

Russian Domestic Policy: Chronology

January-March 2001

January

2 January 2001 Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov outlines plans to start the reform of the country's military-industrial complex.

5 January 2001 Gen Vladimir Bokovikov, deputy president's envoy in the Southern Federal District says "preliminary organizational measures" to form the future government of Chechnya have begun.

5 January 2001 An article in *Segodnya* suggests that the KGB may be revived under Putin.

The deputy chairman of the State Duma Security Committee, Sergey Yushenkov, says the return of the abbreviation KGB is "a matter of time" and that the writing is already on the wall in the form of Putin's centralizing policies.

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 The *Kavkaz Tsent* website gives details of talks between the leader of the URF Boris Nemtsov and representatives of Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov. Chechen sources say that Nemtsov's arrival in Ingushetia to hold a meeting with Maskhadov's representatives had been sanctioned by Putin. The Chechen side reports that Nemtsov himself admitted this and said that he had a meeting with Putin before coming to Nazran. Nemtsov said that Putin is putting three proposals to the Chechen side to resolve the Russo-Chechen problem.

Firstly, Nemtsov said that Putin reckons that Russian troops cannot be withdrawn from Chechen territory as previously happened, given that this could trigger an explosion in Russian society, which supports the military campaign and is thirsty for victory even if the price to be paid is the massacre of all Chechens. This is how Nemtsov described this during the meeting: "You see how the Russian people support Putin and will not simply allow him to stop the war." In this connection, Putin proposes that three or four military bases should be maintained on Chechen territory: Shali, Khankaly, Gudermes and Kalinovskiy District (former military air-defence centre). The proposal is that all the other troops and units of the internal troops should be withdrawn outside Ichkeria.

Putin's second proposal is that the Chechen side should voluntarily give up Naurskiy and Shelkovskiy Districts in exchange for the full withdrawal of troops from the rest of Chechen territory. The Kremlin also believes that there is a need for a certain transitional period.

The third option is that both sides should agree to a five-year moratorium on military actions, with maintenance of the current situation in Chechnya and activation of a gradual political process with the participation of Akhmad Kadyrov. However, the majority of Chechen leaders headed by Shamil Basayev must be excluded from the political process.

9 January 2001 The chairman of the Moscow Helsinki Group human rights organization, Lyudmila Alekseyeva, says, "I am convinced that the trial of scientist Igor Sutyagin is the trial of an innocent person ... the Federal Security Service (FSS) is taking revenge for the acquittal of environmentalist Aleksandr Nikitin - they are desperate to find a real spy".

9 January 2001 Russian Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov has said the government must change its policies, particularly with regard to privatization. He says he thinks President Putin agrees with him on some issues.

9 January 2001 The heads of administration of the Naurskiy and Shelkovskiy Districts in Chechnya, Sergey Ponomarenko and Anatoly Storozhenko, are resigning.

10 January 2001 A group of Americans with the humanitarian mission Action against Hunger including Jonathan Litehead and Kenneth Gluck left for Starye Atagi without the authorization of the military commandant of Chechnya. Gluck is kidnapped by unknown persons.

10 January 2001 Russian military reports that Federal positions in Chechnya came under fire 26 times, including 11 in Grozny over the past 24 hours, as the rebels intensify their attacks.

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 Prime minister Mikhail Kasyanov says the cabinet structure needs some adjustment.

10 January 2001 Representatives of the Russian Prosecutor General's Office search the office of Andrey Tsymaylo, first deputy chairman for economic matters of the Media-Most holding company.

11 January 2001 The commander of federal troops in Chechnya, Lt-Gen Valery Baranov, rules out talks with Chechen rebel commanders.

11 January 2001 Vladimir Putin attends the all-Russia conference of prosecutors. He outlines the main tasks set for the Prosecutor-General's Office.

11 January 2001 Head of the Chechen administration Akhmad Kadyrov says former prime minister of Stavropol Territory Stanislav Ilyasov will be Chechen prime minister. The Chechen government will be completely formed and ready to start working by 25 January 2001.

11 January 2001 Médecins Sans Frontières suspends its work in Chechnya in connection with the abduction of a staff member Ken Gluck on 9 January.

11 January 2001 Russian Prosecutor-General Vladimir Ustinov is interviewed in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*. He speaks out against reforming the prosecution system in Russia.

11 January 2001 In *Segodnya* Sergey Dorenko, deputy general director of ORT, says the state is stepping up control over the media.

12 January 2001 The Russian Prosecutor-General's Office searches the office and apartment of Anton Titov, chief of the financial department of the Media-Most holding company.

12 January 2001 The Prosecutor-General's Office issues formal charges against the finance minister of Moscow government, Yury Korostelev. The charges are connected to the criminal case instituted against the head of the Media-Most holding, Vladimir Gusinskiy.

12 January 2001 Glasnost Foundation chief Aleksey Simonov says on NTV that freedom of the press is in danger.

12 January 2001 Action Contre La Faim, an international non-governmental organization, says it has suspended activities in Chechnya and Ingushetia.

12 January 2001 Lt-Gen Vladimir Vorotnikov takes up the office of commander of the group of Interior Ministry troops and first deputy commander of the unified federal group of troops in the North Caucasus.

13 January 2001 Vladimir Putin meets the heads of Russia's leading media outlets. He calls for the creation of a single information space as a matter of top priority for ensuring integrity of the state. He also criticizes the actions of certain law-enforcement agencies, in particular the Prosecutor-General's Office, which

recently carried out a number of operations at the editorial offices of the Russian Public TV and NTV channels.

