors \$577.45 million. Russia will pay the Paris Club a total of \$1.206 billion in February under the original payment schedule.

21 February 2001 Interfax reports Russian diplomatic sources as saying Moscow believes it would be premature to speak now of the restoration of full-scale Russia-NATO relations.

NATO Secretary-General George Robertson says that the Russian initiative to create European non-strategic anti-missile defence system could become a alternative for the American NMD or an addition to it.

Col-Gen Leonid Ivashov, the head of the Russian Defence Ministry's main directorate for international military cooperation says "the controlled crisis scenario tested by NATO in the Balkans will be applied against Belarus".

22 February 2001 Serb Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic visits Moscow.

22 February 2001 Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov says that Russia has managed to reach an agreement on resumption of a dialogue between the United Nations and the Iraqi leadership.

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22 February 2001 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov rejects proposals that Russia withdraw unilaterally from the international sanctions regime on Iraq.

22 February 2001 Deputy secretary of the Security Council Oleg Chernov says US claims that Russia is violating its international commitments by its military-technical cooperation with Iran are prompted only "by interests of unfair competition in high tech".

22 February 2001 A Public Opinion Foundation poll says a little over half of the Russians (52%) regard the USA as a country hostile towards Russia, although every third Russian believes it to be a friendly country (32%).

22 February 2001 Putin says Russia is ready to cooperate more widely with NATO and the EU in the sphere of controlling the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Sergey Ivanov says "an increasing number of so-called threshold countries have recently appeared in the world trying in various ways to acquire terrible weapons of mass destruction such as nuclear arms ... this is a real danger which represents a threat to Russia as well".

22 February 2001 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov says he may not rule out abolishing the visa regime with Georgia that was introduced in December 2000.

23 February 2001 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov says he favours stopping the operation of the international tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

23 February 2001 The MFA criticises the use of force against Iraq by the United States.

23 February 2001 First deputy secretary of the Security Council Mikhail Fradkov says "military-technical" cooperation with Iran will continue.

24 February 2001 Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and US Secretary of State Colin Powell hold talks in Cairo on arms control. They also discuss Borodin and NTV, Chechnya and the Middle East.

24 February 2001 Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov holds talks with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak in Cairo.

25 February 2001 Igor Ivanov says the USA is prepared to discuss further cuts in strategic offensive weapons following talks with US Secretary of State Colin Powell in Cairo.

26 February 2001 Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov and his Italian counterpart Giuliano Amato in Rome discuss US plans to develop and deploy a national missile defence system along with related Russian initiatives. They also discuss the Paris Club debt.

26 February 2001 Igor Ivanov holds talks in Egypt.

27 February 2001 Putin visits South Korea.

28 February 2001 Vladimir Putin formulates the five basic positions that Russia will be guided by in the inter-Korean settlement.

First. The peace process and cooperation between North and South Korea must be based on the principles agreed upon by the Korean people and Korean leaders without external interference.

Second. All problems must be tackled peacefully and by diplomatic means in the spirit of the joint declaration of South and North Korea of 15 June 2000.

Third. We shall welcome the peaceful creation of a unified Korean state, friendly to Russia and other countries. We are convinced that reliable security may be ensured by non-military means and by creating appropriate international legal guarantees.

Fourth. Easing tensions is unthinkable without ridding the Korean peninsula of weapons of mass destruction and ensuring its nuclear-free status. Russia is ready to play its role in these processes, including in the context of promoting our global initiatives on missile nonproliferation. I am urging the Republic of Korea to take an active part in the implementation of these initiatives.

Fifth. Russia is interested in implementing multilateral projects, aimed at the economic development of the region and involving Northeastern Asian states, including South and North Korea. Such projects, including the organization of railway carriage along the Trans-Korean and Trans-Siberian railways, and the joint modernization of the energy sector on the Korean peninsula will benefit all. Such joint projects are laying a solid economic foundation of stability in the region.

28 February 2001 Putin arrives in Vietnam.

28 February 2001 First deputy Chief of the General Staff arrives in Brussels to attend a session of the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council.

28 February 2001 A Council of Europe human rights commissioner Alvaro Gil-Robles meets Chechen administration head Akhmad Kadyrov.

March

1 March 2001 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov states he welcomes US President George W Bush's latest statements concerning strategic weaponry and NMD.

Defence Minister Igor Sergeev denies reports that, if the USA abandons the ABM Treaty and deploys a system of NMD, then Russia would deploy short and medium-range missiles with nuclear warheads in response.

