

Russian Foreign Policy: Chronology

October-December 2002

October

1 October 2002 Vice-President of the American Koch Supply and Trading Company William Kovach says his firm has made purchases of Russian oil to import to the USA. This is the first import of Russian oil to US strategic reserve.

Rosneft and US Marathon Oil Corporation sign a letter of intent which spells out plans aimed at creating Urals North American Marketing (UNAM), a venture that would transport and market Russian crude oil to the North American market.

Russian Energy Minister Igor Yusufov attends the first Russia-US energy summit in Houston. He says Russia plans to produce 378m tonnes of oil in 2002, an increase on the 348m tonnes in 2001. "Russia effectively becomes an important factor in providing stability and reliability in the world's fuel supply system ... Russia will continue acting as a major fuel exporter and will be able to become in the foreseeable future a large supplier of fuels to the US market. Its high economic and political stability makes Russia a reliable supplier of oil and gas." He says about 50bn dollars must be invested in the Russian oil industry to make this possible and that Russia can technologically manage the forming of an adequate strategic oil reserve within two or three years.

1 October 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov has a telephone conversation with Abd al-Rahman Shalqam, secretary of Libya's General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation. They discuss Iraq.

1 October 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Losyukov visits South Korea. He says "talk is going on about a possibility of organizing such a six-party process" that would engage North and South Korea, Russia, the US, China and Japan.

1 October 2002 Commander of the Chinese People's Armed Police Force Lieutenant-General Wu Shuangzhan meets Commander-in-Chief of the Internal Troops Colonel-General Vyacheslav Tikhomirov in Moscow.

1 October 2002 The Foreign Ministry (MFA) criticizes the ruling on the Kaliningrad Region problem the EU council of foreign ministers issued on 30 September.

1 October 2002 Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says that Moscow is ready to join Tbilisi in the antiterrorism campaign. "We are ready to work together with Tbilisi in

the fight against terrorism ... if Georgia wants to tackle this issue on its own, we have the right to know who and when will disarm, seal off and eliminate terrorists in Georgia."

1 October 2002 Security Council Secretary Vladimir Rushaylo and Armenian Defence Minister Serzh Sarkisyan hold talks on the situation on the Russo-Georgian border, and Nagornyy Karabakh.

1 October 2002 Russian troops begin pulling out of Transdnestria in Moldova. Of a group of 2,000 servicemen it is intended to leave a battalion of around 500 men with the status of a peacekeeping force.

2 October 2002 MFA spokesman Aleksandr Yakovenko says that: "Moscow is satisfied at the productive outcome to the Vienna consultations between the United Nations organization, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and an Iraqi delegation. The prospect of inspections in Iraq is now opening up. This is very important since the Iraqi side has given its consent to all the parameters to all the technical parameters, envisaged by the relevant Security Council resolutions."

Igor Ivanov says UN experts "should resume monitoring activity on Iraqi territory as soon as possible ... we should work in line with the existing agreements." He says it is too early to speak of new UN resolutions on Iraq. "It is too early to speak about this now. First, we should hear a report by the head of the UN disarmament commission, Hans Blix, and then decide whether this is necessary or not." Ivanov says the report would be heard by a session of the UN Security Council on 3 October. Ivanov says that "the Security Council must decide on its future action depending on that ... if additional resolutions are required for international inspectors' work, we are ready to consider them."

Aleksey Arbatov, deputy chairman of the Duma Defence Committee is interviewed on *Ekho Moskvy* radio. He discusses Russo-Georgian relations and the Iraq crisis. He calls for a new UN resolution on Iraq. He criticises Moscow for having too hard a policy towards Georgia.

2 October 2002 Mahmud Abbas (Abu-Mazin), secretary of the Palestine Liberation Organization's executive committee, arrives in Moscow for talks with Igor Ivanov. Moscow will also play host to a session of the Russian-Palestinian working committee on the Middle East. Abbas and Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Saltanov co-chair the committee.

The MFA urges Washington not to take unilateral steps ahead of the completion of talks on the final status of Jerusalem. On 30 September US President George W Bush signed a bill on international relations approved by Congress, which among other things refers to Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. The MFA states: "The problem of Jerusalem should be resolved in the framework of Palestinian-Israeli talks on its final status."

2 October 2002 Igor Ivanov has talks with Austrian Foreign Minister Benita-Maria Ferrero-Waldner in Moscow.

Dr Mark A Smith

2 October 2002 Igor Ivanov says that Moscow welcomes the idea of inviting Lithuania to participate in the Russia-EU talks on the issues facing the Kaliningrad region.

Dmitry Rogozin, special representative of the Russian president on Kaliningrad, visits Italy. He has talks with Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi.

2 October 2002 ITAR-TASS reports that Russia will pass to Afghanistan free of charge a supply of arms and military hardware. The arms are worth 40 million dollars and will reach Afghanistan not earlier than January 2003.

2 October 2002 Deputy speaker Vladimir Lukin visits Japan. He says the territorial dispute between Russia and Japan over the Southern Kuril islands cannot be solved in the short term, and therefore it should be set aside for future generations to resolve.

2 October 2002 Chilean President Ricardo Lagos Escobar arrives in Moscow for trade talks.

2 October 2002 The MFA welcomes Latvia's intention to join the revised CFE treaty.

3 October 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Saltanov says a military scenario for a solution to the Iraq issue would have undesirable consequences for Russia.

Chairman of the Duma international affairs committee Dmitry Rogozin says there is no need to draw up a new UN resolution on Iraq. "It is quite possible to act within the resolutions issued earlier. If the situation changes, then it is worth raising this issue."

An article in *Izvestiya* discusses Russia's position over the Iraq crisis. It says the real aim of Russian policy on Iraq is not to save Saddam, about whom Moscow couldn't care less, but to be in an advantageous position if the USA attacks with or without the UN.

3 October 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov calls on Israel and Palestine to accept the three-year plan for the Middle Eastern settlement which was drafted by the four international mediators - the United Nations, the European Union, Russia and the USA.

Foreign minister's special envoy for the Middle East peace process ambassador Andrey Vdovin leaves for a tour of the Middle East.

3 October 2002 Kuwaiti defence minister Jabir Mubarak al-Hamad al-Sabah visits the Duma.

4 October 2002 Zurab Abashidze, Georgia's ambassador to Russia, says Georgia intends to extradite all the detained Chechen rebels to Russia as soon as it finalizes a corresponding inquiry. He says that Georgia has already decided to extradite five of the 13 rebels detained on the Russia-Georgia border in mid-August.

4 October 2002 The Central Bank states that Russia's international reserves grew 1.292bn dollars, or 2.9% in September, to 45.619bn dollars from 44.327bn dollars. The foreign exchange reserves rose from 40.596bn dollars to 41.887bn dollars in September, while the monetary gold reserves were almost unchanged at 3.732bn dollars as of 1 October.

4 October 2002 Chairman of the Iraq Organization for Friendship, Peace and Solidarity with Foreign Countries Dr Abd-al-Razzaq Qasim al-Hashimi states that Russia and Iraq are now drawing up a large five-year agreement on cooperation in several fields, adding up to 40bn billion dollars.

Iraqi Deputy Minister of Oil Husayn al-Hadithi states that Russian-Iraqi contracts in the petroleum sector amount to 1.5bn euro.

4 October 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and US Secretary of State Colin Powell speak by telephone. They discuss Iraq and the visits of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and the secretary-general of the PLO Executive Committee, Mahmud Abbas to Moscow.

The MFA special envoy Andrey Vdovin arrives in the Middle East and meets the chief of the Palestinian National Authority, Yasir Arafat, in Ramallah. Vdovin also meets Shalom Turjman, a political adviser to Sharon in Jerusalem.

4 October 2002 Vladimir Zorin, the Russian minister responsible for nationalities policy, criticises a recent statement of Latvian President Vaira Vike-Freiberga on citizenship.

4 October 2002 Andrey Nikolayev, chairman of the Duma defence committee, says in an interview published in the Kazakh newspaper *Dozhivem do Ponedelnika* that the the High Frequency Active Auroral Research Programme [HAARP] which is being implemented by the USA is aimed at creating a geophysical weapon.

5 October 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Yury Fedotov says the draft resolution on Iraq proposed by France in the UN does not exceed the limits of the existing UN Security Council resolutions.

5 October 2002 Vladimir Putin says "visa-free travel in sealed carriages, trains" from Kaliningrad Region to mainland Russia with transit through Lithuania "is not in breach of the Schengen visa accord". He says if "no solution to the issue (of Kaliningrad Region) is found that is favourable for Russia, then we will have failed to create the right atmosphere for building a common house in Europe".

Dr Mark A Smith

5 October 2002 Vladimir Putin meets Finnish President Tarja Halonen in St Petersburg.

6 October 2002 The CIS Heads of State summit takes place in Chisinau, Moldova.

6 October 2002 The chairman of Wintershall's executive board, Reiner Zwitterloot, says Wintershall and Gazprom are planning to set up a joint company for the exploitation of gas deposits in western Siberia.

6 October 2002 MFA special envoy Andrey Vdovin has talks with the Israeli leadership.

6 October 2002 Vladimir Putin arrives in Zaporizhzhya in Ukraine. He meets Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma.

7 October 2002 Vladimir Putin and Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze have talks on terrorism at the CIS summit in Chisinau. Shevardnadze agrees to hand over all terrorists detained on Georgian territory.

7 October 2002 The Russian and Ukrainian prime ministers (Mikhail Kasyanov and Anatoly Kinakh) sign an agreement in Chisinau on strategic cooperation in the gas industry to form a consortium. The agreement will last for 30 years.

7 October 2002 The presidents of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan sign the charter and agreement on the legal status of the CIS Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). The recommendation was adopted that the national parliaments of the CSTO member states should complete the procedure of their ratification by May 2003.

Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says the following documents have been approved at the CIS Council of Heads of Government meeting: allocating funds for the creation and development of a unified system of CIS air defence for 2003; on allocating funds for the implementation of a programme of fundamental work on interstate inventorization of supply facilities for the armed forces of CIS member states for 2003; and on creating an information and analysis system at the headquarters for coordination of military cooperation between CIS member states.

7 October 2002 The MFA criticises Israeli use of force in the Gaza strip for being disproportionate.

7 October 2002 Duma Chairman Gennady Seleznev proposes that Lithuania's and Poland's joining the European Union and the Schengen area be postponed until a later time, until the Kaliningrad problem is settled completely.

A Russian Chronology: October-December 2002

7 October 2002 The chairman of the Russian Federation Council's Committee on International Affairs, Mikhail Margelov, gives an interview on Russia's relations with the CIS. He discusses CIS integration, the gas agreement with Ukraine and fighting terrorism. He notes that CIS administration will be reduced from 2003.

8 October 2002 MFA special envoy Andrey Vdovin has talks with King Abdullah II in Amman.

8 October 2002 Russian Air Force C-in-C Vladimir Mikhaylov is appointed chairman of the CIS air defence coordination committee.

8 October 2002 The MFA expresses displeasure over the European Court's recommendations to Georgia not to extradite to Russia the people who had been involved in terrorist groupings. The European Court recommended on 4 October that the Georgian government suspend the extradition of eight Chechen militants who had been detained by Georgian forces in August after they had attacked a unit of Russia border guards and broke through the Russian-Georgian state border at end-July.

8 October 2002 Igor Ivanov says: "The CIS is needed as a forum for multilateral interaction, ensuring effective settlement of difficult and pressing problems". In relations with its immediate neighbours, Russia consistently contributes to stability and conflict-settlement on CIS territory. He says the comprehensive development of relations with CIS partners and friends remains Moscow's priority.

Vladimir Putin proposes Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma as the next CIS chairman. This is opposed by Belarusian President Aleksandr Lukashenko.

8 October 2002 The Kolomenskiy Zavod holding company is to ship the first diesel generator system to the Bushehr nuclear power plant in Iran in late 2002.

8 October 2002 Igor Ivanov attends a conference of Armenian diaspora in Moscow. He speaks on Russo-Armenian economic ties.

9 October 2002 An article in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* discusses the tasks facing the chairman of the Coordinating Committee on CIS air defence. Colonel-General Vladimir Mikhaylov, commander-in-chief of the Russian Air Force, has just been appointed to this post.