13 January 2001 The Rossiya movement headed by Gennady Seleznev holds its first congress.

15 January 2001 The government approves the state defence order for the year 2001.

16 January 2001 Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov says the programme of weapons procurement drafted and submitted for approval to Vladimir Putin implies that large-scale purchases of military hardware will begin in 2008-10.

16 January 2001 The acting head of the Russian Interior Ministry directorate on passports and visas, Police Maj-Gen Yury Sharagorov, says in 2001 residence permits will be given to nearly 800,000 citizens of CIS countries living in Russia. Shagorov says about two million foreigners are permanently resident in Russia.

16 January 2001 NTV reports that the UNESCO head Konchiro Matsuura has sent a message to Putin expressing concern over press freedom in Russia.

16 January 2001 The board for criminal cases at the Russian Supreme Court overturns the verdict which the Moscow city court had delivered on former diplomat Platon Obukhov and sends his file to the Moscow city court for reconsideration.

16 January 2001 The Prosecutor-General's office arrests the head of the finance department of the Media-Most joint-stock company, Anton Titov.

17 January 2001 The State Duma reconvenes for a first plenary session after the New Year break.

17 January 2001 The delegation head of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), Lord Judd, says he is concerned at the suffering of the civil population, and the killings and disappearances of civilians.

17 January 2001 Presidential aide Andrey Illarionov criticises government economic policy.

18 January 2001 Vladimir Putin receives representatives of the country's top officer corps. The supreme commander-in-chief congratulates them on being awarded top military ranks and new appointments.

18 January 2001 Vladimir Putin approves the programme of action to normalize the situation in Chechnya for 2001 proposed by head of the Chechen provisional administration Akhmad Kadyrov.

18 January 2001 Vladimir Putin instructs the military, security, and law-enforcement agencies to prepare proposals on cutting federal forces personnel in Chechnya.

19 January 2001 *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* reports that Vladimir Putin has signed a plan for the reform of the country's armed forces.

19 January 2001 Vladimir Putin sends a letter to Duma Chairman Gennady Seleznev to revoke a bill changing the Criminal Code of Practice. The president submitted the bill to the parliament on 5 January. The key amendment says that suspects can be arrested only on the basis of a court writ. The first deputy chief of the URF Duma faction, Viktor Pokhmelkin, says the URF has information that the president revoked the bill under pressure from chiefs of the Prosecutor-General's Office, the Federal Security Service and the Interior Ministry. Pokhmelkin says: "The president has revoked the bill, and it is a very alarming signal which shows that the president is much more dependent on power departments than on the constitution".

19 January 2001 The Prosecutor-General's Office decides to impound the property of Media-Most holdings' head Vladimir Gusinskiy.

19 January 2001 Vladimir Putin signs a decree on the system of executive government bodies in Chechnya.

The head of administration of the Chechen Republic, Akhmad Kadyrov, appoints Stanislav Ilyasov deputy head of administration and chairman of the government of the Chechen Republic.

Beslan Gantamirov, the deputy head of the Chechen administration, is interviewed in *Izvestiya*. He says federal forces must remain permanently in Chechnya.

Presidential aide Sergey Yastrzhembskiy is interviewed on television on Chechnya.

20 January 2001 The deputy head of the Russian government apparatus, Aleksey Volin says proposals by CNN to acquire a package of NTV shares are "absolutely unrealistic and at odds with Russian legislation".

20 January 2001 An emergency congress in defence of human rights opens in Moscow. The Russian ombudsman, Oleg Mironov, says the human rights situation is alarming. His predecessor Sergey Kovalev expresses concern over a drift towards totalitarianism in Russia.

20 January 2001 The *Kavkaz Tsent* website publishes an interview with the military amir of the Supreme Military Majlis ul-Shura of the Mojahedin, Khattab. He says the mojahedin controls Ichkeria. He says, "Our losses are minimal. We can say that there are almost no losses. Thirty mojahedin maximum have become martyrs over the last four months. During this period, the Russians lost at least 2,000 soldiers or maybe more, and about 120 units of hardware".

21 January 2001 The URF sets forth its attitude to the president and government in a political resolution adopted at a joint closed meeting of the union's coordinating council and parliamentary faction. The document says that the URF "finds it unacceptable in principle to declare loyalty to the president and government irrespective of what they are doing in practice ... we shall support the Russian leadership depending on the extent to which its course meets our ideological principles, political goals and moral values".

The URF says it will become a single party with a single leader. The nine members making up the URF will dissolve themselves. A constituent congress will be held on 26 May 2001. The URF is unlikely to merge with Yabloko.

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 Russian Public TV reports that the army is 20% under strength.

22 January 2001 Vladimir Putin says FSS Director Nikolay Patrushev is now in charge of the antiterrorist campaign in Chechnya, since the service "is the key institution entitled by the constitution to fight terrorism." Putin says "The purely antiterrorist campaign will be carried out by the Federal Security Service, the Interior Ministry and special units of the Defence Ministry". Putin signs a decree on measures to fight terrorism in the North Caucasus. The decree sets up an operations headquarters to control federal troops' antiterrorist operations in the North Caucasus. FSS units in Chechnya will be strengthened.