2 March 2001 Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov believes it is premature to say how Russia may respond to the implementation of the USA's NMD plans. Klebanov says Russia has the technical solutions "to overcome any ABM system".

2 March 2001 The office of the Russian prosecutor-general informs Geneva Prosecutor Bernard Bertossa, who signed the warrant for Pavel Borodin, that it had issued an arrest warrant for Felipe Turover, who is the main witness in the case of Mercata Trading Company.

2 March 2001 Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Losyukov says this April Moscow and Beijing will complete the drafting of a bilateral treaty to be signed by Vladimir Putin and his Chinese counterpart in Moscow in July.

2 March 2001 The MFA criticises Israel for its stated plans to move troops into the Palestinian self-rule zone.

2 March 2001 The Council of Europe Human Rights Commissioner Alvaro Gil-Robles meets Russian Justice Minister Yury Chayka and other Russian officials. They discuss human rights in Chechnya.

3 March 2001 Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Losyukov says Moscow believes that six-sided consultations between North and South Korea, Russia, the USA, China and Japan on Northeast Asia "would be useful".

3 March 2001 Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov meets the Council of Europe commissioner for human rights, Alvaro Gil-Robles. Ivanov says the OSCE should return to Chechnya.

4 March 2001 Vladimir Putin has a telephone conversation with Macedonian President Boris Trajkovski.

4 March 2001 The MFA condemns the terrorist act in Netanya in Israel.

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5 March 2001 Vladimir Putin calls on the international community "to take effective action, or the situation in Kosovo could spiral out of control". He warns it could become another Chechnya with extremism growing in force.

5 March 2001 The USA temporary chargé d'affaires in Russia is summoned to the MFA and handed an official request for the official position of the US State Department, in connection with American media reports of a secret tunnel being dug under the Soviet embassy in Washington in the early 1980s.

5 March 2001 Russian-Japanese consultations take place in Moscow on the forthcoming March 2001 25 meeting between the leaders of Russia and Japan in Irkutsk. They discuss the Soviet-Japanese declaration of 1956 on the Kurile Islands.

6 March 2001 Chairman of the Duma Security Committee Aleksandr Gurov proposes the creation of a joint Russia-NATO anti-terrorist centre, in a speech at NATO.

6 March 2001 PACE approves a resolution calling for the creation of a joint working group of PACE and the Duma on Chechnya.

6 March 2001 Médecins Sans Frontières says it is prepared to return to Chechnya.

7 March 2001 The MFA calls for the disarming of Albanian extremists in Kosovo. This demand had been made by a Russian diplomat at the OSCE Permanent Council which met to discuss Kosovo-Macedonia border tensions.

Russian UN representative Sergey Lavrov says Russia wants a buffer zone between Kosovo and Macedonia.

The Duma issues a statement on Macedonia.

The MFA issues a statement backing FRY's plan for a southern Serbia.

7 March 2001 Deputy foreign minister Sergey Ordzhonikidze states that Russia has reliable information about terrorist bases in Afghanistan.

7 March 2001 Iranian deputy foreign minister Ali Ahani visits Moscow.

7 March 2001 Maj-Gen Vladimir Kazantsev, commander of Russian forces in Kosovo, and KFOR Commander Lt-Gen Carlo Cabigiosu discuss the Kosovo situation in Pristina.

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8 March 2001 The MFA says the UN Security Council should act against the Albanian extremists in northern Macedonia.

8 March 2001 The MFA issues a statement saying it wishes to interact constructively with the new Israeli government.

9 March 2001 Igor Ivanov meets EU leaders in Sweden. He says he welcomes strong EU-Kaliningrad ties. Ivanov says that the Afghan problem has no military solution and should be resolved by inter-Afghan talks under UN aegis. He restates opposition to NMD and proposes a non-strategic RF-European missile defence system.

10 March 2001 Putin signs a decree on UN Security Council Resolution 1333 of 19 December 2000 on sanctions against the Taliban.

11 March 2001 Sergey Yastrzhembskiy condemns the destruction of Buddhist statues in Afghanistan by the Taleban.

12 March 2001 Iranian President Mohammad Khatami visits Russia. A treaty on basic relations will be signed.

12 March 2001 Danish Foreign Minister Mogens Lykketoft arrives in Moscow. He discusses Russian plans for a non-strategic missile defence system for Europe.

Col-Gen Leonid Ivashov says Russia's stance on the 1972 ABM Treaty has not changed: the treaty must be preserved and the parties to this treaty must strictly observe its norms and fulfil all obligations under it. He says Russia's eastern neighbours are also interested in Russian ideas for a non-strategic missile defence system.