9 October 2002 The customs service reports that the volume of Russia's foreign trade turnover in January-August 2002 amounted to 93.7bn dollars. The volume of foreign trade turnover with countries other than ex-USSR states increased by 2.2% as compared with the same period of 2001 to reach 77.8bn dollars, whereas the volume of trade turnover with CIS member states decreased by 8.2% - down to 15.9bn dollars.

Dr Mark A Smith

The volume of Russia's exports in January-August 2002 was 65bn dollars. As compared with the same period of 2001, it declined by 2.9%. The volume of exports to countries other than ex-USSR states decreased by 3.3% - down to 55.6bn dollars, and the volume of trade with CIS member states remained unchanged at 9.4bn dollars.

The volume of imports into Russia in January-August 2002 was 28.7bn dollars. As compared with the same period of 2001, it increased by 8.2%. Imports from countries other than ex-USSR states increased by 19.1% to reach 22.3bn dollars, whereas imports from CIS states declined by 17.7% - down to 6.4bn dollars.

Russia's foreign trade surplus in January-August 2002 was 36.3bn dollars. As compared with the same period of 2001, when the figure was 40.5bn dollars, it went down by 10.4%. Foreign trade surplus with countries other than ex-USSR states was 33.3bn dollars, whereas foreign trade surplus with CIS states was 3bn dollars.

9 October 2002 Dutch foreign minister Jaap de Hoop Scheffer visits Moscow to discuss Vladimir Putin's visit to the Netherlands. Trade turnover between the two countries reached the record-high level of 5.9bn dollars in 2001.

9 October 2002 MFA special envoy Aleksandr Kalugin, who deals with resolving the Iraq issue, says Russia is not discussing with anybody prospects for a possible military operation against Iraq.

The Russian and French foreign ministers stress the importance of reaching practical agreements aimed at ensuring the effective work of UN weapons inspectors in Iraq, following a telephone conversation.

Duma chairman Gennady Seleznev is in Belgium. He says UN inspectors should leave for Iraq without any additional UN Security Council resolutions.

An article by Gleb Pavlovskiy in *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* states that the USA is overlooking Iraqi support for suicide bombers. He writes: "Such an irresponsible stance on the part of Iraq is ground enough in itself for putting to it an ultimatum containing demands commensurate with the threat it poses. It is Russia that has a vested interest in the demand put to Saddam Hussein to categorically condemn terror and mega-terror and to renounce any support for its participants, fighters, advisers and personnel that service the terrorists."

9 October 2002 Russian border guards and commando units of the Russian army have established control of all the mountain passes in the North Caucasus which the terrorists based in Georgia may try to use to penetrate into Russia.

Georgian Security Minister Valeri Khaburdzania visits Moscow.

9 October 2002 Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov signs a resolution empowering Russia's Financial Monitoring Committee to conclude cooperation agreements with financial watchdog bodies of other countries.

9 October 2002 Admiral Viktor Fedorov, the commander of Russia's Pacific Fleet, says Russia and North Korea expect to conduct joint naval exercises in November.

9 October 2002 MFA envoy and ambassador at large Andrey Vdovin arrives in Cairo for talks with the Egyptian leadership and Secretary-General of the League of Arab States Amr Musa.

9 October 2002 The secretary-general of the Eurasian Economic Community (EAEC), Grigory Rapota, says the completion of work to create a free trade zone void of export and import duties for products manufactured within the Eurasian Economic Community has become one of the important steps in overcoming economic barriers between the member states.

9 October 2002 The deputy head of the Federal Security Service (FSB) directorate for combating terrorism, Maj-General Arkady Yedelev says there are special terrorism and sabotage training camps on Georgian territory. Funding for international terrorists located on Georgian territory is being provided by one of the people close to Osama Bin-Ladin, Jordanian citizen Abu Hafs, who is involved in the Al Qaeda terrorist network.

10 October 2002 British Prime Minister Tony Blair visits Moscow for talks with Vladimir Putin. Trade turnover between Russia and Britain reached 4.4bn dollars in 2001, with Russian exports growing by 39% and imports by 34%. Britain is among the five biggest trade partners of Russia. It accounts for 3.5% of the overall trade turnover of Russia. Trade turnover between the two countries stabilized at a level of 4.2bn-4.4bn dollars after 1997 with a balance in favour of Russia. It is the third biggest investor in the Russian economy after Germany and Cyprus. Direct investment amounts to 1.8bn dollars.

Putin and Blair discuss Iraq.

10 October 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Yury Fedotov expresses concern about foot-dragging on the sending of international weapons inspectors to Iraq. He says there is no need for new UNSC resolutions. Fedotov says that a decision to resume international inspections in Iraq "should open a simultaneous prospect for the suspension and lifting of sanctions ... Russia insists that a new possible decision of the UN Security Council should be in line with the logic of a comprehensive Iraqi settlement." He then says: "It is very important that members of the Security Council stay united on the issue ... Russia may consider the possibility of new resolutions on the work of international weapons inspectors in Iraq, if the majority of Security Council members believe those resolutions are necessary." He says that all the new resolutions stay in line with the UN's previous decisions and do not contain unrealistic demands. "We maintain our former stance that the new resolutions should not contain provisions on the use of force."

10 October 2002 The MFA says it has sent a note to Georgia demanding the immediate extradition of Chechen rebels detained on Georgian territory.

The Chechen National Salvation Committee issues an appeal to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) President Peter Schieder, Council of Europe Secretary-General Walter Schwimmer, Council of Europe Human Rights Commissioner Alvaro Gil-Robles, Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze calling on them to stop further extradition from Georgia to Russia of members of Chechen armed formations.

Chief of the Press Service of the Russian group of forces in the Transcaucasus Col Aleksandr Lutskevich says the personnel of the Russian military base in Batumi (Ajaria) will be rotated in the week beginning 14 October to replace the discharged servicemen.

10 October 2002 Deputy Defence Minister Lyubov Kudelina speaks at a scientific-practical conference of Russian and NATO experts on the problems of military reform, which is taking place at the NATO Defence College in Rome. She discusses Russian military reform.

11 October 2002 Russia's representative in the European Court, Pavel Laptev, lodges a protest against the decision to suspend the extradition of eight militants from Georgia to Russia.

11 October 2002 The MFA calls on Israel and the Palestinians to comply with the UN Security Council Resolution 1435 and resume the political process.

11 October 2002 The Duma ratifies four agreements between the governments of Russia and Kazakhstan with regard to Russia renting testing ranges and a test flight centre in Kazakhstan. The agreements were signed in Moscow on 18 October 1996.

11 October 2002 The Duma votes in favour of asking the government to open a Russian consulate in Transdnestr.

11 October 2002 In an interview in *Moskovskiy Komsomolets*, the chairman of the Duma Committee on Defence, Andrey Nikolayev, and the vice-president of the Academy of Geopolitical Problems, Vladimir Anokhin, discuss the possibility of a US attack on Iraq.

An article by Mikhail Rostovsky in *Moskovskiy Komsomolets* criticises the work of the Russian MFA.

12 October 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and his Japanese counterpart Yoriko Kawaguchi hold talks in Moscow. Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi will visit Russia in January 2003. Kawaguchi says: "This time we have reached an agreement on six points of the future Russian-Japanese plan of action. These are the strengthening of dialogue, efforts to sign a peace treaty, interaction in the international arena, cooperation in the economic and legal fields, and the development of cultural and human contacts ... the main idea in this plan is to

make it a guiding thread for further development of bilateral cooperation and to develop relations in such a way that will raise them to a new level."

12 October 2002 Ivanov and Kawaguchi agree to support an idea of creating a six-party conference on security and confidence-building measures in Northeast Asia. They should include, apart from Russia and Japan, the US, China, North Korea and South Korea.

13 October 2002 Deputy Director of the FSB Vladimir Pronichev returns to Moscow after a three-day visit to Tbilisi. He and Valeri Khaburdzania (Georgian state security minister) give a joint news conference to discuss the agreements reached on the joint patrolling of the Russian-Georgian border. A document on joint patrolling will be signed by the sides at a planned meeting in Yerevan on 17 October. Until then, the details of this agreement and the specific date when it will start being implemented will remain secret.

13 October 2002 Vladimir Putin sends a telegram of condolences to the president of Indonesia, Megawati Sukarnoputri, in connection with the terrorist incident in Bali. He also sends a telegram to the prime minister of Australia, John Howard, stressing the importance of a genuinely universal fight everywhere against this evil of the 21st century.

12-13 October 2002 Russian special envoy for Kaliningrad Region Dmitry Rogozin believes that Russia has run out of time in solving the Kaliningrad Region issue. Rogozin made the statement in his address to an international forum on prospects for cooperation between Russia and the EU in the Baltic region. The forum was in Kaliningrad. He says: "We do not have any perfidious designs on our minds. We want to reach an agreement by which travel from one part of Russia to another does not depend on European officials. Therefore the European Commission's proposals have so far been unacceptable to us." He suggests "polishing the idea of introducing a Facilitated Transit Document (FTD)" proposed by the European Commission as well as paying attention to the development of the transport infrastructure in the region. "Although the FTD is a surrogate visa, if this idea is polished then the FTD could be used for motor travel." He says railway travel should remain visa-free, and that the Kaliningrad issue should be resolved during Denmark's EU presidency.

14 October 2002 The Deputy Speaker of Kuwait's National Assembly Mishari Jasim al-Anqari visits Russia.

14 October 2002 Foreign minister Igor Ivanov states:

The latest act of terrorism in Indonesia once again shows that international terrorism is not beaten, that a very difficult and extended struggle against terrorism lies ahead, and that in order to win this struggle, the international community needs to be united.

Dr Mark A Smith

The terrorists will undoubtedly continue to seek any occasion to destabilize the situation in various regions in order to intensify extremist opinion, including in the Islamic world. Any kind of pretext, be it the situation in the Palestinian territories or in the Persian Gulf, can be used to achieve this aim, but the international community can only resist by increasing the level of coordination of its joint efforts. In this respect, Russia is in favour of the strengthening of the international antiterrorist coalition.

14 October 2002 Russia's general consulate officially opens in northern Afghanistan.

14 October 2002 The director-general of the Russian Munitions Agency, Zinovy Pak, says all chemical weapons in Russia will be destroyed by 2012.

Sergey Kiriyyenko, chairman of the Russian Federation State Commission for Chemical Disarmament, is interviewed in *Kommersant* about the Chemical Weapons Convention meeting in the Hague.

14 October 2002 Rosoboroneksport participates in the 4th International Special Operation Forces Exhibition SOFEX 2002 in Jordan.

14 October 2002 The chief UN mission observer in Georgia, General Kazi Ashfak says a joint patrol of Russian peacekeepers and UN mission representatives leaves for the Kodori Gorge of Georgia for monitoring. The patrol will study the situation in the gorge for three days.

14 October 2002 Russian Central Bank's figures state the foreign trade turnover between Russia and the countries of the far abroad in January-August 2002 amounted to 86,624m dollars, which was 3,021m more than in the same period of 2001. At the same time, Russian exports to the far abroad declined by 1,856m dollars to 56,773m dollars. Imports from the far abroad in the first eight months of 2002 were up nearly 5bn dollars on January-August 2001 and amounted to 29,851m dollars. The surplus in trade with the far abroad in January-August was 26,922m dollars, whereas in the same period of 2001 it amounted to 33,655m dollars.

15 October 2002 The Russo-Saudi joint intergovernmental commission for trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation meets. Its Russian co-chairman is Energy Minister Igor Yusufov. Yusufov desires Saudi investment in Russia: "Russia has interesting developments to offer to Saudi Arabia, specifically in the oil and gas industry and in aluminium production." He believes the commission should discuss cooperation prospects in the spheres of agriculture, water management, space exploration and communication. Cooperation in banking, culture, information and education is also important.

15 October 2002 Special representative of the Russian president on Kaliningrad Dmitry Rogozin meets parliament members from Russia, Poland, Lithuania and representatives of the European Parliament in Brussels to discuss access to Kaliningrad. He objects to Russian citizens requiring visas to travel across Lithuania to and from Kaliningrad. Mikhail Margelov, the head of the Federation Council international committee, also attends this meeting. He proposes setting up a working group of 12 people, half representatives from the European Parliament and the other half from Russia. He says:

We think that any talks about all manner of special documents which in essence are a kind of quasi-visa are not the way to solve the problem. This is a way that leads to an impasse, to a further bureaucratization of transit.