22 January 2001 Deputy Interior Minister Ivan Golubev says the interior ministry has lost 2,700 men and 7,900 have been wounded since the beginning of the antiterrorist campaign in the Northern Caucasus, eight administration chiefs and their deputies, 10 Chechen policemen, two employees of the Chechen prosecutor's office, two clergymen, 19 members of local councils and 59 civilians have been killed since November 2000.

First Deputy Chief of the Armed Forces' General Staff Col-Gen Yury Baluyevskiy says the defence ministry's losses in Chechnya have been insignificant over the past few months. Slightly more than 10 army servicemen have been killed in Chechnya since October 2000. Baluyevskiy says that the army force in Chechnya is now about 40,000 strong, including 15,000 servicemen of the 42nd Motor-Rifle Division to be permanently stationed in Chechnya. "The army force did not exceed 50,000 servicemen throughout the antiterrorist campaign ... ten army units have been withdrawn from the republic to their permanent locations." He says at present the

army force in Chechnya has 170 tanks. "The army force had 400 tanks in November 1999." Baluyevskiy says "there are up to 1,000 rebels, who are acting both in the Chechen highlands and in villages." Rebel groups are separated from each other, and there is no organized resistance that used to exist in 1999. The general staff assessed the number of rebels at up to 20,000 at the beginning of the antiterrorist campaign 1 October 1999, and that assessment was confirmed in the course of the hostilities.

Russian presidential aide Sergey Yastrzhembskiy says the combined federal force involved in the antiterrorist operation in Chechnya, including the armed forces, permanently stationed units, special detachments and teams from other ministries and agencies, numbers almost 80,000.

22 January 2001 CPRF leader Gennady Zyuganov is elected Chairman of the Council of the Communist Parties (CCP) - CPRF, which includes 19 communist parties of the former Union republics.

22 January 2001 The collegium of the Russian Federal Security Service meets to discuss its work in 2000 and tasks for 2001.

Vice-Adm German Ugryumov, deputy director of the FSS and chief of its department for constitutional order protection and combating terrorism is to head the regional operations staff for the management of antiterrorist activities in the North Caucasus.

23 January 2001 Vice President of the Russian Jewish Congress, Mikhail Mirilashvili, is arrested in St Petersburg. He is charged with abduction.

25 January 2001 The Russian government adopts the draft federal programme of the restoration of the economy and the social sphere of the Chechen republic in 2001.

25 January 2001 The MOD says a gradual reduction in federal forces in Chechnya is planned to start in February 2001. Several regiments of the Moscow Military District and some units of airborne troops will return to places of their permanent deployment.

25 January 2001 Gazprom-Media head Alfred Kokh announces that the Gazprom-Media company has become the owner of the controlling packet of shares in NTV.

Ekho Moskvy reports that NTV's general director and "Itogi" programme presenter, Yevgeny Kiselev, has been summoned for interrogation to the Prosecutor-General's Office. Kiselev says the Kremlin has stopped respecting law.

The Russian General Prosecutor's Office states that "there have been and will be no persecution of journalists for their professional activity".

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

25 January 2001 Presidential aide Yevgenny Shaposhnikov says that the Russian Security Council has endorsed the decision to separate Space Missile Defence and Military Space Forces from the Strategic Missile Troops with the aim of creating a new arm of service. It is planned to complete this process within this year.

25 January 2001 Vladimir Gusinskiy gives an interview in Spain while under house arrest. He sharply attacks Putin.

26 January 2001 The Duma adopts in the third final reading a draft law cutting the period after which new recruits can sign a contract for military service.

26 January 2001 NTV journalist Tatyana Mitkova is interrogated at the Prosecutor-General's Office.

26 January 2001 The Narodny Deputat group in the Duma decides to become a movement. It will support Putin.

26 January 2001 Duma member from Chechnya Aslanbek Aslakhonov says he believes the current size of the federal force in his republic is excessive and suggests that it be reduced by almost 75%. "In general, 22,000-24,000 people make for a sufficient contingent." The current size of the force is 80,000.

27 January 2001 Vladimir Putin meets in Novo-Ogarevo with Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov, head of the presidential administration Aleksandr Voloshin, Security Council secretary Sergey Ivanov and all presidential envoys in the federal districts. The meeting will discuss the results of the presidential envoys' work in 2000, as well as tasks for the current year.

28 January 2001 The Federal Security Service takes control of the antiterrorist operation in Chechnya from the military.

29 January 2001 Vladimir Putin receives Russian Prosecutor-General Vladimir Ustinov before meeting NTV journalists. He later meets NTV personnel: Yevgeny Kiselev, Grigory Krichevskiy, Mikhail Osokin, Svetlana Sorokina, Viktor Shenderovich, Irina Zaytseva, Marianna Maksimovskaya, Alim Yusupov, Tatyana Mitkova, Nikolay Nikolayev and Leonid Parfenov. He says NTV must remain independent.

29 January 2001 Vladimir Putin meets his representative for human rights and freedoms in Chechnya, Vladimir Kalamonov, and a member of the public commission for human rights in Chechnya, Ella Pamfilova.

29 January 2001 Mintimer Shaymiyev officially declares that he is prepared to run for a third term as president of Tatarstan.

30 January 2001 Deputy General Staff Chief Col-Gen Valery Manilov rejects talk of a 50% or 25% reduction in the size of federal forces in Chechnya.

30 January 2001 The fifth meeting of the presidium of the State Council takes place. Putin discusses land reforms and Russia's new land code.