14 March 2001 The secretary of the Russian Security Council, Sergey Ivanov, visits the USA for talks with the Bush Administration.

14 March 2001 Moscow criticises moves by the Bosnian Croats towards self-rule.

14 March 2001 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov has talks in Murmansk with his Norwegian counterpart Thorbjørn Jagland. They discuss nuclear issues and the environment.

14 March 2001 The Federation Council ratifies the Russian-Tajik interstate agreement on the status and stationing terms of the Russian military base in Tajikistan.

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15 March 2001 Sergey Ivanov says relations with the USA remain a priority for Russia but that they are no longer Russia's top priority.

15 March 2001 A Tu-154 airliner of Vnukovo airlines en route for Moscow is hijacked in Istanbul by two Chechens. It lands in Saudi Arabia. On 16 March Saudi special forces storm the plane and end the hijack.

15 March 2001 The MFA criticises a recent CIA report on proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) for having an anti-Russian character.

15 March 2001 Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov voices concern over the ongoing situation in Macedonia and Presevo Valley.

15 March 2001 The Russian MOD denies Georgian claims that a Russian warplane crossed Georgian skies on the Chechen stretch of the Russian-Georgian border at about 2100 Moscow time on 14 March and dropped a bomb.

16 March 2001 Vladimir Putin orders the Foreign Ministry and Interior Ministry to seek ways for "effective interaction" with Turkey in combating international crime.

16 March 2001 Defence Minister Igor Sergeyev condemns NMD and NATO widening.

16 March 2001 Russian Deputy Foreign Minister and special envoy of the Russian president for the Middle East settlement Vasily Sredin tells the Palestinian ambassador in Moscow, Khayri al-Uraydi, that Russia regards Israel's actions against Palestinians as unacceptable.

17 March 2001 Sino-Russian consultations on disputed border areas take place in Beijing. The head of the Russian delegation, Foreign Ministry special envoy Vitaly Vorob'yev, says the dispute concerns two areas - "the area of the Bolshoy island in the upper reaches of the Argun river and islands on the Amur in the area where the Ussuri flows into it".

Vitaly Vorob'yev in Beijing says Russia "wholeheartedly supports the idea that such a large state as Uzbekistan should take part in the work of the Shanghai Five group".

17 March 2001 Sergey Ivanov, secretary of the Russian Security Council gives an interview to *Komsomolskaya Pravda*. He discusses his trip to the USA and defends arms sales to Iran.

18 March 2001 Duma chairman Gennady Seleznev visits Iraq.

Russian Foreign Policy: Chronology January-March 2001

18 March 2001 Igor Ivanov is interviewed in the Yugoslav newspaper *Politika*. He says specific cooperation with NATO on a Balkan settlement is among the main spheres of relations between Russia and the alliance. He says dialogue between Russia and NATO over the Balkans has improved. However, he says, along with some positive moments emerging in the gradual restoration of Russian-NATO contacts, "we have not noticed a deep-rooted transformation of the alliance, about which it had repeatedly stated in the past". "The basic yardstick for us was and remains NATO's readiness to observe the basic principles of international law, above all the UN Charter," he stressed. "All of us are facing a responsible choice: what Europe will be like in the 21st century". In Ivanov's opinion, a reply to this question should be formulated in a new model of European security, which Russia suggests "drafting jointly".

19 March 2001 Vladimir Putin says that the situation in Macedonia is out of control. He says:

"Unfortunately the situation there is developing in a way we thought it would. Having once armed Albanian illegal separatist units, no-one now knows what to do. The situation there is out of control."

19 March 2001 Foreign minister Igor Ivanov visits Yugoslavia. He calls for an end to sanctions.

Ivanov hands a message from Putin to Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica. Putin supports the Yugoslav leadership's efforts to preserve the single union state. Ivanov calls for lifting of arms embargo and sanctions against Yugoslavia.

Col-Gen Leonid Ivashov says the MOD believes resolute steps must be taken to have the decisions on Kosovo carried out and Albanian militants there disarmed. He says, "somebody in NATO seems to be cashing in on a permanent crisis in Yugoslavia".

20 March 2001 The MFA criticises remarks by US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and his deputy, Paul Wolfowitz, as "openly confrontational". They accuse Russia of being a proliferator of WMD.

20 March 2001 Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov rejects US criticism of Russian-Iranian projects in nuclear power engineering and military-technical cooperation.