What will happen? Russians will have first of all to turn to a Russian official and ask to be put onto some kind of special list of those that have to travel frequently to Kaliningrad on business and then go to either a Lithuanian or a Polish or a European Union official, and instead of simplifying it, travel will be made more complicated.

Kaliningrad governor Vladimir Yegorov says the cost in loss of border trade for Kaliningrad Region of the introduction of EU visa requirements will be R2bn (63m US dollars) a year.

15 October 2002 MFA spokesman Aleksandr Yakovenko says the new Russia-NATO Council has to draw up a clear-cut programme of cooperation in the sphere of Theatre Missile Defence.

15 October 2002 The Russia-Africa business council is set up. Vladimir Rayevskiy, chief of the department for coordination of work in Africa of Alrosa joint-stock company, has been elected chairman of the council. 1,000 Russian companies now do business with African countries. According to official information, Russo-African trade turnover has been steadily growing for the third year in succession. African projects are being implemented by such large Russian companies as Alrosa, Rosoboroneksport, Gazprom, RAO UES (United Energy Systems), LUKoil, Rosneft, KamAZ, AvtoVAZ.

15 October 2002 King Mohammed VI of Morocco visits Russia. Several agreements are signed.

15 October 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Saltanov says Moscow thinks that international observers should commence their tasks in Iraq as soon as possible. He meets deputy speaker of Kuwait's National Assembly Mishari Jasim Mishari al-Anqari in Moscow.

15 October 2002 Representatives of the interior ministries of Russia and Georgia have started in Tbilisi an exchange of operational information on wanted criminals.

15 October 2002 The Russian consulate-general in Mazar-e Sharif in northern Afghanistan officially resumes its activities. The consulate-general suspended its work in 1997 when the city was seized by the Taleban.

16 October 2002 Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin visits Britain.

16 October 2002 Vladimir Putin says the Russian leadership is ready if necessary to adopt an additional UNSC resolution which will guarantee the work of weapons inspectors in Iraq. Putin has talks in Moscow with Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi.

16 October 2002 Saudi Finance and National Economy Minister Dr Ibrahim al-Assaf and Russian Energy Minister Igor Yusufov sign a protocol which determines the fields of cooperation between the two countries. In particular, it envisages developing a legal foundation, stepping up exchanges and attracting Saudi investments for setting up oil joint ventures in western Siberia. Russia is also expected to form a centre of its goods and technologies in Saudi Arabia.

Al-Assaf has talks with Igor Ivanov on Iraq.

16 October 2002 Minatom head Aleksandr Rumyantsev says Russia does not cooperate with Iraq in the nuclear technology field. He says all such cooperation ended in 1980.

16 October 2002 Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi visits Moscow.

16 October 2002 MFA spokesman Aleksandr Yakovenko says Russia has called for developing "sustainable and long-term" cooperation with the European Union, based on mutual benefits and in the interests of global peace and stability. He says Russia has noted "the special topicality and importance of further steps to fill with substance the Russia-EU partnership in the fields of security and defence". Yakovenko says the development of cooperation in these areas, and of the economic potential, will help transform the EU into "an independent centre of influence in the world ... the Russian side is ready to have a detailed discussion of the draft plan of action for Russia and the EU in security and defence that was handed over to the EU leadership at the previous summit in Moscow." He says Russia is interested in "participation in the EU policing mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the furtherance of talks on the use by the EU of Russian wide-bodied planes." He calls for "strengthen[ing] the base for cooperation between Russia and the EU in the anti-terrorist sphere", and so "supports the proposal to create a Russia-EU internal security council".

17 October 2002 Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin attends the 6th session of the Russian-British inter-governmental committee for trade and investment in London. British investment in Russia increased 2.6-fold, to 1.55bn dollars, in 2001.

17 October 2002 Georgy Poltavchenko, presidential plenipotentiary representative of Russia's Central Federal District, meets Shi Guangsheng, Chinese Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, in Guangzhou. Over the first nine months of 2002 bilateral trade ran at 8,870m dollars, increasing by 17% as compared with the corresponding period of 2001.

A 100-member Russian delegation visits the southern Chinese province of Guangdong, with which, Poltavchenko says, the Central Federal District established partnership contacts. Over the first nine months of the current year, Guangdong-Russia trade intensified considerably: trade turnover amounted to 727m dollars or almost 30% more than in the same period last year. Guangdong held a trade fair in Russia in June, with the sides concluding contracts worth an aggregate value of about 1,200bn dollars.

17 October 2002 Igor Ivanov says Russia is holding consultations, including with its partners in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, with the aim of obtaining information about the nuclear programme of Pyongyang.

17 October 2002 Igor Ivanov meets the EU troika in Moscow. They discuss Iraq and the Middle East.

Igor Ivanov and US Secretary of State Colin Powell discuss the return of weapons inspectors to Iraq, by telephone.

The MFA says Russia will actively contribute towards the soonest possible settlement of the Iraqi problem on the basis of international law.

17 October 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Saltanov denies claims that Russia and Syria are cooperating in the field of nuclear research.

17 October 2002 Igor Ivanov says Russia and the EU's positions on Kaliningrad are closer following talks with the EU troika.

17 October 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Andrey Denisov says Moscow supports the construction of a Trans-Afghan gas pipeline via Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan. A summit of the project's member countries - Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan, is scheduled to take place in Asgabat on 26-27 October.

17 October 2002 Deputy head of the MOD's International Agreements Department Vladimir Nikishin says Russia may revise approaches to the implementation of the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty if NATO expands eastwards. The MOD is concerned that NATO, at its meeting in Prague in November, may admit to its ranks new states which are not signatories to that treaty.

18 October 2002 Russia's foreign trade surplus in January-August 2002 amounted to 29.097bn dollars, down from 34.581bn dollars in the same period of

2001. Russia's exports declined by 2.7% on year in the period to 66.7bn dollars, while imports increased by 10.8% on the year to 37.603bn dollars.

Russia's exports to countries outside the CIS declined by 3.2% on the year to 56.773bn dollars, while imports from non-CIS countries increased by 19.5% on the year to 29.852bn dollars. Russia's exports to CIS countries rose by 0.3% on the year to 9.927bn dollars, while imports from CIS countries declined by 13.6% on the year to 7.751bn dollars.

18 October 2002 Military sources state that a total of 2,678 Defence Ministry servicemen have died in the second Chechnya campaign that started in October 1999. 6,322 Defence Ministry servicemen have been injured and 29 are missing.

18 October 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov says Russia "has given its consent to work on a draft resolution which would uphold the mandate of international inspectors in Iraq". Sergey Lavrov, Russia's permanent envoy to the UN says: "If we're talking not about the launch of the inspections, but about an attempt to create, through the Security Council, a legal basis for the use of force, or even a change of regime in a UN member state - and certain officials have persistently confirmed this aim in public - then, in that case, we don't see how the Security Council can give its agreement to this."

Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says the issue of resorting to force against Iraq should be tackled by the UN Security Council only after the results of the work done by the military inspectors are to hand.

18 October 2002 The MFA denies that it helped North Korea to develop its nuclear weapons.

18 October 2002 The MFA expresses concern over Israeli operations in Palestinian areas following an operation in Rafah.

18 October 2002 Defence minister Sergey Ivanov says Russia and Belarus will coordinate their military reform programmes.

18 October 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov rejects the idea of energy sanctions against Georgia.

Igor Ivanov calls for visa-free travel between Russia and the EU.

Igor Ivanov says the International Stabilisation Force (ISF) must remain in Afghanistan whilst reforms are carried out. Once Afghanistan has established its own armed forces then the ISF can leave.

20 October 2002 Dmitry Rogozin is interviewed on TV on Russian foreign policy.

20 October 2002 The Russian foreign minister's envoy for the Middle East, Andrey Vdovin, meets Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in Tel Aviv. Vdovin arrives in the area of the Palestinian-Israeli standoff after consultations in Paris of the four international mediators, representatives of Russia, the US, European Union and United Nations.

21 October 2002 Deputy foreign minister Georgy Mamedov says he hopes that the USA will not use strong arm methods against North Korea over its nuclear programme. He calls for a dialogue with North Korea on this issue.

21 October 2002 The MOD and Transdnestr region postpone their negotiations on the withdrawal of Russian weapons from the region. An unplanned trip to Moscow by Transdnestr leaders has been named as one of the reasons for the postponement. In his meeting with Moldovan parliamentarians in Chisinau, Duma speaker Gennady Seleznev says that the Russian military will withdraw and scrap all weapons remaining in the region.

21 October 2002 Security Council Secretary Vladimir Rushaylo meets US Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security John Bolton and US ambassador to Russia Alexander Vershbow and discusses with them international and regional security issues.

Deputy Foreign Minister Georgy Mamedov urges the Russian parliament to ratify the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT). The treaty was signed in Moscow in May 2002 at the Putin-Bush summit. Mamedov has talks with John Bolton. They discuss North Korea's nuclear programme. Bolton gives Mamedov a dossier on North Korea's nuclear programme. Mamedov criticises US policy for causing tension due to statements on the axis of evil, and the published new military doctrines envisaging preventive strikes.

The MFA criticizes the USA's attempts to distort the history of the Caribbean crisis of October 1962 in order to reinforce its new national security strategy.

21 October 2002 The MFA special envoy Andrey Vdovin meets Palestinian leader Yassir Arafat, Finance Minister Salam Fayyad, and Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Nabil Ali Sha'th in Ramallah.

The MFA issues a statement on the Middle East.

21 October 2002 Minister of atomic energy Aleksandr Rumyantsev is interviewed on TV. He discusses North Korea and Russian ties with Iran.

21 October 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Yury Fedotov says Russia wants the UN's new resolution on Iraq to be balanced. He says that Moscow expects that the draft resolution, which is to be reviewed at the UN Security Council, "will not contain the unacceptable elements of the previous American draft". "We still proceed from the assumption that any resolution on Iraq must not give a carte blanche for the use of force against this country ... the new document must not

have provisions that envisage automatism in the use of force against Iraq and absolutely impossible, unrealistic demands regarding the inspection activity ... in any case the UN Security Council's prerogatives should be preserved in accordance with its competence under the UN Charter in the matters of maintenance of international peace and security."

21 October 2002 Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov says Russia-EU talks on Kaliningrad are going better than before.

21 October 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Georgy Mamedov has talks with his Canadian colleague, Jim Wright, to discuss the implementation of bilateral agreements on strategic partnership.

22 October 2002 Dmitry Rogozin, presidential representative for Kaliningrad, says the EU council of foreign ministers in Luxembourg has decided to postpone the final solution on Kaliningrad. "The point is that Lithuania will be allowed to find, together with Russia, a form of control over railway transit that would satisfy both sides ... this status will continue until 1 July 2003."

Sergey Shishkarev, Duma deputy, is appointed head of the bureau of the Russian special presidential envoy for Kaliningrad, under an instruction signed by the head of the presidential administration on 18 October.

22 October 2002 Igor Ivanov says the US draft resolution on Iraq does not meet the requirements put forward by the Russian side. "We are prepared to work on a draft resolution that will ensure the effective work of inspectors, will be realistic and will not contain provisions which will automatically open the way to the use of force ... the proposed draft does not yet meet such requirements."

UNMOVIC head Hans Blix has talks with Igor Ivanov in Moscow.

22 October 2002 Russian Atomic Energy Minister Aleksandr Rumyantsev meets a delegation of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran to discuss issues relating to the construction of a nuclear power plant in Bushehr. Minatom has also given Tehran a feasibility study for the construction of a new VVER-1000 unit. Iran is expected to determine the site where it will be built. In addition, the Russian government has said it is ready to help Iran build another five nuclear units within the next ten years.

22 October 2002 Rumyantsev says Russia has no information about any possibility that North Korea is creating nuclear weapons. He says Russia needs to verify information given to it by the US on North Korean nuclear weapons.