30 January 2001 Putin signs a decree coordinating work of his envoys in federal districts. According to the document, the head of the presidential administration is to coordinate interaction between plenipotentiary representatives and their administrations and Moscow departments of the presidential administration. The representatives are also expected to fulfil his instructions. The measures seem to be quite logical because from the very beginning plenipotentiary representatives were given the status of deputy heads of the Kremlin administration and are members of its staff.

30 January 2001 The head of the North Caucasus department of the federal border service, Col-Gen Yevgeny Bolkhovitin, says that border guard troops may be reinforced in the North Caucasus soon.

31 January 2001 Vladimir Yelagin, the Russian minister responsible for coordinating the work of Chechen executive bodies, says R432m will be spent on repairing housing facilities and R200m will be spent on services in Chechnya. Yelagin says the work will commence within three months. A tendering process for the work currently is under way.

31 January 2001 The Federation Council approves amendments to the law allowing heads of Russian regions to be elected for more than two terms.

The Federation Council passes law on guarantees to ex-presidents.

The Federation Council rejects liberal amendments to the legislation governing criminal procedure.

31 January 2001 Yabloko leader Grigory Yavlinskiy warns of the danger of a police state emerging in Russia.

February

1 February 2001 FSS director Nikolay Patrushev outlines FSS plans for normalising the situation in Chechnya. He says there are about 5,000 rebels in Chechnya now; 1,500 of them are irreconcilable.

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1 February 2001 The Russian Prosecutor General's Office announces it will press charges against Boris Berezovskiy in the framework of the criminal case involving shady business dealings at Aeroflot.

1 February 2001 Former office manager of the Prosecutor-General's Office Nazir Khapsirokov had been appointed as aide to the head of the presidential administration, Aleksandr Voloshin.

1 February 2001 A commission for personnel matters has been formed in Chechnya to select candidates for the republic's top posts. Khamzat Idrisov, who was recently appointed first deputy chairman of the Chechen government, heads the commission.

1 February 2001 The *Kavkaz Tsent*r website says Russian forces have lost between 24,000 and 27,000 officers and men since the start of the second Chechen war.

1 February 2001 Moscow mayor Yury Luzhkov describes as an act of provocation the criminal case opened by the Russian Interior Ministry Investigation Committee over misappropriation of \$1.3m from city funds.

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

2 February 2001 Interior Minister Vladimir Rushaylo speaks at a meeting of the interior ministry collegium. The crime rate in Russia declined by 2% last year to 2,952,000 crimes.

2 February 2001 Col-Gen Valery Manilov, deputy chief of the General Staff of the Russian armed forces says a new security structure will be put in place in Chechnya.

Manilov says 2,728 servicemen of the joint group of troops have been killed during the antiterrorist operation in Chechnya since 1 October 1999. 7,971 soldiers and officers have been wounded.

Manilov says Vladimir Putin endorses the plan to cut the numerical strength of the armed forces of the Russian Federation by 365,000 servicemen over the next four years.

2 February 2001 Putin meets the leadership of the Interior Ministry (MIA). He discusses the tasks for the militia.

2 February 2001 Spanish newspaper *ABC* interviews Russia's Deputy Prosecutor-General Vasily Kolmogorov on the Gusinskiy affair.

3 February 2001 Chechen prime minister Stanislav Ilyasov says the new Chechen government will be formed by 10 February. Ilyasov names his two deputies. Khamzat Idrisov, earlier proposed as a candidate for the post of the government chairman by interim administration head Akhmad Kadyrov, is appointed first deputy chairman. Viktor Aleksentsev becomes second deputy chairman and governmental chief of staff.

3 February 2001 In *Kommersant* Valery Manilov, first deputy chief of the General Staff, says the Russian army has won an imposing victory in Chechnya

5 February 2001 Energy Minister Aleksandr Gavrin resigns.

5 February 2001 Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov appoints Valentin Shelepov deputy energy minister.

Governor of Maritime Territory Yevgeny Nazdratenko writes to Vladimir Putin to say that he has decided to resign.

5 February 2001 The ORT administration notifies journalist Sergey Dorenko about his dismissal.

5 February 2001 An explosive device goes off at the Belorusskaya Metro station in Moscow.

5 February 2001 The State Duma prepares a draft law on the Russian Security Council.

5 February 2001 Konstantin Totskiy, Director of Russia's Federal Border Guard Service, says in the next few years the number of border guard troops will be reduced by 15,000. The expected cuts will be carried out in two stages. By the year 2006 the number of Russian border guard troops will total 168,000 servicemen and 14,500 civilian personnel. The planned cuts are expected to be completed by the year 2010.

6 February 2001 Valery Manilov, first deputy chief of the General Staff says that over 10 Defence Ministry divisions and units have been withdrawn from Chechnya since 14 April 2000 (the day on which the military part of the antiterrorist operation in Chechnya was completed). He says the group of federal forces in Chechnya should be about 50,000 strong following its partial reduction, including those units which are to be based in the republic on a permanent basis. The total strength of the group of federal forces in Chechnya is now approximately 80,000, including 40,000 Defence Ministry servicemen.

6 February 2001 Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov signs a resolution appointing Gennady Ustyuzhanin deputy energy minister.

6 February 2001 URF leader Boris Nemtsov says the war in Chechnya costs approximately \$1bn a year or more than 2% of the entire Russian budget.

7 February 2001 Russian Justice Minister Yury Chayka says Russia has now 56 political parties and 150 political associations. It has also more than 153,000 non-government associations of various forms, including over 17,000 religious organizations, 60 confessions and more than 53,000 trade unions.

