

Conflict Studies Research Centre

A Russian Chronology - January-March 1998

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Russian Internal Politics: Chronology

January - March 1998

January

6 January 1998 Petr Marchenko, the presidential plenipotentiary representative in Adygeya, Dagestan, Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachay-Cherkessia says that the North Caucasus is of special interest to foreign intelligence services.

6 January 1998 Interior minister Anatoly Kulikov threatens cross border raids into Chechnya.

8 January 1998 Presidential press spokesman Sergey Yastrzhembskiy says that Yel'tsin will not be going to Chechnya in the near future.

8 January 1998 Chechnya reinforces its border with Dagestan following reports of Russian troop movements in Dagestan.

9 January 1998 Prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin reviews 1997's economic performance in Rossiyskaya Gazeta.

9 January 1998 Federation Council chairman Yegor Stroyev is concerned that Russia may become a confederation.

11 January 1998 Top officials from 22 regions visit the USA with a member of the presidential staff, Viktoriya Mitina to attend an investment symposium.

11 January 1998 A poll carried out by the Public Opinion Foundation gives the following results:

Who would you vote for president? (December 28 1997 poll)

Gennady Zyuganov	18%	21%
Boris Nemtsov	14%	10%
Aleksandr Lebed'	11%	11%
Yury Luzhkov	10%	10%
Grigory Yavlinskiy	8%	9%

14 January 1998 The Duma's spring session commences.

14 January 1998 Yel'tsin rejects all talk of a coalition government.

14 January 1998 Economics minister Yakov Urinson says that the annual amount of foreign investments should double in Russia in the next two years. Urinson says that foreign investments accounted for 3-4% of all capital investment in Russia in 1997, while the country needs at least 5-10%.

14 January 1998 Nezavisimaya Gazeta reports that Lev Rokhlin has sought to register The Movement in Support of the Army, the Defence Industry and Military Science with the Ministry of Justice.

15 January 1998 Yury Luzhkov say he will run again for mayor in 2000.

16 January 1998 Yel'tsin has instructed the government and Security Council to draw up a plan for reducing the size of the shadow economy.

16 January 1998 The presidential administration is being reorganised. It will be reduced from 1,700 to 1,500.

17 January 1998 Russo-Chechen talks are taking place in Nazran. A team will be appointed to find out why the Russian government has failed to meet commitments to fund the restoration of the Chechen economy.

19 January 1998 Yel'tsin publicly criticises Viktor Chernomyrdin, and deputy prime ministers Anatoly Chubais and Boris Nemtsov on TV.

19 January 1998 Deputy prime minister Ramazan Abdulatipov says that more power must be delegated to Russia's regions, that the system of bilateral treaties between the centre and the regions is not good, and that it is impossible to govern the process of federalism by decrees.

20 January 1998 Yel'tsin addresses a meeting of the Defence Council. They discuss military reform and space defence, and discussed the merger of Military Space Forces with Strategic Missile Troops.

20 January 1998 Yel'tsin dismisses General Petr Deynekin as commander in chief of the air force. He will be replaced by Col-Gen Anatoly Kornukov of the merged air force and air defence force. Kornukov was commander of the air defence troops of the Moscow Military District.

21 January 1998 First deputy prime minister Boris Nemtsov supports the idea of a third term for Yel'tsin.

23 January 1998 Moskovskiy Komsomolets claims that the Interior Ministry is planning for a coup.

23 January 1998 Russia TV reports that Yel'tsin has issued instructions to draw up a draft decree on the merging of the Federal Border Guard Service with the Federal Security Service. This is backed by Defence Council experts.

26 January 1998 The Russian government issues a 12 point programme for 1998.

26 January 1998 Col-Gen Nikolay Bordyuzha is appointed head of the Federal Border Guard Service.

27 January 1998 Duma Security Committee head Viktor Ilyukhin says that Yel'tsin lacks the will to fight corruption and that 14,000 officials annually are held responsible for corruption. One-third of all bribery crimes are committed by staff of law enforcement bodies.

28 January 1998 Yel'tsin appoints finance minister Mikhail Zadornov to the Security Council.

28 January 1998 Interior minister Anatoly Kulikov on Russian TV rules out Chechen independence.

29 January 1998 Duma chairman Gennady Seleznev gives Yel'tsin plans for forming a government with a majority government. The Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF) is also preparing plans for a government of popular trust.

29 January 1998 Security Council secretary Ivan Rybkin says that Moscow may suggest to Chechnya that it become a free and independent state, freely associated with the Russian Federation. The head of the Chechen delegation at the talks with Russia, Movladi Udugov, says that there will be no treaty with Russia unless Chechen sovereignty is recognised.