22 October 2002 The Federal Border Guard service says Russian, Georgian, Azeri border guards will hold exercises at the end of October to practise action against rebels. The exercises will most likely be held on the Dagestani section of the border.

23 October 2002 The CIS decides to set up an energy council. Energy Minister Igor Yusufov says the new council will be in a position to carry out continuous monitoring of the state of the fuel and energy industry in the CIS countries, and to make decisions on the redistribution of fuel supplies depending on demand.

23 October 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and US Secretary of State Colin Powell discuss the Iraqi issue by telephone.

23 October 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Saltanov says Russia insists that international inspectors begin their activity in Iraq as soon as possible. He meets UNMOVIC head Hans Blix in Moscow.

23 October 2002 Mikhail Bogdanov, director of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Middle East and North Africa department, visits Sweden.

23 October 2002 Deputy foreign minister Aleksandr Saltanov says Russia is prepared for investment cooperation with Saudi Arabia. He attends a conference in Moscow on Russo-Saudi relations. The Saudi delegation at the conference is led by Prince Turki al-Faysal. The conference is timed to coincide with the 70th anniversary of the visit to Moscow by the prince's father King Faysal.

23 October 2002 The leaders of the Russian Union of Right Forces Boris Nemtsov and Irina Khakamada have been detained in Belarus. They are later expelled. The Russian leadership expresses concern over these events.

23 October 2002 Deputy foreign minister Georgy Mamedov says Russia favours the implementation of the 1994 US-North Korean framework nuclear agreement.

24 October 2002 Vladimir Putin cancels his meeting with German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder in Berlin and a trip to Portugal following the hostage crisis in Moscow. He also postpones his visit to Mexico and will not take part in the 25-27 October APEC summit. Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov will attend the summit, leaving for Mexico on 25 October.

The MFA welcomes US support over the hostage crisis in Moscow.

The MFA strongly protests to Denmark against plans to hold the World Chechen Congress in Copenhagen in October.

Igor Ivanov says the terrorist raid in Moscow is one link in a chain of well-coordinated actions on the part of international terrorists. "The USA, Indonesia, the Philippines and Russia are situated a long way from each other, but it is absolutely obvious that the acts of terrorism which have been committed in these countries were dispatched from a single centre, this is the work of one pair of hands ... the civilized world will only be able to confront this challenge, and, moreover, win this encounter, if it pools its efforts, declaring a war on terrorism in all its manifestations and in all dimensions".

24 October 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Yury Fedotov says the amended draft resolution submitted by the USA for the consideration of the UN Security Council "underwent some changes but in its present form it still does not meet the criteria that Russia is aiming for".

24 October 2002 Deputy foreign minister Aleksandr Losyukov says Russia is "holding consultations to obtain as full and trustworthy information as possible about the Korean People's Democratic Republic's nuclear programme".

25 October 2002 Interior Minister Boris Gryzlov has a telephone conversation with US FBI Director Robert Mueller.

25 October 2002 Minister of Economic Development and Trade German Gref and EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy hold negotiations in St Petersburg to discuss Russian accession to the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

The Economic Development and Trade Ministry reports that Russia's trade surplus amounted to 33.6bn dollars in January-September. Comparative data were not available. Exports declined by 1% on the year during the period to 76.2bn dollars. Exports to non-CIS countries were at 64.9bn dollars, a decrease of 1.4% on the year, while exports to CIS countries amounted to 11.3bn, up 1.4% on the year. Imports rose 11.8% on the year in January-September to 42.6bn. Imports from non-CIS countries amounted to 33.8bn dollars, a 19.9% increase on the year, while imports from CIS countries stood at 8.8bn dollars, down 10.8% on the year. Russia's total foreign trade turnover was 118.8bn dollars in January-September, posting an increase of 2.6% on the year.

26 October 2002 Vladimir Putin has a telephone conversation with UK Prime Minister Tony Blair. The head of the British government describes as "an impressive achievement" the operation to free the hostages in Moscow. Both sides emphasize the vital need to consolidate efforts in the fight against terrorism.

US Ambassador to Russia Alexander Vershbow praises the Russian security services for their actions during the operation.

26 October 2002 Deputy foreign minister Aleksandr Losyukov says Russia has no evidence of a nuclear programme by North Korea.

26 October 2002 The Russian and Chinese foreign ministers, Igor Ivanov and Tang Jiaxuan, discuss aspects of bilateral Russian-Chinese relations at a meeting in Los Cabos (Mexico). They are attending the APEC forum.

Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov, speaking at a meeting of the APEC Business Consultative Council, calls for curbing financial support for terrorism.

27 October 2002 First Deputy Foreign Minister and state secretary Valery Loshchinin protests against the World Chechen Congress planned to be held in

A Russian Chronology: October-December 2002

Copenhagen. An MFA statement says: "If the assemblage of the accomplices of the terrorists does go ahead in Copenhagen, the holding of the bilateral visit and the Russia-EU summit in Denmark, will become impossible."

The MFA protests to the French Ambassador over a meeting in support of Chechen separatists in Paris.

27 October 2002 The MFA condemns the terrorist incident in Ariel on the West Bank in Israel.

27 October 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Trubnikov visits Cuba. He says Russia is resolutely against the use of force to solve the Iraqi problem.

27 October 2002 Arab League Secretary-General Amr Musa meets Russian envoy Andrey Vdovin on the volatile situation in the Middle East region and the Iraqi crisis, in Cairo.

28 October 2002 The Chechen World Congress opens in Copenhagen. It calls for talks between the Russian and Chechen leaderships.

Presidential aide Sergey Yastrzhembskiy is interviewed on TV. He condemns the Danish authorities for allowing the World Chechen Congress to be held in Copenhagen.

The MFA says Vladimir Putin's visit to Denmark does not seem possible, because the Danish authorities have allowed the World Chechen Congress to take place on its territory. Putin's visit is scheduled for 11-12 November.

28 October 2002 Andrey Vdovin meets Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud Al-Faysal in Riyadh.

28 October 2002 Russia-WTO talks take place in Geneva. The Russian delegation is led by Maksim Medvedkov, deputy minister for economic development and trade.

28 October 2002 The Russian air force commander-in-chief, Vladimir Mikhaylov, meets his North Korean counterpart, O Kum-Chol, in Moscow.

29 October 2002 MFA special envoy Andrey Vdovin visits Syria.

29 October 2002 Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov meets his Azeri counterpart Safar Abiyev in Moscow.

29 October 2002 The MFA criticises Georgia's delaying the extradition of Chechen rebels seized in its Pankisi Gorge.

Vladimir Chkhikvishvili takes over as Russian Ambassador to Georgia.

29 October 2002 ITAR-TASS reports that Saudi Arabia has taken a major decision on cooperation with Russia in exploring the kingdom's huge natural gas deposits. At issue is the involvement of Russian energy companies in a Saudi gas programme worth 25bn dollars. Riyadh is negotiating with Western companies on this, and would like Russian participation.

30 October 2002 The Duma ratifies an agreement on setting up Blackseafor, a navy rapid interaction force. Turkey initiated the group in 1997 and a pertinent cooperation agreement was signed in Istanbul in April 2001. Bulgaria, Georgia, Russia, Romania, Turkey and Ukraine joined the force "due to the need to further cooperation and dialogue among countries along the Black Sea coast".

30 October 2002 Representative for Aslan Maskhadov Akhmed Zakayev is arrested in Denmark at the World Chechen Congress. The Russian Prosecutor-General's Office sends an official request for the extradition of Zakayev.

30 October 2002 Deputy Prime Minister Valentina Matviyenko visits Austria. She attends the 7th meeting of the joint economic cooperation commission in Vienna.

30 October 2002 The secretary-general of Amnesty International, Irene Khan, expresses concern over the human rights situation in Russia.

30 October 2002 The MFA welcomes the formation of the new Palestinian Cabinet.

31 October 2002 Vladimir Putin calls for cooperation with CIS states in fighting terrorism.

31 October 2002 Presidential aide Sergey Yastrzhembskiy says Russia will ask Qatar to consider the possibility of extraditing one of Aslan Maskhadov's emissaries, Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev.

Aleksandr Polukhin, the press attaché of the Russian embassy in Ankara, demands that Turkey close down a number of Chechen organizations located on its territory.

31 October 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Losyukov says Moscow has received unsatisfactory explanations from Pyongyang through diplomatic channels which concern the North Korean nuclear programme. He says: "The statements by North Korean authorities contain some ambiguity. In our opinion, such ambiguity is very dangerous, because it leads to mutual suspicions and may negatively influence the situation on the Korean peninsula."

31 October 2002 The Russian government approves the agreement between Russia and the USA on the reduction of strategic offensive potentials (SORT). The

document will now be presented to Vladimir Putin for submission to the Russian parliament.

November

1 November 2002 Federal Border Guard Service Director Colonel-General Konstantin Totskiy says eighty border guards have died and 220 have been wounded in the antiterrorist campaign in Chechnya.

1 November 2002 The Duma passes a resolution supporting Vladimir Putin's policy over Iraq.

Foreign Minister Yury Fedotov says the UN Security Council, not individual states, "should take a decision on the use of the whole arsenal of available means" to ensure the implementation by Iraq of the existing resolutions.

1 November 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Georgy Mamedov and China's ambassador to Russia Zhang Deguang hold talks on Korea.

The MFA welcomes the Japanese North Korean talks.

1 November 2002 The MFA criticises Turkish media coverage of the Dubrovka theatre siege.

2 November 2002 Denmark rejects Russia's request for the extradition of Chechen rebel president Aslan Maskhadov's envoy Akhmed Zakayev.

2 November 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov sends a letter via the Russian ambassador to Egypt Nikolay Kartuzov to the secretary-general of the Arab League, Amr Musa, telling him that Russia is against any UN Security Council resolution allowing for the automatic use of force against Iraq.

2 November 2002 First Lieutenant-General Mustafa Tlass, Syrian deputy commander-in-chief, deputy premier and minister of defence, visits the Russian cruiser *Moscow* and the accompanying guard ship *Pytlivyy*, which are on a three-day visit to Syria.

4 November 2002 The MFA states that it believes that the Iraqi leadership's unconditional consent to a return of UN inspectors to that country makes a new UN Security Council resolution on Iraq hardly necessary.

4 November 2002 The MFA criticises the "Russian Democracy Act of 2002" which has been adopted in the USA. It says it borders on interference in the internal affairs of Russia.

4 November 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov held talks with Secretary-General of the Arab Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Abd-al-Rahman Bin-Hamad al-Atiyyah. He says it is necessary to step up cooperation with Arab countries in the Persian Gulf region.

4 November 2002 Vladimir Putin has a telephone conversation with Azeri President Heydar Aliyev.

4 November 2002 The MFA says the matter of cuts in Russian gas supplies to Belarus is a purely economic one. The MFA rejects the Belarusian MFA's claims that Russia is trying to pressurise Belarus.

5 November 2002 Russia and China sign a joint programme for development, production and supply of civil aircraft.

5 November 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov says a settlement of the Iraqi crisis lies within the framework of political and diplomatic efforts in accordance with the UN resolutions. He meets CIS CST partners in Moscow. They adopt a resolution on Iraq.

5 November 2002 Prosecutor-General Vladimir Ustinov meets Danish Justice Minister Lene Espersen in Moscow and hands to her additional evidence of Akhmed Zakayev's involvement in a number of crimes in 1991-2001.

5 November 2002 Security Council secretary Vladimir Rushaylo says that Moscow is calling on Georgia not to procrastinate concerning the issue of the extradition of Chechen rebels detained in August on the Russian-Georgian border, who are now under guard in Tbilisi. Rushaylo also calls for the closure of Chechen missions in Georgia.

5 November 2002 The EU troika visits Moscow. They discuss coordination in fighting international terrorism.

5 November 2002 Prime minister Mikhail Kasyanov visits Armenia. He says Russia strongly objects to any attempts at forcible meddling with the affairs of sovereign countries. "We have a firm belief in the UN leading role in ensuring global peace and security." Armenia is transferring ownership of five of its firms to Russian control as a means of paying off its debt to Russia.

5 November 2002 Deputy foreign minister Georgy Mamedov says the Russian-US Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions "will be ratified before the end of this year".