7 February 2001 Defence Minister Igor Sergeev says that the federal forces during the counterterrorist operation in Chechnya have completely smashed any organized armed resistance by rebel formations.

7 February 2001 Chechen prime minister Stanislav Ilyasov says the Chechen government will move to Grozny before the end of April.

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 Moskvy*.

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.

8 February 2001 A new interfactional association of deputies, the European Club, is formed in the Duma. Its initiators are Yedinstvo faction members Vladimir Koptev-Dvornikov and Vladimir Semenov. Koptev-Dvornikov says the aim of the European Club is to unite politicians who regard Russia as an integral part of European civilization. He says that the members of the new association intend to seek the development of relations between Russia and European countries on the basis of legislation and to harmonize parliamentary ties between them.

8 February 2001 The MOD says that the Russian Armed Forces General Staff has drawn up plans for a reduction of superfluous military units in Chechnya, following the decision taken on this by Vladimir Putin.

8 February 2001 The MIA says that the establishment of federal criminal police committees in the federal districts and component parts of the Russian Federation has been completed.

9 February 2001 Investigators from the Prosecutor General's Office take more documents from the offices of the Media-Most holding located in two buildings in the centre of Moscow.

10 February 2001 Russian Press Minister Mikhail Lesin says there are no obstacles on the side of the Russian authorities, including the Press (Television and Radio Broadcasting and Mass Communications) Ministry, regarding the purchase of a stake in the NTV television company by foreign investors.

Kommersant reports that Boris Berezovskiy has offered to bail out Media-Most.

10 February 2001 The Yedinstvo party regional representatives meet in Moscow to discuss strengthening party discipline in the regions.

10 February 2001 Head of the Chechen civil administration Akhmad Kadyrov signs a decree to make the first appointments to the Chechen government in Gudermes.

12 February 2001 Putin orders the main monitoring directorate to investigate how Prosecutor General Vladimir Ustinov obtained a flat in Moscow.

12 February 2001 Sergey Ivanov gives an interview on TV.

12 February 2001 The Audit chamber says it is checking how the R14 billion allocated to Chechnya from the state budget has been spent.

13 February 2001 Putin's envoys under Konstantin Pulikovskiy take over key posts in the Primorskiy kray. However there will be no presidential rule there.

13 February 2001 The federal government approves a programme for the social and economic rehabilitation of Chechnya in 2001.

14 February 2001 Akhmad Kadyrov signs a decree setting up a Public and Economic Security Council in Chechnya. Rodnik Dudayev is appointed secretary.

It is reported that Chechen republic administration head Akhmad Kadyrov is maintaining permanent contacts with the rebel field commander Ruslan Gelayev.

Kadyrov speaks out against humanitarian organizations operating in Chechnya on their own.

14 February 2001 The Moscow court of arbitration postpones until 3 October the hearing on Gazprom-media's suit concerning the transferral of 19% of NTV television channel shares.

14 February 2001 Minister of Industry, Science and Technology Aleksandr Dondukov tells the Duma that since 1991, financial injections into research programmes have decreased six times in Russia.

15 February 2001 Prime minister Mikhail Kasyanov advocates incentives for couples to have children. The Russian government is meeting and discussing a draft concept for Russian demographic policy in the period up to 2015.

15 February 2001 The Duma turns down in the first reading the draft bill providing for appointment of regional governors instead of electing them. The draft bill proposed by Unity MP Viktor Lednik envisaged appointment of the governors by the president of the Russian Federation instead of electing them by universal suffrage as provided by the constitution and the current legislation.

15 February 2001 A correspondent of Nokhchi information centre reports that the Russian command has started implementing a plan to separate the highlands and lowlands of the Chechen Republic.

15 February 2001 Presidential aide Sergey Yastrzhembskiy says the federal authorities are against any idea of redrawing the administrative borders in Russia's North Caucasus. He says "any territorial changes in the North Caucasus could lead to new ethnic conflicts". He is commenting on a proposed plan for attaching three Chechen Districts - Shelkovskiy, Naurskiy and Kargalinskiy - to Stavropol Territory, and on reports about a possible redrawing of the borders in the North Caucasus which the Duma plans to discuss. He also denies reports that independent Cossack formations are to be sent to Chechnya's Shelkovskiy and Naurskiy Districts.

15 February 2001 The Supreme Court of Yakutia rules that the republic's citizenship law runs counter to Federal legislation, is not valid and may not be applied.

16 February 2001 Vladimir Putin makes new appointments to the presidential administration. He appoints Aleksandr Kosopkin head of the Main Domestic Policy Directorate and Andrey Popov head of the Main Territorial Directorate.

16 February 2001 The Strategic Missile Troops begin exercises. In the course of the war games an intercontinental ballistic missile Topol will be launched from the Plesetsk cosmodrome in Archangel Region.

16 February 2001 Vladimir Putin visits Siberia. He says there is a utilities catastrophe.

16 February 2001 The Russian president's representative in the Southern Federal District, Viktor Kazantsev, says he opposes remapping of Chechen administrative borders which would cede the three Chechen Districts of Naurskiy, Kargalinskiy and Shelkovskiy to neighbouring Stavropol Territory.