29 January 1998 Aleksandr Lebed' says he may run in the Krasnoyarsk gubernatorial elections in spring.

30 January 1998 Yel'tsin says he will not run for a third term. He says that Chernomyrdin should stay as prime minister, but there should be some cabinet changes. Presidential press spokesman Sergey Yastrzhembskiy says that Yel'tsin will not violate the constitution by running for a third term. However, he says that the Constitutional Court still has to pronounce on this issue and might make a third term legal.

30 January 1998 Yel'tsin discounts the possibility of a military opposition to his rule.

30 January 1998 Central Electoral Commission chairman Aleksandr Ivanchenko says that the next Duma elections must be held on 19 December 1999 and presidential elections on 9 July 2000.

30 January 1998 Viktor Chernomyrdin is non-committal about standing for president.

31 January 1998 Anatoly Kulikov calls for a definition of Chechnya's status. The Security Council says Chechnya's status can only be changed by law.

February

1 February 1998 The Russian military base in Buynaksk, Dagestan, is attacked.

4 February 1998 Yel'tsin holds a meeting with 11 regional leaders. He recommends that regional leaders develop direct contacts with foreign countries.

5 February 1998 The Duma passes the budget in its third reading by 232 votes to 141, with one abstention. Expenditure will be R499,945.2 mn in new roubles, and revenues R367,548 mn. GDP is expected to be R2,840bn and inflation to stay within 5.7%. The federal budget deficit will not exceed R132,397.2 mn, or 4.7% of GDP. The fourth reading will be on 18 February.

5 February 1998 Yel'tsin says that Anatoly Chubays and Boris Nemtsov will remain in their posts as first deputy prime ministers until 2000.

5 February 1998 The Constitutional Court decides to consider an interpellation from the Duma on whether Yel'tsin has the right to put himself forward as a candidate in the presidential election in 2000.

5 February 1998 Rossiyskaya Gazeta interviews Ivan Rybkin on the national security concept.

6 February 1998 The Duma approves a draft law on the procedure for amending the constitution. Changes to the Russian constitution necessitate support from at least two-thirds of constituent members of the Russian Federation.

12 February 1998 The federal government approves drafts of agreements with Orenburg, Perm, Ulyanovsk and Chelyabinsk regions.

12 February 1998 Yel'tsin cuts the staff of the presidential administration by 100 to 1,945. The Security Council was reduced by 25 to 182, and the Defence Council lost 8. The State Military Inspectorate lost 12. Yury Baturin was dismissed as a presidential aide.

14 February 1998 Gennady Seleznev, Duma chairman, calls for changes in the Russian constitution. He says the presidency is too powerful.

14 February 1998 The CPRF Central Committee holds a plenum.

16 February 1998 Igor Rodionov and Andrey Nikolayev are both contesting the same Duma by-election for a Moscow constituency.

16 February 1998 Viktor Chernomyrdin meets regional leaders.

18 February 1998 Yel'tsin gives his annual address to the Federal Assembly.

19 February 1998 The Popular Patriotic Union of Russia (PPUR) signs a cooperation pact with Lev Rokhlin's Movement for Support of the Army.

19 February 1998 Boris Nemtsov says he will not run in the 2000 presidential election.

20 February 1998 The Duma rejects the 1998 budget on its fourth reading. The next budget debate will be on 4 March.

20 February 1998 Sergey Baburin starts collecting signatures for a no-confidence vote in the government.

20 February 1998 The Duma passes a law on Russia's territorial integrity.

20 February 1998 Anatoly Chubays says that the federal government owes the armed forces and other power ministries 19.9 billion new roubles.

20 February 1998 The head of the State Tax Service Aleksandr Pochinok says that tax revenues for federal, regional, and local governments in 1997 amounted to R611 billion new roubles, 98% of target, and 32% more than in 1996.

20 February 1998 Anatoly Kulikov says that organised crime in Russia controls over 40,000 businesses, including 550 banks, 1,500 state run enterprises and 4,000 joint-stock companies.

23 February 1998 Yel'tsin discusses military reform with defence minister Igor Sergeyev.

24 February 1998 Yel'tsin warns that oil and gas production may decline.

26 February 1998 Yel'tsin attends a session of the government which is televised. He threatens dismissals.

28 February 1998 Yel'tsin dismisses deputy prime minister Valery Serov, transport minister Nikolay Tsakh and general and vocational education minister Vladimir Kinelev.