6 November 2002 The special presidential envoy for the Kaliningrad problem and chairman of the Duma International Affairs Committee, Dmitry Rogozin, says there is certain progress in negotiations between Russia and the European Union over Kaliningrad.

6 November 2002 Vladimir Putin says that Russia "is sincerely interested in the broadest international cooperation and strengthening of the UN as the central element of the modern world order".

7 November 2002 Vladimir Putin and US President George W Bush hold a telephone conversation.

7 November 2002 Qatar is considering a request from the Russian Prosecutor-General for the arrest and extradition of Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev.

7 November 2002 The European Union officially recognizes Russia as a market economy.

8 November 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Yury Fedotov says the UN Security Council Resolution 1441 on Iraq means that the UNSC has the right to make the final decision on the use of force.

9 November 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov urges Iraq to accept UNSC Resolution 1441 passed on 8 November. Ivanov says that the resolution "reflects Russia's fundamental approach ... formulas unacceptable to Russia have been removed from the document: it does not provide for the automatic sanctioning of the use of force ... this resolution averts a real threat of war and clears the way for further efforts in search of a political and diplomatic settlement of the Iraq issue".

10 November 2002 Vladimir Putin welcomes UNSC Resolution 1441. He says: "I want to confirm once again that this is the result of a compromise. However, it is a compromise which is acceptable to us. It is the result of all the Security Council members and the United Nations working together. This is what is of fundamental importance to us, and this how all the permanent members of the UN Security Council interpret this resolution. It does not create a mechanism for the automatic use of force. This is what we managed to achieve by working together. We consider this a positive result."

Igor Ivanov calls on Iraq to accept UNSC Resolution 1441.

10 November 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Yury Fedotov meets US Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security John Bolton and US Ambassador to Moscow Alexander Vershbow. They discuss Iraq and the future of the International Criminal Court.

Dr Mark A Smith

10 November 2002 The MFA calls on the US Senate to ratify the Treaty on Reductions in Strategic Offensive Potentials before the end of 2002.

10 November 2002 Vladimir Putin has appointed Vladimir Chizhov as deputy foreign minister. Chizhov used to head the all-European cooperation department of the MFA.

11 November 2002 Vladimir Putin attends the Russia-EU summit in Brussels. They discuss fighting terrorism. They also discuss Kaliningrad. Putin says Russia and the European Union have succeeded in arriving at mutually-acceptable solutions of the problems of Kaliningrad Region. Energy projects are also discussed.

11 November 2002 The MFA says it hopes that the Iraqi parliament will make a decision to cooperate with the United Nations on the basis of UN Security Council Resolution 1441.

Deputy Foreign Minister Yury Fedotov says UN inspectors should be allowed access to Iraq's presidential sites. He also condemns US and British air raids in the no fly zones. He says UNSC resolution 1441 does not legitimise US plans. He says he does believe that the "United States will embark on unilateral action against Iraq after the adoption of the UN Security Council resolution, especially if Baghdad cooperates with the international inspectors ... much will depend on how the Iraqi side behaves." He says economic sanctions may be suspended this year and that Russia is in favour of extending the UN oil for food programme for Iraq.

11 November 2002 The MFA welcomes the results of a meeting of the Arab League foreign ministers which ended in Cairo on 10 November.

11 November 2002 Sergey Ivanov and Lee Jun, the Russian and Republic of Korea defence ministers, sign an intergovernmental agreement on preventing dangerous military activity, in Moscow.

Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says that Moscow has no information to indicate that North Korea is implementing a nuclear programme or has nuclear weapons.

11 November 2002 Gazprom head Aleksey Miller says Russia and the EU have agreed to start work on a gas pipeline across the Baltic seabed to link Leningrad Region directly to Germany. Miller talks with EU energy commissioners.

11 November 2002 Vladimir Putin meets NATO Secretary-General George Robertson in Brussels.

12 November 2002 Vladimir Putin visits Norway. Agreements on the Barents Sea are signed. He also meets German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder in Oslo. They discuss energy relations.

12 November 2002 Vladimir Putin says Moscow is willing to listen to Western advice to resolve Chechnya.

This problem is so complex that no-one is likely to provide a comprehensive recommendation for its resolution. Europe has fine examples of solutions for conflicts about contentious issues. But it also has examples of conflicts that even now, after many centuries, they have not managed to finally resolve.

I would like to say that we are not going to turn our noses up and say we are entirely indifferent to your opinion, we spit on it, and we are just going to go ahead and do what we think is necessary. Of course, we are going to listen attentively and respond to all well-meaning advice, to all those who really want to help resolve the situation.

12 November 2002 Gazprom deputy head Aleksandr Ryazanov criticises Belarus for blocking liberalisation of the gas market.

Gazprom and the Pakistani Ministry for Petroleum and Natural Resources sign a memorandum of understanding on the construction of a gas pipeline from Iran to India via Pakistan. Gazprom will carry out preliminary research of the pipeline route across Pakistan's coastal waters of the Arabian Sea.

12 November 2002 MFA special envoy Andrey Vodvin takes part in a meeting of Quartet representatives in Israel. He also meets Israeli and Palestinian officials.

12 November 2002 Vladimir Putin warns in Norway of the danger of an "extremist Islamic revolution." He says:

If you look at the statements and propaganda documents by those who give ideological inspiration to international terrorism, you notice the following: in essence, these people have set for themselves a global goal of creating a global caliphate, as they put it. This is very much reminiscent of communist world revolution, only in a new edition, in an extremist Islamic edition.

Thus, they set for themselves global goals. I would like to immediately point out that one should not confuse this with Islam in general. Islam as such has nothing to do with extremism and terrorism. And this is not the only direction the representatives of which are trying to achieve their political aims by using the methods of terrorism, there are also others [sic].

13 November 2002 Deputy foreign minister Yury Fedotov says Russia maintains "close contacts with the Iraqi leadership in its efforts to find a settlement of the issue surrounding the country." He says Russia is ready to offer inspectors to take part in monitoring on Iraqi territory. He says if Iraq complies with UN requirements Russia will raise the issue of lifting sanctions.

Dr Mark A Smith

13 November 2002 Georgy Mamedov, deputy foreign minister, has talks with British FCO officials on Chechnya and questions connected with preparing the foreign political and disarmament agenda for the next summit of the G8 in Evian (France) and also strategic stability, weapons of mass destruction and terrorism.

Russian navy C-in-C, Admiral Vladimir Kuroyedov, and First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff of Great Britain Admiral Alan West have talks in Moscow on naval cooperation.

13 November 2002 Special presidential representative for Kaliningrad Dmitry Rogozin says problems of Russia's military transit through the territory of Lithuania will be decided with that country on a bilateral basis.

Dmitry Rogozin calls on European countries to take a more active part in the fight against international terrorism and to support Russia in this fight. He says Europe is lax about international terrorism, and military measures may be necessary.

13 November 2002 Foreign minister Igor Ivanov is interviewed on Channel One TV. He welcomes Iraq's move to accept UNSC Resolution 1441.

13 November 2002 Interior Minister Boris Gryzlov proposes to set up a security belt on the Afghan border with CIS countries to prevent drug smuggling. He also calls on European countries to help.

13 November 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Razov meets Yugoslav Foreign Minister Goran Svilanovic.

13 November 2002 The Federation Council ratifies the agreement to set up a Black Sea naval group for operational interaction between the participating countries. The agreement, ratified by the Duma on 30 October, was signed by the Russian Federation on 2 April 2001, in Istanbul. The parties to the agreement, in addition to Russia, are Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Turkey and Ukraine.

14 November 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov says that Russian experts will be part of the international inspection mission in Iraq.

14 November 2002 Iraqi energy minister Sahban Faysal Mahjub is in Moscow for talks on signing numerous large contracts with Russia. Over 130 contracts worth a total of 1.2bn dollars have been signed in the electrical engineering field over the last three years. Energomashservis company signed a 70m dollar contract in Baghdad earlier in November.

14 November 2002 Russian presidential envoy for Kaliningrad Region, Dmitry Rogozin, says issues relating to military transit through Lithuania to Kaliningrad Region are a subject of bilateral Russian-Lithuanian agreements.

A Russian Chronology: October-December 2002

14 November 2002 The director of the Federal Border Guard Service, Konstantin Totskiy, says the Russian border in the North Caucasus will be technically reinforced in 2003.

14 November 2002 Sergey Lavrov, Russia's permanent representative at the UN, expresses the hope that the international inspectors in Iraq will not, like their predecessors, engage in any improper activity.

Deputy foreign minister Yury Fedotov says Russia favours reducing the timeframe for the work of international inspectors in Iraq and tying it closer to the suspension and further lifting of the sanctions against Baghdad.

15 November 2002 The Russo-French security council meets in Paris. Igor Ivanov and Sergey Ivanov attend.

Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov believes it is too soon to hold joint Russian-French military operations against international terrorism.

15 November 2002 Sergey Yastrzhembskiy attends a conference in Prague "Russia-EU-NATO". He says that "my perception is that Russia, having created the mechanism of "twenty" with NATO, is already, if you will, within NATO to a certain extent, in the sense that together with NATO we have already created a mechanism that to a great extent meets the needs and challenges of today in terms of security".

15 November 2002 Russian Security Council Secretary Vladimir Rushaylo says Russia will meet its obligations on arms withdrawal from Transdnestr region.

16 November 2002 Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma arrives in Moscow for talks en route to China.

16 November 2002 The MFA denounces the terrorist attack in Hebron in which 12 Israeli citizens were killed.

16 November 2002 Igor Ivanov says on TV that the use of force against Iraq cannot be ruled out but the relevant decision must be taken by the UN Security Council, not by inspectors.

17 November 2002 Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov arrives in France on a two-day official visit.

18 November 2002 Andrey Vdovin meets Jordanian Foreign Minister Marwan Mu'ashir in Amman. They discuss issues relating to the road map that has been formulated by the US administration in coordination with the concerned parties. The plan will be presented to the international Quartet in mid December to be approved and turned into an international plan to achieve peace in the Middle East.

18 November 2002 The MFA says "there is serious concern about the ongoing and conflicting reports from Pyongyang about the PDRK's right to possess nuclear weapons ... Russia expects the friendly Korean leadership to strictly observe all the terms and commitments in the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty."

18 November 2002 The MFA confirms the Russian ambassador to Iran has met an Iraqi opposition leader in Tehran.

18 November 2002 The Russian Air Force Commander's Deputy for CIS joint air defence affairs Yury Bondarev has a meeting with a Ukrainian delegation headed by Air Defence Troops Commander-in-Chief Anatoly Toropchyn. They discuss participation of Ukrainian air defence units in joint exercises with firing practice of CIS air defence and air forces, planned for August 2003 at the Russian training ground Ashuluk in Astrakhan Region.

19 November 2002 Sergey Tsyplakov, Russian trade representative to China, says Sino-Russian trade is likely to hit an all-time high to run at 11.5bn to 12bn dollars. Defence, nonferrous metallurgy and chemical-industry products, timber, fish and marine product constitute the core of Russian deliveries to the PRC. The share of machine equipment and household electrical appliances has grown in Chinese export to Russia along with traditional export commodities such as leather goods, shoes, and clothes.

19 November 2002 The State Customs Committee states that Russian-US trade in January-September 2002 went down by 11.3% to 5bn dollars.

19 November 2002 Security Council secretary Vladimir Rushaylo meets his Georgian counterpart Tedo Japaridze in Moscow.

19 November 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov meets speaker of the Lithuanian parliament Arturas Paulauskas in Moscow. Ivanov says a Russian delegation led by Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Razov will be sent to Lithuania shortly to discuss technical matters following from a recent understanding with the EU on transit to and from Kaliningrad Region.

19 November 2002 Itera concludes a contract with Belarus to supply gas. The price is higher than previous agreements with Gazprom.

19 November 2002 Foreign minister Igor Ivanov is interviewed in *Argumenty I Fakty*.

20 November 2002 Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says that Moscow does not have any information indicating that North Korea is holding nuclear weapons.

20 November 2002 Council of CIS defence ministers meets in Moscow. Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says the personnel at CIS military HQ will be reduced from 110 to 55 in January 2003. Ivanov says that members of the CST have decided to reinforce troops in Central Asia.