The Commander of the North Caucasus military district Gennady Troshev says: "The army has smashed - one should not shy away from this - it has smashed the

organized, illegal bandit formations on the territory of Chechnya. The bandit formations as such have not existed for the past half-year, and perhaps a little longer. Yes, there are disparate bandits, yes there are small disparate bandit groups, which number 3-5 or 5-7. I cannot fail to say that this decision (on withdrawing forces) was taken correctly, albeit slightly late. Someone must sit down at the negotiating table, or elect their president and get on with their lives, as happens today in all corners of our boundless homeland."

Aslan Maskhadov says Russia has no chance of victory in Chechnya.

17 February 2001 Vladimir Putin says he intends to improve Russia's transport infrastructure as part of a state programme of social and economic development of Siberia and the Far East. He says he favours tighter control over natural monopolies.

17 February 2001 Viktor Kazantsev, the plenipotentiary representative of the Russian president in the Southern Federal District says "the counterterrorist operation to destroy international bandits will be completed this year".

18 February 2001 The administration of Stavropol Territory denies that it has ever raised the question with the federal authorities or with representatives of the Chechen Republic on returning the Nadterechnyy, Shelkovskiy and Naurskiy Districts of Chechnya to Stavropol Territory.

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

19 February 2001 Russian Prosecutor-General Vladimir Ustinov orders his officials to tighten surveillance of search and document seizure operations by law enforcers.

19 February 2001 The Yabloko central council expresses concern over the building of "a bureaucratic police state" in Russia.

19 February 2001 Interior Minister Vladimir Rushaylo says there are no plans to cut internal troops in Chechnya.

20 February 2001 Putin attends a meeting of the State Council and outlines a reform of local self-administration.

20 February 2001 CPRF leader Gennady Zyuganov says that the Communists intend to raise the issue of no-confidence in the Kasyanov government.

21 February 2001 Putin attends a meeting of the State Council and calls for land reform.

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21 February 2001 *Kommersant* reports the launch of the Soyuz party, which was organized by retired law-enforcement officials and military-industrial complex veterans, on 20 February.

22 February 2001 The CPRF issues a statement calling for the resignation of the Kasyanov government.

22 February 2001 The governor of Russia's Kaliningrad Region, Vladimir Yegorov, says economic weakness may encourage separatism.

23 February 2001 The Chairman of the independent public commission for Chechnya, Pavel Krasheninnikov, submits an annual report on the state of Chechen affairs.

26 February 2001 Former Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev gives evidence in the Moscow circuit military court on the Dmitry Kholodov affair.

26 February 2001 The General Staff of the Russian armed forces has started looking into the scandal that arose out of statements by the *Novaya Gazeta* newspaper correspondent Anna Politkovskaya that there are filtration camps on the grounds of the 45th independent reconnaissance regiment of the Russian federal airborne forces.

Russian president's aide Sergey Yastrzhembskiy and Council of Europe human rights commissioner Alvaro Gil-Robles meet in Moscow and discuss the humanitarian situation in Chechnya.

27 February 2001 Oleg Mironov, the Russian Federation human rights envoy, has a meeting with ambassadors of Council of Europe members in Moscow. He says there has still not been any tangible improvement in the human rights situation in Russia.

27 February 2001 A spokesman for the joint federal headquarters in Chechnya say the beginning of the staged reduction of the group of federal troops in Chechnya initially scheduled by President Vladimir Putin for late February has been waived, due to tension in Chechnya. Withdrawal will now begin in mid-March.

In an interview with Chechenpress, Aslan Maskhadov says talks between Russia and Chechnya are inevitable, as no war can go on forever.

27 February 2001 The movement Pokoleniye Svobody transforms itself into the political party Svoboda.

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

28 February 2001 The trial of Col Yury Budanov on charges of murdering 18 year old Elza Kungayeva begin in Rostov.

March

1 March 2001 Vladimir Gusinskiy resigns as president of the Russian Jewish Congress.

1 March 2001 The All-Russia Centre for Public Opinion Study on 26 February polled 1,600 persons.

Vladimir Putin is currently approved of by 69% and disapproved by 21% of Russians (these figures were 68% and 23% respectively in December).

Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov is approved of by 45% of the population; against are 43% (two months ago 37 and 35%, respectively).

Government: 34% approve 50% disapprove. December 2000: 38% approve and 48% disapprove.

In response to a request to name five of six of Russia's most trustworthy politicians, Putin's name was given by 40% of those interviewed (41% back in December). Others named are:

CPRF leader Gennady Zyuganov with 17% (19% in December);
Emergency Situations Minister Sergey Shoygu at 11% (13%);
Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov - 7% (9%);
Vladimir Zhirinovskiy - 7% (5%);
Yevgeny Primakov - 7% (6%);
former Kemerovo governor Aman Tuleyev - 6% (6%);
Moscow mayor Yury Luzhkov - 5% (7%);
Grigory Yavlinskiy - 5% (6%),
Boris Nemtsov, with 5% (6%)

"There are no politicians worthy of trust in Russia" was the answer of 21% of the respondents (18% in December).

1 March 2001 The Supreme Court of Russia upholds an appeal by the lawyer for Tamara Rokhlin, the widow of Gen Lev Rokhlin convicted of killing her husband, and decided against the court resolution. The Supreme Court agrees that the sentence was illegitimate and unfounded because Rokhlin's guilt had not been definitively established at trial.

1 March 2001 The Chechen foreign ministry issues a statement calling for an international tribunal to try Russia for war crimes.

1 March 2001 *Kommersant* reports that an interdepartmental group that will monitor financial flows directed to rebuilding Chechnya was set up in the government on 28 February.