March

2 March 1998 Yel'tsin appoints Ivan Rybkin as deputy prime minister. He will concentrate on CIS integration.

2 March 1998 Ruslan Aushev is re-elected president of Ingushetia.

3 March 1998 Yel'tsin issues a decree abolishing the Defence Council and State Military Inspectorate. It will form part of the Security Council, which is to be revamped. It will be headed by Andrey Kokoshin. The Security Council is to draw up new statutes. It is also to present proposals within one month for reforming the armed forces and other military forces, armed bodies and authorities.

4 March 1998 Yevgenny Adamov is appointed minister of atomic energy.

4 March 1998 The Duma passes the 1998 budget in its final reading by 252 votes to 129.

4 March 1998 Federal Security Service (FSS) director Nikolay Kovalev says that the FSS arrested 29 agents of foreign intelligence services in 1997.

10 March 1998 The Justice Ministry registers the Movement in Support of the Army, Defence Industry and Military Science led by Lev Rokhlin.

10 March 1998 Yel'tsin meets North Caucasian elders.

11 March 1998 Acting Chechen premier Shamil Basayev says that Russo-Chechen talks are pointless.

12 March 1998 The Federation Council approves the 1998 budget.

13 March 1998 Yel'tsin cancels all engagements because of a cold.

13 March 1998 Two senior members of the Russian parliament Lev Rokhlin and Viktor Ilyukhin plan to ask the Supreme Court whether actions by Yel'tsin constitute legal offences.

14 March 1998 Yabloko holds its sixth congress.

14 March 1998 Andrey Kokoshin says that the structure of the Security Council will change and that its involvement with Chechnya will be reduced.

15 March 1998 An opinion poll broadcast on Itogi gives the following results to the question "who would you vote for if there were a presidential election today?":

Gennady Zyuganov	17%
Boris Nemtsov	12%
Yury Luzhkov	10%
Aleksandr Lebed'	10%
Grigory Yavlinskiy	9%

The sample was 1,500 in 56 urban and rural areas in 29 regions. Yel'tsin was not on the list of candidates.

17 March 1998 Boris Nemtsov, in *Argumenty i Fakty*, warns of an authoritarian and semi-military future for Russia.

18 March 1998 Doctors permit Yel'tsin to work at his out of town residence.

20 March 1998 Yel'tsin arrives back in the Kremlin for work. He has telephone conversations with Viktor Chernomyrdin and Yevgenny Primakov.

20 March 1998 Duma chairman Gennady Seleznev suggests an upper age limit of 65 for the presidency.

20 March 1998 The CPRF faction in the Duma plans to gather signatures calling for the dismissal of the government, which could be submitted to the Council of the Duma by 18 April.

20 March 1998 Boris Nemtsov says he is preparing a programme to combat oligarchy in Russia.

20 March 1998 FSS director Nikolay Kovalev says that it is in the FSS's interests to subordinate the Federal Border Guard Service to the FSS.

20 March 1998 Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) troops commander Leonty Shevtsov says that MIA forces will be deployed on the border with Chechnya for decades.

21 March 1998 Yel'tsin receives Viktor Chernomyrdin at his out of town residence in Gorkiy-9. They discuss the economy. Chernomyrdin says that Yel'tsin is worried about public sector wage arrears. Sergey Yastrzhembskiy says that Yel'tsin is still undecided on the budget.

23 March 1998 Yel'tsin dismisses the entire Russian government and appoints the fuel and energy minister Sergey Kiriyenko as acting prime minister. Individual decrees of dismissal are issued for Anatoly Chubays and Anatoly Kulikov. Kulikov is replaced by first deputy interior minister Pavel Maslov in an acting capacity. All ministers are remaining at their posts, however, until the new government is formed, with the exception of Chernomyrdin, Chubays and Kulikov.

24 March 1998 Sergey Yastrzhembskiy says that Yel'tsin will keep Yevgenny Primakov and Igor Sergeyev as foreign and defence ministers respectively.

26 March 1998 Former Border Guard chief Andrey Nikolayev forms a political alliance with Yury Luzhkov.

27 March 1998 Yel'tsin says he will nominate Sergey Kiriyenko to the Duma as prime minister. The Duma will consider the nomination on 3 April.

27 March 1998 It is reported that Yel'tsin and Kiriyenko have agreed to halve the size of the cabinet.

27 March 1998 Sergey Yastrzhembskiy says that there will be no cabinet appointments before the prime minister is confirmed by the Duma.

28 March 1998 Viktor Chernomyrdin states in a TV interview that he will run for president in 2000.

28 March 1998 Yel'tsin issues a decree reorganising the Security Council. The Security Council secretary will have six deputies, including one first deputy. The Security Council staff will not exceed 200. New departments will be created to cope with the merging of the Defence Council and State Military Inspectorate.