Members of the CIS security treaty have three regional groups: the Russian-Belarus group on the western rim of the CIS, the Russian-Armenian group in the south, and a collective rapid deployment force in the Central Asian region, which unites troops from Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

20 November 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov writes in *Kommersant*. He says the recent terrorist act in a Moscow theatre has been a link in the chain of crimes committed by terrorists recently in Indonesia, the Philippines and other parts of the world. He says no state currently threatens Russia and the world community now has more understanding for Russia's problems with Chechen terrorism. He welcomes Russia-EU agreements on Kaliningrad.

Akhmad Kadyrov, head of Chechnya's administration, says there are sufficient reasons for the extradition of Akhmed Zakayev, an envoy of Chechen elected president Aslan Maskhadov from Denmark.

20 November 2002 Oleg Chernov, deputy secretary of the Russian Security Council, says "the planned NATO expansion does not pose a serious threat to Russia's national security". He says the Baltic states must join the CFE Treaty. He says Russia will not join NATO.

20 November 2002 The MFA welcomes Turkey's decision to refuse entry to several Chechen military commanders.

20 November 2002 State Oil Company of the Azerbaijani Republic (SOCAR) President Natic Aliyev say Gazprom will begin gas deliveries of 1bn cubic metres to Azerbaijan annually starting in 2003.

20 November 2002 Andrey Nikolayev, chairman of the Duma Defence Committee, calls for joint arms production between Russia and India.

20 November 2002 Deputy foreign minister Sergey Razov is interviewed in Macedonian newspaper *Utrinski Vesnik* on Russia's Balkan policy.

21 November 2002 Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says NATO widening "is not an issue for Russia".

With regard to NATO enlargement, we have said this on more than one occasion. Our attitude to this process is calm. We see clearly that the military organization of NATO, and this is admitted by the leaders of NATO, is in need of reform so that, first of all, to respond to the real threats that do exist and not to the mythical ones.

Dr Mark A Smith

From the military point of view, I have only one concern. The three Baltic states, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, are not signatories to the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty. This is something I am concerned about. I think that in the future - prior to their accession or immediately after the accession, this is not that important - but these three countries must join the treaty in one form or another. This, without a doubt, would facilitate the stability of all restrictions on deployment of armed forces in Europe on the flanks and especially in the north, in the northwest, which is at present the calmest part of Europe in the military sense. At least we are interested that this situation continues to be the same in the future.

MFA spokesman Aleksandr Yakovenko is interviewed in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* on NATO widening and NATO-Russia relations.

First Deputy Chief of Staff of the armed forces Colonel-General Yury Baluyevskiy is interviewed in the Spanish newspaper *El Pais*. He says NATO is almost impossible to govern and expansion will only aggravate the issue.

21 November 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Trubnikov visits Portugal.

21 November 2002 LUKoil plans to build an export terminal in Murmansk with pipelines from various oil fields. This project will provide Russian oil companies with the shortest sea route to Northern Europe and the USA.

21 November 2002 Interior Minister Boris Gryzlov visits Belarus.

22 November 2002 The Russia-NATO Council meets in Prague on the second day of the NATO summit. NATO invites Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Estonia to join.

22 November 2002 US President George W Bush meets Vladimir Putin in St Petersburg following the NATO Prague summit. They discuss terrorism, US-Russian energy dialogue, NATO and Iraq. They adopt a joint statement on Iraq.

22 November 2002 The Belarusian cabinet reaches an agreement with Gazprom on the payment of Belarus's gas supply debts to Russia.

Gazprom chairman Aleksey Miller says activities on the North Europe gas pipeline project to ship Russian gas through Finland and the Baltic Sea to Europe will start in January.

22 November 2002 Minister for Industry, Science and Technologies Ilya Klebanov visits India.

A Russian Chronology: October-December 2002

22 November 2002 Zamir Kabulov, special envoy of the foreign minister to Afghanistan, says Russia is ready to dispatch specialists to Afghanistan to help restore industrial facilities.

23 November 2002 Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan visits Moscow for talks with Vladimir Putin. He also attends a conference of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation foreign ministers.

23 November 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov is interviewed on Channel One TV about the problems of the modern world and Russia's priorities in foreign policy.

Igor Ivanov warns that the international community should not be under the illusion that the threat of international terrorism will be eliminated after the Iraq problem is settled.

25 November 2002 Igor Ivanov says there is nothing unusual about Russian contacts with Iraqi opposition leaders.

25 November 2002 The MFA urges dialogue between the USA and North Korea.

25 November 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Losyukov warns of the danger of instability in Afghanistan and the possible return of the Taliban. "However, the potential threat of the comeback of the old forces to power in Afghanistan remains and correspondingly the spread of their ideology beyond the borders of the country ... lately the need has arisen to revise the actions of the international community with regard to Afghanistan and if not to develop a new strategy, then at least update the ideas of what should be jointly done in Afghanistan."

25 November 2002 Canadian foreign minister Bill Graham visits Moscow.

25 November 2002 Alexander Vershbow, US ambassador in Moscow, is interviewed on *Ekho Moskvy* radio.

25 November 2002 King Abdullah II of Jordan arrives in Moscow on a working visit. Igor Ivanov says he hopes the Quartet's peace plan will be adopted at foreign minister level by the end of 2002. He says there is no military solution to the Iraq problem.

25 November 2002 The MFA says Pakistan should fulfil all its obligations in order to eradicate terrorism in the country.

26 November 2002 Head of the executive staff of the Chechen administration Rudnik Dudayev says Grozny would like to hear concrete offers from the USA about the ways in which it could support efforts of Vladimir Putin to achieve

stability in Chechnya. He says: "The Chechen leadership is interested in the expulsion to Russia of separatist leaders such as Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev and Movladi Udugov, who illegally live abroad. The Americans could offer assistance in returning these terrorist leaders to Russia and bringing them to the dock." He says the USA could help block channels of outside support for foreign mercenaries fighting in Chechnya.

26 November 2002 Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Yury Fedotov and the chairman of UNMOVIC, Hans Blix, meet in New York to discuss "specific issues regarding Russia's part in the international inspections and monitoring in Iraq".

26 November 2002 FSB and Chinese Public Security Ministry officials meet in Chita to discuss consolidating their efforts in combating terrorism, illegal border-crossing, drug trafficking and smuggling.

27 November 2002 Belarusian President Aleksandr Lukashenko visits Russia for talks with Vladimir Putin. Putin announces that the Bank of Russia has allocated to Belarus another instalment of R1.5bn to effect the transition of the union state to a single currency.

27 November 2002 Vladimir Putin meets the chairman of PACE Peter Schieder.

27 November 2002 The MFA welcomes the resumption of weapons inspections in Iraq which begin today.

27 November 2002 The MFA says that Georgia no longer has grounds to refuse the extradition of Chechen nationals as the European Court for Human Rights in Strasbourg has lifted its moratorium on the extradition of eight Chechen militants from Georgia to Russia.

27 November 2002 Ground Forces Commander and Deputy Defence Minister Nikolay Kormiltsev says that the 6th independent motor-rifle battalion of the CIS Collective Peacekeeping Forces in the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zone has been disbanded and withdrawn from its permanent stationing area in Gudauta.

27 November 2002 The Russian Baltic Fleet and the Royal Swedish Navy are carrying out a joint command-post exercise to aid surface ships and submarines in distress.

27 November 2002 The MFA says that Russia will help Afghanistan build a new army and law-enforcement agencies.

27 November 2002 The NATO-Russia Council meets at ambassadorial level. The participants of the meeting focus attention on interaction in rescue operations at

sea, the coordination of actions of both sides for the control of air corridors in the fight with terror threats, as well as promising projects of applying military and transport aviation.

27 November 2002 Security Council deputy secretary Vladimir Potapov is interviewed in *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* on security in the Russian Far East.

28 November 2002 Foreign Minister Aleksandr Losyukov says Russia does not have any plans to have Afghanistan divided into spheres of influence. Afghan Foreign Minister Abdollah Abdollah visits Moscow.

28 November 2002 MFA says Russia will open a general consulate in Haifa, Israel.

28 November 2002 The MFA welcomes the establishment of the International Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (ICOC).

28 November 2002 The MFA says that the Jackson-Vanik amendment hinders US-Russian business relations.

28 November 2002 Chinese foreign minister Tang Jiaxuan is interviewed in *Izvestiya* on Russo-Chinese relations.

Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov writes an article on Russo-Chinese relations in *Kommersant*.

29 November 2002 Vladimir Putin says Russia's armed forces will gradually become an all-contract force.

29 November 2002 Gazeksport says exports of Russian gas to Europe in January-October 2002 increased by 3% (3.1 bn cubic metres) year-on-year to 104.9 bn cubic metres. Gas supplies to Western Europe increased 2.1% to 71.04 bn cu.m. (69.6 bn cu.m. in the same period last year). Russia exported a total of 33.84 bn cu.m. of gas to Eastern Europe in January-October 2002, up 5.1% from 32.2 bn cu.m. in the same period a year earlier.

29 November 2002 Deputy foreign minister Aleksandr Losyukov says Moscow has evidence that Chechen rebels are maintaining their presence and continuing training in Afghanistan.

29 November 2002 Sukhoy have won a tender to supply the Malaysian air force with Su-30MK fighters. Malaysia will also have the Boeing F-18E Super Hornet.

Dr Mark A Smith

29 November 2002 Deputy foreign minister Aleksandr Saltanov says Russia and Iraq have basically coordinated a long-term cooperation programme.

29 November 2002 MFA says it hopes that the United States and North Korea will hold a direct dialogue to discuss implementation of the non-proliferation treaty.

29 November 2002 Deputy foreign minister Sergey Razov and Turkish ambassador to Russia Kurtulus Taskent meet to discuss fighting terrorism, particularly Chechen organisations operating in Turkey.

30 November 2002 Afghan Foreign Minister Abdollah Abdollah ends his visit to Moscow.

30 November 2002 Dmitry Rogozin, special presidential envoy for Kaliningrad, has discussions in Lithuania on the rules of Russian citizens' trips to and from Kaliningrad.

December

1 December 2002 Vladimir Putin arrives in China on an official visit.

1 December 2002 Russia begins deploying military aircraft at Kant airbase near Bishkek in Kyrgyzstan.

1 December 2002 Duma chairman Gennady Seleznev visits Japan.

1 December 2002 A Pakistani delegation, led by Deputy Foreign Minister Anisuddin Ahmad, arrives in Moscow to attend a meeting of the joint working group on the struggle against terrorism.

1 December 2002 Vladimir Putin is interviewed in the Indian newspaper *The Hindu*.

2 December 2002 The MFA condemns recent US air raids on Iraq.

2 December 2002 The MFA says Russia does not plan to take part in any international conferences on "the future of Iraq without Saddam Hussein". A conference of this sort will take place in London on 13-15 December.

2-3 December 2002 Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov visits Germany. He says Russia will not join NATO.

3 December 2002 Gazprom will start gas supplies to Europe by the new North European line in 2007.

3 December 2002 Vladimir Putin says in China that Russia has its interests in the Caspian region and it will uphold them. He says that Russia's interests in the region "may be coincident with interests of the US". He says the "configuration of interests in the energy sphere is now changing with the unstable situation in the Middle East". He adds that the "world economy is interested in stable deliveries of energy carriers from new regions".

3 December 2002 Vladimir Putin arrives in India on an official visit. He is accompanied by Security Council Secretary Vladimir Rushaylo and Ilya Klebanov, minister of industry, science and technologies, to discuss military-technical cooperation. Russia's cooperation with India in the field of military hardware is estimated at 1,500m dollars a year. Accords on strategic partnership and anti-terrorist cooperation are signed. While in India, Putin tells Pakistan to crack down on its terrorist infrastructure in Kashmir and Jammu. India and Russia will cooperate on projects in the energy, metals, civil aviation and space industries. Russia will take part in a tender to upgrade India's railway network and its electrification.

3 December 2002 The Danish Justice Ministry has officially turned down Russia's request for the extradition of Chechen rebel leader Aslan Maskhadov's envoy, Akhmed Zakayev. This is criticised by the Russian Justice Ministry.