2 March 2001 *Kommersant* reports that the Russian Jewish Congress Presidium has unanimously elected Leonid Nevzlin, deputy chairman of the board of the Yukos oil company, acting president of the Russian Jewish Congress.

2 March 2001 Duma Defence chairman Andrey Nikolayev criticizes chief of staff Anatoly Kvashnin's army reform plans in *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*.

5 March 2001 Vladimir Putin congratulates the Muslims of Russia on the Kurban-Bairam holiday (Id al-Adha).

7 March 2001 Russian forces arrest Chechen warlords Ruslan Akhmadov and Badrudi Murtazayev. Presidential aide Sergey Yastrzembkiy links Akhmadov with the killing of British and NZ telecom engineers in December 1998.

12 March 2001 Vladimir Putin appoints the presidium (governing body) of the State Council. The presidium, whose membership is to rotate, comprises:

Nikolay Volkov, Jewish Autonomous Region governor;
Sergey Katanandov, Karelia head of government;
Valery Kokov, Kabarda-Balkaria president;
Anatoly Lisitsyn, Yaroslavl Region governor;
Leonid Polezhayev, Omsk Region governor;
Murtaza Rakhimov, Bashkortostan president; and
Aleksandr Filipenko, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area governor

13 March 2001 The withdrawal of military units and subunits of the Russian army begin in Chechnya.

Interior Minister Vladimir Rushaylo says the 46th Brigade of the Russian Interior Ministry's interior troops is permanently based in Chechnya.

14 March 2001 The Duma rejects the no-confidence vote initiated by the CPRF and supported by the Agrarians. 127 deputies voted in favour of no confidence in Mikhail Kasyanov's cabinet, 76 were against and five abstained.

14 March 2001 A new interfactional group, called Honour, Duty, Fatherland - Career Officers, is formed in the Duma. It includes 34 parliamentarians from different factions. The group is headed by Vice-Admiral Valery Dorogin from the Russia's Regions faction.

15 March 2001 Refakh leader and Duma deputy Abdul-Vakhed Nyazov says at a meeting of Refakh's council held in Moscow that the Refakh movement is to be transformed into a political party.

15 March 2001 A spokesman for the united group of federal forces HQ says that

about 11,000 rebels have been killed in Chechnya since the antiterrorist operation started in October 1999. The General Staff estimates that the rebel army could have numbered about 16,000-17,000 people, including reservists and volunteers, in the summer of 1999. The federal planes and artillery have destroyed 28 tanks, 61 armoured vehicles, 14 anti-aircraft installations, two or three Grad rocket systems, 20 heavy 152 millimetre guns and 120 millimetre mortars.

Chechen Prime Minister Stanislav Ilyasov says that the republic's police department will have 5,000 officers by the time the federal troops complete their withdrawal.

16 March 2001 Russia's Internal Affairs Ministry bodies registered 506,733 crimes in the first two months of 2001, which is a 3.9% growth in comparison with the same period of 2000.

The major share of crimes was committed in the Central and Volga federal districts. As many as 102,150 and 99,126 crimes were registered there, respectively, but the crime rate growth is not the highest there at only 1.8 and 2.6%, respectively. Crime escalation was the most intense in the North Western, Urals and Siberian federal districts, where it grew by 9, 6 and 5.5%, respectively. The North Western district saw 58,806 offences and 53,759 crimes were registered in the Urals district, while the Siberian district suffered 84,116 offences. The Southern federal district registered 58,859 crimes, which is 2.6% higher than in the same period of 2000. The Far Eastern federal district is the only one where the crime rate decreased - by 0.6% - and the number of crimes fell - to 29,887.

19 March 2001 Vladimir Putin signs a decree "On the Information Directorate of the president of the Russian Federation", whereby he has ordered the creation within the presidential administration of a Russian presidential Information Directorate "using the personnel of the apparatus providing for the activity of the Russian presidential aide". It is designed to improve provision for the president's activities in the sphere of information policy. It will be headed by presidential aide Sergey Yastrzhembskiy.

19 March 2001 The FSS denies reports in the US media that Vladimir Putin has been surrounded with tighter protective measures after Chechens hijacked a Russian airliner en route from Turkey to Russia.

19 March 2001 Ingush President Ruslan Aushev says he opposes a possible reintegration of his republic with Chechnya.

20 March 2001 Head of the political movement Refakh Abdul-Vahid Niyazov is expelled from Yedinstvo.

21 March 2001 A new group of deputies - Volga-Urals - is established at the Duma. Fifty-eight deputies elected to the Duma from the Volga Federal District have joined the new parliamentary group headed by its coordinator, deputy from Samara Aleksandr Belousov.

21 March 2001 The deputy head of the State Duma Committee on Security, Sergey Yushenkov, calls for greater control over the power structures.

22 March 2001 Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Interior Ministry forces Col-Gen Vyacheslav Tikhomirov says there are 3,000 to 5,000 rebels in Chechnya fighting the federal forces.

22 March 2001 Vladimir Putin says that to a significant extent the Russian armed forces are already professional.

23 March 2001 Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov signs an instruction on raising, transporting and planting in a dry dock the Kursk nuclear-powered submarine.

23 March 2001 *Kommersant* reports that Putin has met Bashkortostan President Murtaza Rakhimov in the Kremlin. Rakhimov was critical of Putin's reforms.

24 March 2001 Three bombs explode in the Northern Caucasus. 21 people are killed and 142 injured. Sergey Ivanov blames Chechens.