20 March 2001 Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov visits Macedonia.

20 March 2001 State Duma defence committee deputy chairman Aleksey Arbatov says in Tokyo that the US military presence in the Asia-Pacific region is excessive.

20 March 2001 Russian Security Council Chief Sergey Ivanov holds talks in France with the diplomatic advisor to the French president, Jean-Marc de la Sabliere,

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diplomatic advisor to the Prime Minister Denis Dalbourg, Chief of Staff of the French Armed Forces Gen Jean-Pierre Kelche, and head of the Secretariat for National Defence Jean-Claude Mallet.

20 March 2001 The MFA criticises the Latvian authorities for another series of events honouring Latvian troops of Waffen-SS divisions.

21 March 2001 Igor Ivanov puts forwards a Balkans peace initiative in Macedonia.

21 March 2001 Russian Presidential aide Sergey Yastrzhembskiy criticises the Bush's administration plans to have diplomatic contacts with the rebel government in Chechnya. Marc Grossman, director general of the Foreign Service and a nominee as under-secretary of state for political affairs, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee yesterday that US diplomats were ready to establish contacts with separatist representatives.

21 March 2001 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov criticises the West for its passivity when faced with the increased activity of terrorists and extremists in the Balkans.

21 March 2001 Igor Ivanov visits Albania. He praises Albanian policy in the Balkans.

21 March 2001 Vladimir Putin is interviewed by four Russian newspapers. He says the international community should crush separatism in the Balkans. In the interview he expresses concern about the Russians living in the Baltic states.

21 March 2001 Russian Security Council secretary Sergey Ivanov says "the events in Macedonia remind us of Chechnya's aggression against Dagestan in 1999".

21 March 2001 Russian Interior Minister Vladimir Rushaylo and his Yugoslav counterpart Zoran Zivkovic sign a protocol on cooperation between their ministries.

21 March 2001 Russian border guards set up additional posts on the Russo-Georgian border to guard the approaches to highland passes.

21 March 2001 Lord Judd, head of the PACE delegation to Moscow, says the situation with the observation of human rights in Chechnya leaves much to be desired.

21 March 2001 Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus visits Moscow.

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22 March 2001 The MFA issues a statement condemning ties between the USA and Chechen rebels.

22 March 2001 First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Aleksandr Avdeyev says the Bush Administration is wedded to stereotypes about Russia.

22 March 2001 The Duma issues a statement denouncing NATO's policy in the Balkans.

22 March 2001 Sergey Ivanov, secretary of the Russian Security Council, and Marek Siwec, chief of the Polish presidential Bureau of National Security, hold talks in Warsaw.

22 March 2001 Putin says Russia must pay off its foreign debts in full.

23 March 2001 The US chargé d'affaires ad interim in Russia, John Ordway, is summoned to the MFA. He is informed that four US diplomats will be expelled.

23 March 2001 The MFA urges the world community to take urgent, decisive and coordinated action to stop the spread of terrorism and separatism in the Balkans. It calls for international support for FRY and Macedonian sovereignty and territorial integrity.

23 March 2001 Sergey Ivanov says Russia's military presence in Kaliningrad Region has nearly halved compared to that of 10 years ago. He says Russia proposes that a dialogue between Kaliningrad and the EU should involve Poland and Lithuania which are not yet EU members.

23 March 2001 Vladimir Putin attends the EU summit in Stockholm.

23 March 2001 Defence Minister Igor Sergeev says Russia is ready for concrete assistance to the Macedonian armed forces in order to stop the conflict. He partly blames the West for the crisis and says it is beneficial to the West.

Putin says the situation in Macedonia is parallel to the one in Chechnya.

23 March 2001 The Russian Prosecutor General's Office officially asks the Saudi authorities to extradite the two Chechens who hijacked an Istanbul-Moscow flight.

23 March 2001 The head of the OSCE contact group in Chechnya, Aleksandr Kornya says the OSCE intends to resume work in Chechnya.

23 March 2001 The Russian Ambassador to Lithuania Yury Zubakov says that Russia is keeping to its unconditionally negative attitude towards the NATO membership aspirations of Lithuania and the other two Baltic countries.

24 March 2001 The sixth round of Russian-Georgian talks on military issues ends in Moscow. Chairman of the parliamentary Committee for Defence and Security Gia Baramidze says that an agreement was reached at the talks to have the military airdrome and the base in Vaziani transferred to the Georgian side by 1 July 2001. Baramidze says that the base in Gudauta was still being negotiated.

25 March 2001 Putin meets Japanese prime minister Yoshiro Mori in Irkutsk. Putin says the 1956 Soviet-Japanese declaration is still valid.