The head of the international legal department of the Office of the Russian Prosecutor-General, Robert Adelkhanyan, says Russia is to appeal to the European Court over Denmark's refusal to extradite Akhmed Zakayev.

3 December 2002 Chief of the General Staff Anatoly Kvashnin arrives in Brussels for a meeting of the Russia-NATO Council at CGS level. He says the most urgent issue of military cooperation between Russia and NATO is the fight against terrorism.

3 December 2002 Russian deputy chief delegate to the UN Gennady Gatilov tells the 57th session of the UN General Assembly that Israel and the Palestinians must show restraint. He calls on the Israeli and Palestinian leaders "to stand abreast of high political responsibility and to do their utmost to resume the negotiating process" on the basis of the so-called road map worked out by the four international mediators (Russia, the USA, the EU and the UN).

3 December 2002 Valery Loshchinin, Russia's first deputy foreign minister, says because the Georgian authorities' cooperation in the fight against terrorism is insufficiently effective, "it is quite difficult to pursue substantive talks" on the conclusion of a treaty on peace, cooperation and mutual security between Georgia and Russia, although there are no substantive problems over the treaty.

3 December 2002 The Russian government approves a draft medium-term programme of trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation with Ethiopia, that had been submitted earlier by the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade.

4 December 2002 Svetlana Marennikova, expert for dangerous infections of the World Health Organisation denies claims that the Russian smallpox virus was exported to Iraq in 1990.

5 December 2002 Vladimir Putin visits Kyrgyzstan.

5 December 2002 The MFA issues a note to the US embassy in Moscow over the US administration's September decision to impose sanctions against three Russian defence factories that the USA suspects of cooperation with the countries they list among sponsors of terrorism.

6 December 2002 Interpol's National Bureau in Russia confirms that Russian law-enforcement agencies sent an international warrant for the search and detention of Chechen separatist Akhmed Zakayev to Britain.

Vladimir Putin has a telephone conversation with British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

6 December 2002 Igor Ivanov criticises Georgia's desire to join NATO.

Russian presidential aide Sergey Yastrzhembskiy says he thinks that NATO's expansion will make the alliance weaker.

6 December 2002 Iraqi Ambassador to Moscow Abbas Khalaf reaffirms Baghdad's intention to continue cooperation with Russian oil companies. He says Iraq is happy with Russia's stance on the Iraqi question.

6 December 2002 An intergovernmental commission of Russia and Kazakhstan concludes its work on an agreement delimiting the border between Altay Territory and Kazakhstan. The total length of the border sector is 300 km. The next phase of delimitation negotiations will take place in Ust-Kamenogorsk in spring 2003. The work will be over in 1.5-2 years.

6 December 2002 The minister of nationalities policy, Vladimir Zorin, and Tajik minister of labour and social security, Rafiqqa Musoyeva, discuss Tajik illegal immigration into Russia.

6 December 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and Dutch Foreign Minister Jakob de Hoop Scheffer meet in Portugal, to discuss OSCE work for 2003. The Dutch foreign minister is the OSCE chairman-in-office.

A Russian Chronology: October-December 2002

6 December 2002 Minister of Atomic Energy Aleksandr Rumyantsev says India and China are the most promising markets for modern Russian nuclear technologies.

7 December 2002 Igor Ivanov says he hopes that Britain will allow the extradition of Akhmed Zakayev.

7 December 2002 The Russian Prosecutor-General's Office welcomes Georgia's decision to hand over to Russia one of the people accused of bombing houses in Moscow and Volgodonsk, Yusuf Krymshamkhalov.

7 December 2002 Igor Ivanov says Moscow believes it is wrong to make any hasty judgments about Iraq's compliance with UN Security Council Resolution 1441 and other international documents.

7 December 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov meets in Porto with Yugoslav Foreign Minister Goran Svilanovic at the OSCE Ministerial Council.

Igor Ivanov says in Portugal that the possibility of extending the OSCE mandate in Chechnya is currently being discussed, as it formally expires on 31 December.

7 December 2002 The Council of the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly meets in St Petersburg.

7 December 2002 *Al Hayat* newspaper reports that Moscow intends to hold direct contacts with Iraqi Kurdish leaders and will send its Baghdad ambassador to Kurdistan for that purpose.

7 December 2002 Vladimir Putin submits the treaty between Russia and the USA on cuts in strategic offensive arsenals for ratification by the Duma.

8 December 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and US Secretary of State Colin Powell discuss the Iraqi situation by telephone.

8 December 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov visits Spain.

8 December 2002 NATO Secretary-General George Robertson arrives in Moscow. He will discuss with Russian leadership cooperation with the alliance and will sum up the results of six months' work of the Russia-NATO Council.

8 December 2002 The MFA welcomes Iraq's report on its weapons programmes submitted to the UN.

9 December 2002 Defence minister Sergey Ivanov says Chechen rebels must be treated as terrorists.

9 December 2002 Vladimir Putin addresses a NATO-Russia conference on the role of the armed forces in fighting terrorism in Moscow. Secretary-General George Robertson says NATO and Russia are now the core of the coalition to guarantee security. He says Osama bin Laden has brought Russia and NATO together. Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says he so far has not seen a possibility for Russian-NATO joint operations to combat terrorism.

George Robertson says that his latest talks in Moscow have made it clear that Russia would not object to the use of armed force against Iraq if that country fails to comply with UN resolutions.

Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov says Russia and NATO are entering a stage of a true partnership. "The Russia-NATO Council has started working towards strengthening our common and indivisible security, which shows that we are entering a stage of true partnership ... NATO's re-orientation from political confrontation between coalitions to the struggle against today's main threat, international terrorism, is objectively strengthening the foundations for our further cooperation ... there are two fundamental principles that will guide us along in dealing with NATO. First, our relations must be based on international law, on the UN Charter and on resolutions of the UN Security Council." Second: "NATO must observe its commitment to pursue a policy of military restraint in line with the Russia-NATO Founding Act and to ensure that the amended treaty on conventional forces in Europe be signed by the countries that have been invited to join NATO."

9 December 2002 The Russian Prosecutor-General's Office sends a request to London to extradite Akhmed Zakayev, together with the evidence about the former field commander's involvement in serious crimes in Russia.

9 December 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Georgy Mamedov says cooperation between Russia and China is expected to serve as the basis of the antiterrorist centre of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Russo-Chinese consultations take place in Moscow.

9 December 2002 President Vladimir Putin has a telephone conversation with his French counterpart Jacques Chirac.

9 December 2002 Ukrainian Leonid Kuchma visits Moscow. Vladimir Putin congratulates Ukrainian Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich on his appointment to this post. Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov says Russia and Ukraine may sign a free trade agreement in February 2003.

9 December 2002 Vladimir Putin thanks Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze for the arrest of Yusup Krymshamkhalov, one of the organizers of the explosions of apartment houses in Moscow and Volgograd.

A Russian Chronology: October-December 2002

9 December 2002 Amr Musa, secretary-general of the Arab League, arrives in Moscow. Russia and the Arab League will sign a series of agreements designed to advance their bilateral contacts.

10 December 2002 The Russian and Belarusian prime ministers sign a gas deal. Belarus is to import 18.5bn cubic metres of natural gas from Russia in 2003. No final agreement is reached on currency union.

First Deputy Foreign Minister Valery Loshchinin says the EU's policy of isolating Belarus is useless.

10 December 2002 Russian Atomic Energy Minister Aleksandr Rumyantsev signs a cooperation protocol with France's industrial group Areva in France.

10 December 2002 Russia starts to import electricity from Kazakhstan.

10 December 2002 Russian special presidential representative for the Caspian Sea and Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Kalyuzhnyy says Russia has invited Iran to take part in developing the southern part of the Caspian, specifically the Turkmen shelf. Kalyuzhnyy says Russia has invited Iran to opt for dividing the Caspian Sea by resources rather than percentage shares. Kaluzhnyy says Iran "has started considering this option and asked Russia for the methodology of dividing the northern part of the Caspian".

10 December 2002 The MFA warns that using the activity of international weapons inspectors in Iraq as a pretext for an attempt to violently remove the Iraqi leadership is inadmissible.

Igor Ivanov says the UN Security Council will only take into account the opinions of Unmovic and IAEA experts on the Iraqi report on its military programmes.

10 December 2002 The MFA calls on Israel to scale down military operations in Palestinian areas.

Igor Ivanov says the quartet of international mediators (Russia, the USA, the EU and the UN) have virtually completed work on a "road map" for settling the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, which should bring about the formation of a Palestinian state.

10 December 2002 The MFA says it opposes a Montenegro-Serbia divorce.

10 December 2002 Zarubezhneft general director Nikolay Tokarev is interviewed in *Vremya*. He says the USA has offered to let it retain its long-standing links with Iraq in return for supporting US policy over Iraq. Tokarev says Zarubezhneft will follow Russia's policy over Iraq.

11 December 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Yury Fedotov says Russia has received a copy of the Iraqi report to the UN disarmament commission.

11 December 2002 Foreign minister Igor Ivanov meets Albanian foreign minister Ilir Meta in Moscow. He says Russia is interested in maintaining stability in the Balkans by political means.

European Union Special Representative in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Paddy Ashdown, visits Moscow.

11 December 2002 Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov and chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, Richard Myers, discuss issues pertaining to nuclear attack warnings. The talks are held at the Space Troops command post in the town of Solnechnogorsk near Moscow.

11 December 2002 Deputy Director of the Federal Border Guard Service Colonel-General Aleksey Kozhevnikov says Russian border guards have confiscated over 3.6 tonnes of drugs, including 2.3 tonnes of heroin, on the Tajik-Afghan border since the beginning of 2002.

11 December 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksey Meshkov speaks at an international conference in Moscow entitled "Russia-NATO-EU in a changing security space". He says Moscow is optimistic about plans to develop trilateral contacts between Russia, NATO and the EU. "Russia has not and will not oppose its relations with NATO to that organization's ties with the EU. Moreover, we can and should say that trilateral ties are promising."

12 December 2002 *Radio Russia* reports Iraq has broken a contract with LUKoil on the joint development of the Western Kurna oil and gas deposit. This is because of Russia's failure to fulfil its commitments to develop the field stipulated by the 1997 contract. The 12-year-old UN embargo on investment in the Iraqi oil sector is still in force, which makes it impossible to fulfil the contract.

12 December 2002 The MFA expresses deep concern when North Korea announces its decision to resume its nuclear programme after it stopped receiving compensatory fuel oil from the USA under a 1994 agreement.

12 December 2002 Vladimir Putin signs a decree extending the term of Russian peacekeepers' stay in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Russian military are to stay in the Balkans at least until August 2003. The Russian contingent of some 350 servicemen has already been in Bosnia and Herzegovina for five years.

13 December 2002 The head of the centre for coordinating Russian-Iranian programmes, Radzhif Safarov, denies US allegations that Iran may be developing a secret nuclear weapons programme. He says the claims are due to tough competition on the nuclear technology market.

13 December 2002 Russia's envoy to the UN Sergey Lavrov says Russia has prepared its proposals on changes to the list of goods that Iraq needs UN approval to import, and is ready to discuss them at any moment. On 10 December the USA presented the UN Security Council with 36 additions to the list of goods banned for import to Iraq, as they may be used for both civilian and military objectives.

Yuly Vorontsov, Russian UN coordinator for Iraq, has been invited by the Iraqi authorities to visit Baghdad for the first time.

15 December 2002 The MFA says it "views with regret" the decision of the Iraqi Oil Ministry to sever a contract with a Russian consortium comprising LUKoil and its partners for the development of the Western Qurna-2 oil deposit.

15 December 2002 First Deputy Foreign Minister Yury Fedotov says only UN experts are in position to assess the weapons dossier submitted by Iraq.

15 December 2002 Nuclear Energy Minister Aleksandr Rumyantsev says Russia does not have any contacts in the nuclear field with North Korea.

15 December 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Losyukov says Russia does not intend to give up its jurisdiction over four South Kuril islands claimed by Japan but does not rule out a mutually-beneficial compromise in the future.

15 December 2002 First Deputy Foreign Minister Valery Loshchinin accuses Georgia of hampering the implementation of bilateral agreements on cooperation in the fight against terrorism.