25 March 2001 Vladimir Ustinov, Russia's prosecutor-general, says that field commander Khattab masterminded the latest terrorist acts in the North Caucasus. Khattab denies these accusations.

25 March 2001 A ROMIR public opinion poll taken centre among 1,500 people gives the following results. Who would you vote for in a presidential election?

Vladimir Putin	56.4%
Gennady Zyuganov	11.1%
Vladimir Zhirinoskiy	3.1%
Grigory Yavlinskiy	2.2%
Yury Luzhkov	2%

Putin's economic activities are approved by 64.4%.

56.5% of the respondents approve his activities aimed at ensuring personal security of citizens and the state as a whole and struggling against corruption and crime and efforts aimed at raising living standards.

The overwhelming majority of the polled (86.3%) believe that the Russian president worthily represents the country abroad.

In the opinion of 56.9%, Russia's image abroad improved for the better after Putin took the presidential office.

The public at large also backs Putin's initiatives in the sphere of state construction: 63.2% of the respondents described them positively.

Putin enjoys the greatest support among the young and the old. For instance 23.3% of the respondents in the age group 18-29 would have voted for him, 18.6% in the age group 30-39, 21.4% in the age group 40-49 years, 13.3% in the age group between 50 and 59 and 23.4% in the age group 60 and above.

25 March 2001 The presidential election takes place in Tatarstan. Mintimer Shaymiyev is elected Tatarstan president for a third term.

26 March 2001 Vladimir Gusinskiy has been released from custody in Spain and bailed.

26 March 2001 It is reported that the Moscow police directorate intends to set up an antiterrorist section for the first time. The section will have several subdivisions specializing in information, analytical, search, preventive, undercover and combat activities. The section will employ only officers and its staff is to comprise about 100 people. According to the spokesman, the new unit will have an experimental status. It will cooperate with the relevant territorial units of all law-enforcement bodies engaged in combating terrorism.

27 March 2001 Russian President Vladimir Putin and North Osetian President Aleksandr Dzasokhov meet to discuss the situation in the North Caucasus.

27 March 2001 Four people suspected of involvement in the Saturday bombings in Russia's North Caucasus are arrested.

28 March 2001 President Vladimir Putin appoints Sergey Ivanov Russian defence minister instead of Igor Sergeev. Vladimir Rushaylo is appointed secretary of the Russian Security Council. Boris Gryzlov is appointed Russian Interior Minister. Yevgeny Adamov is relieved of the post of Atomic Energy Minister. The director of the Kurchatov Institute, Aleksandr Rumyantsev, is appointed instead of Adamov. Mikhail Fradkov is appointed head of the Russian Federal Tax Police Service instead of Vyacheslav Soltaganov. Former Defence Minister Igor Sergeev is appointed presidential aide on strategic stability issues.

The current deputy secretary of the Security Council, Col-Gen Moskovskiy, returns to the Defence Ministry. Other changes have also been made. Commander of the Moscow Military District Col-Gen Puzanov has been relieved from his post. He has been appointed deputy defence minister and state secretary. New commanders for the Ground and the Space Troops have also been appointed.

Former Deputy Interior Minister Vladimir Abdualiyevich Vasil'yev is returning to the Interior Ministry.

At the Tax Police Service, Fradkov will be joined by deputy minister for taxes and levies Verevkin-Rakhalskiy

Lyubov Kudelina is appointed deputy defence minister.

Anatoly Perminov is the new commander of Russian space forces.

28 March 2001 Aleksandr Babichev, the deputy head of the centre for fighting money laundering at the Interior Ministry is interviewed in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*. He says some 250bn dollars in capital taken out of Russia is sitting in foreign bank accounts. Babichev also says that "shadow capital" amounts to 40-42% of total money turnover in Russia.

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 Sergey Ivanov says no sharp steps will be taken during the reorganization of Russia's armed forces.

29 March 2001 Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says the MOD will be more financially accountable.

29 March 2001 The Security Council discusses the restoration of the Chechen economy. Putin presents a plan for its restoration.

30 March 2001 A ROMIR poll says that 42.8% of Russians support Moscow's Chechnya policy and 46.4% oppose it. According to ROMIR, 38.3% of Russians wish the war to go on until the rebel movement is stamped out, 15.3% want Russia to pull its troops out and give Chechnya complete independence, 14.7% wish Russian forces in the region to be cut in number, 13% would like the pro-Moscow Chechen administration to be entrusted with restoring law and order in the region, and 6.8% believe Chechnya could be put under international control. ROMIR questioned 2,000 people.

30 March 2001 General Staff deputy chief Col-Gen Vladislav Putilin says the Russian army will be downsized by 365,000 by 2004.

Rossiyskaya Gazeta publishes a decree by Putin stating that by 1 September 2001 the Volga Military District and the Urals Military District are to be transformed into the Volga-Urals Military District.

31 March 2001 New defence minister Sergey Ivanov is interviewed on *Vremya* on TV. He discusses military reform. He calls for an evolutionary approach towards military reform.

Newly-appointed Russian Deputy Defence Minister Lyubov Kudelina backs the formation of a professional army.

Viktor Kazantsev, the Russian president's envoy to the southern federal district, expresses concern at the delay in the implementation of anti-terrorist measures in the North Caucasus.

A spokesman for the Russian Armed Forces General Staff's mobilization department says there are about 20,000 conscripts dodging military service in Russia.

31 March 2001 A freedom of speech rally is held in Moscow.

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