30 March 1998 Yel'tsin says he will not run for a third term.

30 March 1998 Sergey Stepashin is appointed acting interior minister.

30 March 1998 The CPRF parliamentary faction says that it will not support the acting premier's nomination.

31 March 1998 Gennady Zyuganov meets Sergey Kiriyenko and urges a government round table.

31 March 1998 Chairman of the Duma Defence Committee, Lev Rokhlin, says that a task force charged with preparing impeachment materials against Yel'tsin has been set up.

## Russian Foreign Policy: Chronology

January - March 1998

January

1 January 1998 Yel'tsin and French President Jacques Chirac hold a telephone conversation. They confirm their intention to hold a Franco-Russo-German summit in 1998.

5 January 1998 Yel'tsin's visit to India which was planned for January 1998 has been put off until the second half of 1998.

6 January 1998 Yel'tsin and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl hold a telephone conversation. They confirm their intention to hold a Franco-Russo-German summit in 1998.

6 January 1998 Deputy prime minister Valery Serov says that Russia aims at increasing CIS integration. He says trade with Belarus has increased, whereas trade with Ukraine and Kazakhstan has decreased.

6 January 1998 The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) criticises US-Israeli-Turkish naval exercises to be held in the eastern Mediterranean. It says it could undermine the security of Arab states.

6 January 1998 The Russian mission in Sarajevo becomes an embassy.

8 January 1998 Russian prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin told journalists that oil and gas delivery routes from Central Asia and the Caspian across Russia are the most economical.

9 January 1998 Yel'tsin and British Prime Minister Tony Blair have a telephone conversation. They discuss Russia-EU ties.

12 January 1998 Duma deputy chairman Vladimir Ryzhkov says that Russia is unlikely to ratify START-2 in the coming months.

12 January 1998 Several Russian oil companies have signed up to buy nearly 29 million barrels of oil from Iraq under the UN oil for food scheme. This programme was recently extended for a third six month period. During the second period Russian companies bought 38.75 million barrels.

12 January 1998 Yel'tsin orders the creation of a committee for Asia-Pacific economic cooperation under the government.

13 January 1998 Deputy foreign minister Nikolay Afanasevskiy visits Croatia and Eastern Slavonia.

13 January 1998 Deputy foreign minister Aleksandr Avdeyev and UN special envoy for Cyprus, Diego Cordovez call on the Cypriot parties to show readiness for compromise. They that the current status quo can no longer be maintained.

14 January 1998 Defence minister Igor Sergeyev visits France.

17 January 1998 He signs a defence protocol for 1998-99.

14 January 1998 Deputy foreign minister Grigory Karasin visits India to discuss Yel'tsin's visit later in 1998.

15 January 1998 Yel'tsin urges the Duma to ratify START-2.

14 January 1998 Presidential press spokesman Sergey Yastrzhembskiy warns that NATO widening towards the former Soviet states would cause a Russian rethinking of relations with NATO.

14 January 1998 Sergey Yastrzhembskiy says that Russia's relations with the Baltic extends beyond ties with the three former Soviet states, and includes the Council of Baltic Sea States.

15 January 1998 The anti-NATO commission of the Duma expresses concern over US support for Baltic states' desires to join NATO. It also expresses concern over the US-Baltic charter, to be signed on 16 January.

15 January 1998 Deputy foreign minister Nikolay Afanasyevskiy visits Bosnia.

15 January 1998 The MFA criticises cooperation between Turkey and northern Cyprus, including the planned integration of northern Cyprus into Turkey.

15 January 1998 The MFA condemns Israel's decision to keep more than half of the West Bank, even if a settlement with the Palestinians is reached.

15 January 1998 Minister for foreign economic relations and trade, Mikhail Fradkov, says that Russia will use arms sales to boost trade. He says trade with Africa, Asia and Latin America could reach \$40-45 bn by 2005. Trade with the West could reach \$90bn by 2005 and \$30 bn with Eastern Europe as a result of gas deals.

15 January 1998 Gazprom warns Bulgaria that gas deliveries are under threat following the failure of recent talks on a new gas delivery contract. Bulgarian prime minister Ivan Kostov threatens to reduce the volume of Russian gas exported through Bulgaria to third countries. On 19 January Kostov's statement is criticised by the MFA.

16 January 1998 The Duma approves a law on Russian territorial waters.

17 January 1998 Viktor Chernomyrdin has talks with US Vice-president Al Gore by telephone on the forthcoming Russo-US Intergovernmental Commission on Economic and Scientific-Technical Cooperation. They discuss export controls and the need to strengthen the non-proliferation regimes.