26 March 2001 The federal minister for the social and economic rehabilitation of Chechnya, Vladimir Yelagin, criticizes the planned meeting between officials from the US Department of State with the so-called foreign minister of Chechnya, Ilyas Akhmadov.

27 March 2001 The MFA condemns the US State Department meeting with Aslan Maskhadov's envoy Ilyas Akhmadov.

27 March 2001 Paul Hollingsworth, the CIA head of intelligence operations in Moscow, is expelled from the US Embassy. Three other US diplomats are also expelled. Another 46 embassy officials have until July to leave Russia.

27 March 2001 Shamil Beno, authorized representative for Chechnya under the Russian president plays down Ilyas Akhmadov's meeting at the US State Department. He says: "This is the West's usual practice - the attempt to collect information from both sides".

27 March 2001 Vladimir Putin sends a message to participants in the summit of Arab presidents and prime ministers in Amman on the Middle East peace process.

The MFA issues a statement calling on Israelis and Palestinians to show maximum restraint and wisdom and to meet each other halfway for the sake of easing the tension.

27 March 2001 Speaker of the State Duma Gennady Seleznev says Moscow is sincerely interested in Yugoslavia's integrity.

27 March 2001 The MFA defends UN sanctions against the Taleban and denies that they have had a negative impact on the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan.

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27 March 2001 Russian diplomatic sources criticise Lithuania's position on the problems of vital supplies to Kaliningrad Region, "primarily the transit of troops, in spite of the fact that Russia and Lithuania have signed an intergovernmental agreement in this sphere".

27 March 2001 Russian Interior Minister Vladimir Rushaylo holds a meeting with his Armenian counterpart (Lt-Gen Ayk Arutyunyan) to sum up the working results for the previous year and to discuss measures to pool efforts to combat organized crime.

28 March 2001 Foreign minister Igor Ivanov says the spy scandal with the USA is over.

Igor Ivanov says Russia is actively searching for ways to stop the violence and achieve stability in the Middle East and is keeping up an active dialogue with the US.

28 March 2001 Deputy Russian Foreign Minister Ivan Sergeyev says Moscow is rejecting as "unfounded" Vilnius's claims on Russia for material recompense for "the damage done by the Soviet occupation".

28 March 2001 Russian Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov announces that Russia plans to sign a contract for the sale of air-defence systems to Iran.

28 March 2001 First Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin confirms the government's refusal to sign a new programme of cooperation with the IMF for 2001. "The text of the joint statement of the Russian government and the Central Bank on cooperation with the IMF this year was almost agreed but the government of Russia does not find it necessary to be under IMF control." However he confirms "our commitment to reforms and this programme". Kudrin also says that Russia was not planning in the near future to start negotiations with the Paris Club of government creditors on the restructuring of Russia's debt.

29 March 2001 President Vladimir Putin meets Italian Prime Minister Giuliano Amato in the Kremlin. They discuss the Balkans and G8.

29 March 2001 First Deputy Foreign Minister Nikolay Trubnikov is interviewed in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*. He warns of the dangers of appeasing the Taleban in Afghanistan and blames appeasement of the KLA for the current tension in Macedonia. He outlines the role of a new Foreign Ministry department for international liaison on terrorism and organized crime, describes his role as presidential representative to the CIS, notes the importance of reinforcing CIS border security.

30 March 2001 President Vladimir Putin receives Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus in the Kremlin.

30 March 2001 The MFA backs the Arab summit in Amman.

31 March 2001 The secretary-general of the CIS Collective Security Council, Valery Nikolayenko, visits Tajikistan.

31 March 2001 The MFA says "possible actions by Yugoslav law-enforcement agencies as regards Slobodan Milosevic are Yugoslavia's internal affair, as he is a Yugoslav citizen".

31 March 2001 The MFA condemns the USA's decision to abandon the Kyoto protocol.

31 March 2001 The MFA expresses regret at Slovakia's announcement of its priority to join NATO as soon as possible.

31 March 2001 Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus visits Kaliningrad.

31 March 2001 Aleksandr Gurov, head of the lower house's security committee and a member of Yedinstvo, accuses the USA of interfering in Yugoslavia's internal affairs by demanding former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic's extradition to the Hague tribunal. He also accuses current Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica of making a concession to the West on the issue.

31 March 2001 Federation Council Deputy Chairman Vladimir Platonov says his visit to Kuwait was successful and useful for both sides.

31 March 2001 Duma speaker Gennady Seleznev heads a Duma delegation visit to Poland.

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