16 December 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov visits the Philippines.

16 December 2002 Igor Ivanov sends a message to the Iraqi leadership in connection with the dispute about LUKoil's contract to develop the Western Qurna-2 oil deposit. He calls on the Iraqi leadership to review the decision it took earlier.

16 December 2002 Russia supplies 10 Su-30MKK multifunctional fighters to China in the framework of a bilateral contract.

17 December 2002 The MFA proposes that the Russian-US Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty, signed in Moscow in May 2002 be ratified early in 2003. The Duma is setting up a working group on "improving" the Russian-American treaty on reducing strategic offensive potentials. It will draw up amendments to the bill on ratifying the Treaty.

17 December 2002 Vladimir Putin meets Yemeni President Ali Abdallah Salih in Moscow. They sign a declaration on the principles of friendly relations and

cooperation between the two countries which states their intention to develop military and technological cooperation and to cooperate in economic and political fields.

17 December 2002 The sixth round of consultations between the general staffs of the Russian armed forces and the People's Liberation Army of China end in Beijing. The head of the Russian delegation, the first deputy chief of the Russian General Staff, Yury Baluyevskiy, held a meeting in the second half of the day with Chinese Defence Minister Chi Haotian.

17 December 2002 A Russian-Norwegian expert group discusses expanding cooperation in a programme for the environmental reclamation of the Kola peninsula.

17 December 2002 Gazprom and Uzbekneftegaz sign an agreement to supply 10bn cubic metres of natural gas to Russia by 2005.

17 December 2002 Deputy foreign minister Sergey Razov visits Turkey.

18 December 2002 The MFA says it regrets US attempts to create a global missile defence system. Presidential aide on strategic stability issues Marshal Igor Sergeyev says Washington has presented no sufficient arguments to assure Moscow that the deployment of national missile defence system (NMD) is not targeting Russia.

18 December 2002 Igor Ivanov visits Japan. He denies that Russia has supplied nuclear weapons to Iran. He calls for a dialogue between North and South Korea.

18 December 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Georgy Mamedov says Moscow believes it is appropriate to make conclusions as to whether Iraq has violated the international community's demands or not only after the UN weapons inspectors submit a report on this account.

18 December 2002 The Duma proposes that the US Congress expand joint efforts on chemical disarmament.

19 December 2002 Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev visits Moscow for talks with Vladimir Putin.

19 December 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Losyukov says efforts have failed so far to create a six-sided mechanism with the participation of North and South Korea, Russia, the United States, China and Japan capable of resolving the Korean peninsula issue.

19 December 2002 Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says Russia plans foreign borrowing of 3bn dollars in 2004 and 4bn dollars in 2005. In 2004, Russia's foreign debt payments will amount to 14.5bn dollars and in 2005 Russia would have to pay 17.2bn dollars on its foreign debt. In 2003, Russia is due to pay 17.3bn dollars.

19 December 2002 Assistant Deputy Chief Secretary of the Japanese cabinet Shotaro Yachi arrives in Moscow for talks with deputy foreign ministers Georgy Mamedov and Aleksey Meshkov.

20 December 2002 The director of the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) Sergey Lebedev is interviewed in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*. He says Russia does not spy against CIS countries.

20 December 2002 The Duma ratifies the Shanghai convention on the fight against terrorism, separatism and extremism. The convention was signed by the Russian president on 15 June 2001 at a meeting of the heads of the Russian, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Chinese, Tajik and Uzbek states in Shanghai.

20 December 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov visits the USA. Igor Neverov, head of the MFA's North America Department, says the Russian Federation and the United States differ in their assessment of the situation around North Korea.

20 December 2002 Hungarian Prime Minister Peter Medgyessy visits Moscow.

20 December 2002 The MFA states that the possible use of force in Iraq would undermine prospects for a Middle East settlement. Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Saltanov and Arab League representative Saied Al-Bouromi have talks in Moscow.

20 December 2002 Russian military communications start withdrawing from Georgia following the agreement reached by Russian and Georgian military experts on 11 December.

The head of the MOD's international cooperation department, Anatoly Mazurkevich, says Russia does not refuse to withdraw its military units from Georgia, but the withdrawal cannot be completed earlier than in 11-12 years. Georgia continues to insist on a 3-3.5-year timeframe, but Russia believes it is unrealistic.

20 December 2002 Gazprom Chief Mikhail Akselrod says supplies of gas to Turkey as part of the Blue Stream project will begin on 28 December.

20 December 2002 World Bank chief economist for Russia Christof Ruehl says GDP growth in Russia will be less than 4% in 2003. The World Bank estimates this year's GDP growth in Russia at 4.1%.

21 December 2002 Russian presidential plenipotentiary envoy for the Far Eastern Federal District Konstantin Pulikovskiy meets Japan's ambassador to Russian Federation, Issei Nomura. They discuss energy cooperation.

21 December 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and US Secretary of State Colin Powell meet in Washington. They reaffirm that security guarantees will be given to North Korea, but it should allow the IAEA to control its nuclear programmes.

21 December 2002 The MFA expresses concern over the European parliament resolution welcoming the decision by the Danish government not to extradite Chechen separatist emissary Akhmed Zakayev.

22 December 2002 Foreign minister Igor Ivanov says Russia sees no basis for joining any possible military operation against Iraq.

22 December 2002 Igor Ivanov says the US plan for NMD does not threaten Russia. The first deputy chief of the General Staff, Yury Baluyevskiy, repeats this view.

22 December 2002 The MFA says it opposes any forceful resolution of the Kurdish problem in Turkey.

22 December 2002 The head of the MOD's department for international military cooperation Colonel-General Anatoly Mazurkevich says Russia and South Korea have signed a memorandum on military and military-technical cooperation for 2003. He says there is no information about North Korea's work on the production of weapons of mass destruction on the basis of fissile materials. He says concrete information is needed.

23 December 2002 Atomic Energy Minister Aleksandr Rumyantsev visits Iran. He says the Atomic Energy Ministry has instructed Atomstroyeksport to review the technical aspects of building the second unit of the Bushehr nuclear power plant in Iran.

Deputy Foreign Minister Georgy Mamedov is interviewed in *Vremya Novosti*. He says Russian-Iranian atomic energy cooperation complies with the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

23 December 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov says that any unilateral actions against Iraq that do not fall under UN Security Council resolutions are inadmissible. He says: "Any action outside the framework of Resolution 1441 (on Iraq) of the UN Security Council can do nothing but complicate the regional situation."

23 December 2002 Israeli Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu visits Russia.

23 December 2002 The MFA expresses regret about North Korea's unilateral step to remove seals and other monitoring tools put on its nuclear facilities by the IAEA.

23 December 2002 Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov and Ukraine's Defence Minister Army General Volodymyr Shkidchenko sign a cooperation plan between the two countries' military departments for 2003.

23 December 2002 Duma speaker Gennady Seleznev says Russia lacks a serious state policy of interaction with CIS states.

24 December 2002 Defence minister Sergey Ivanov says Russia is in no hurry to pull out its military bases from Georgia. He says negotiations with Georgia on the bases are so far fruitless.

24 December 2002 The MFA says it receives with interest a proposal US President George W Bush made in an interview with *US News and World Report* on US cooperation with Russia and China to preserve peace and reach a common goal - a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula.

Russian and Japanese foreign ministers Igor Ivanov and Yoriko Kawaguchi discuss the situation on the Korean Peninsula by telephone.

24 December 2002 The MFA expresses regret over the US intention to start deploying a global antimissile defence system. It also regrets Japan's intention to cooperate with US NMD plans.

24 December 2002 Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the head of the ruling Turkish Justice and Development Party, visits Moscow for talks with Vladimir Putin.

24 December 2002 Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says he opposes using forces against Iraq.

24 December 2002 Viktor Kozlov, general director of the Russian company Atomstroyeksport, says the total value of Russian contracts for the construction of the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant will exceed 1bn dollars.

24 December 2002 The Vietnam-Russia Inter-Governmental Committee on Economic, Trade, Scientific and Technological Cooperation meets in Hanoi. Deputy Prime Minister Viktor Khristenko heads the Russian delegation.

25 December 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Losyukov calls for North Korea's cooperation with the IAEA. He says the "situation surrounding North Korea's nuclear programme worries Russia, as it negatively affects the situation on the Korean peninsula".

Dr Mark A Smith

Atomic Energy Minister Aleksandr Rumyantsev says the IAEA has no complaints about Russia's cooperation with Iran.

25 December 2002 Vladimir Rushaylo, the chairman of the Security Council and secretary of the Committee of the CIS Collective Security Treaty, is interviewed in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* on Russian security policy in the CIS.

25 December 2002 A Russian communications battalion leaves a Russian military base in Georgia for Armenia.

25 December 2002 Deputy foreign minister Yury Fedotov warns that war against Iraq may distract the international community from Afghanistan.

25 December 2002 Defence minister Sergey Ivanov says the Baltic states should join the CFE Treaty.

25 December 2002 Yury Shafranik, chairman of the oil and gas industrial union of Russia, visits Saudi Arabia. He holds talks with Saudi Arabian Minister for Oil and Mineral Resources Ali Bin-Ibrahim al-Nu'aymi and the top managers of the Saudi Aramco national oil company.

26 December 2002 The MFA criticises the US State Department's report on human rights.

27 December 2002 The Federation Council ratifies the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's convention on combating terrorism, separatism and extremism.

27 December 2002 The MFA says that Islamic terrorists arrested in France recently are linked with Chechen forces.

27 December 2002 The MFA expresses concern over ongoing US and British air raids on Iraqi sites.

27 December 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and his Chinese counterpart Tang Jiaxuan speak by telephone. They call for dialogue between the USA and North Korea over the nuclear issue.

27 December 2002 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Losyukov says North Korea must continue cooperation with IAEA. Aleksandr Rumyantsev, Russia's minister of atomic energy, says North Korea does not have the serious preconditions needed to develop a nuclear military programme.

27 December 2002 Aleksandr Rumyantsev says Russia and Iran have agreed on the final text of the agreement on supplying nuclear fuel to the nuclear power plant in Bushehr.

27 December 2002 Deputy Interior Minister, Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Interior Ministry Troops, Army General Vyacheslav Tikhomirov visits China. He says law-enforcement bodies of Russia and China are ready to discuss in detail matters of fighting terrorism.

28 December 2002 Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and his British counterpart Jack Straw discuss the OSCE mandate for Chechnya by telephone.

The MFA states it regards the terrorist act in Groznyy as a continuation of the global terrorist challenge.

28 December 2002 The FSB hands over to Georgia two men (Soso Toria and Vepkhia Durglishvili) accused of an attempt on the life of President Eduard Shevardnadze in 1998.

29 December 2002 The Blue Stream Black Sea Russia-Turkey pipeline is launched. The pipeline will pump 16bn cubic metres of natural gas from Russia to Turkey every year.

29 December 2002 The Georgian State Border Guard Department says it and the Russian Federal Border Guard Service have worked out a plan of measures to cooperate in border protection in 2003. The plan was worked out in compliance with the provisions of a protocol on reinforcing protection of the Russian-Georgian border, signed in Yerevan in October.

30 December 2002 Foreign minister Igor Ivanov is interviewed in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* on Russian foreign policy in 2002.

30 December 2002 Mikhail Lysenko, director of the MFA's security and disarmament department, says Moscow rejects the possibility of imposing international sanctions on North Korea over the resumption of its nuclear programme.

Igor Ivanov regrets North Korea's decision to expel IAEA inspectors. He says North Korea should abide by the 1994 US-North Korean agreement on non-nuclear status. He also says it is wrong to try to isolate North Korea.

31 December 2002 The MFA says the OSCE's Assistance Group to Chechnya is ending its work; its mandate, which expires on 31 December, will not be extended.

31 December 2002 Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says international terrorism, NATO expansion and the US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty are the key threats facing Russia.

31 December 2002 Deputy foreign minister Yury Fedotov says Russia "is going to try to simplify the rules for supplying civilian goods to Iraq in the future". Russia abstains from the vote on UN Security Council Resolution 1454 on the Goods Review List for Iraq.

NTV reports that two anti-submarine warships will be sent to the Persian Gulf.

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