18 January 1998 The chairman of Gazprom and Polish president Aleksandr Kwasniewski reach agreement in Warsaw on the problem of Poland's debt for Russian gas supplies.

19 January 1998 Yevgenny Primakov speaks at a conference on Russian federalism on the role of the regions in Russia's international relations.

19 January 1998 Russia replaces some of her troops in Bosnia. 303 troops will be sent to Tuzla. There are currently 1,600 Russian troops in former Yugoslavia.

19 January 1998 Yel'tsin speaks at a ceremony at the Kremlin for the presentation by ambassadors of their credentials. He says he sees foreign support for reform as a key foreign policy priority.

19 January 1998 Yevgenny Primakov attends the fifth session of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council.

20 January 1998 Yel'tsin says on TV that 1997 was a bad year for the CIS.

20 January 1998 The MFA says that Russia will revise its relations with NATO if the admission of the Baltic states into NATO becomes a reality. The MFA says that the US-Baltic charter signed on 16 January raises a number of questions as it says that the US will aid in the admission of the Baltic states into NATO.

20 January 1998 Ukrainian foreign minister Gennady Udovenko for talks on the forthcoming visit of President Kuchma to Russia.

20 January 1998 Foreign minister Yevgenny Primakov, speaking in Sweden, says that Russia's relations with the Baltic states are not adequately normalised.

20 January 1998 The MFA says that it could drop human rights accusations against Latvia and Estonia if they observe all recommendations of OSCE Human Rights Commissioner Max van der Stoel.

20 January 1998 Yevgenny Primakov meets his Finnish counterpart in Sweden.

20 January 1998 MFA spokesman Gennady Tarasov says that Russia is eager to break the deadlock in the Middle East and welcomes any efforts to do so, including American ones. He says that it is necessary to coordinate the actions of the USA, Russia and other states in the Middle East peace process.

21 January 1998 Belarusian President Aleksandr Lukashenko arrives in Moscow on an official visit. He will take part in sessions of the Russo-Belarusian union and the quadripartite union.

21 January 1998 The MFA says that it disagrees with the statements that the three Baltic states were annexed or occupied in 1940.

21 January 1998 Yevgenny Primakov tells Ahmad Quray, the chairman of the Palestinian Legislative Council, that Moscow supports the Palestinian leadership's desire to resume talks with Israel on confidence building measures.

21 January 1998 Deputy prime minister Vladimir Bulgak holds talks with the Iranian Ambassador Medhdi Safari. They discuss trade relations.

22 January 1998 A Russo-Belarusian union budget will be formed. Russia will provide 65% of funds, and Belarus 35%. 94% of the funds will be directed at implementing joint projects.

22 January 1998 The quadripartite union meets in Moscow. Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev chairs the meeting. The presidents of Russia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan reject a draft treaty for a single economic space proposed by Kazakhstan. However, agreements are reached on common customs tariffs.

22 January 1998 Military diplomatic sources in Moscow state that Russia will be joining monitoring flights over Iraq in February-March 1998. This is later confirmed by the MFA.

22 January 1998 Andrey Kokoshin, secretary of the Defence Council, arrives in Beijing. He aims to establish links with the Chinese Central Military Commission and the Defence Council.

22 January 1998 A new Russo-Japanese peace-treaty commission is to be set up, to be headed by the foreign ministers of the two countries.

22 January 1998 Viktor Chernomyrdin says that the Russian and German governments will hold a first joint session in Germany later this year. An informal meeting of Yel'tsin, Kohl and Chirac will take place in Yekaterinberg on 25-26 March.

22 January 1998 Aleksandr Lyusyukov, director of the second Asian department of the MFA, discusses the Russo-Japanese treaty commission. He says that 2000 is a target date for completing treaty talks.

22 January 1998 Viktor Chernomyrdin attends the meeting of the Council of Baltic Sea States prime ministers in Riga.

23 January 1998 He says that EU enlargement must not hurt Russian and other CIS members' economic interests.

23 January 1998 The Duma ratifies treaties with Azerbaijan and Armenia.

23 January 1998 Sergey Yastrzhembskiy rejects allegations that Russia is helping Iran create missile technology. The head of the Russian Space Agency, Yury Koptev, admits that some Russian organisations have had some contacts over dual purpose technologies to Iran.

23 January 1998 The Sakhalin regional Duma has warned against Russia compromising the current status of the Kuriles in talks with Japan.

23 January 1998 Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev has talks with the Russian leadership in Moscow.

23 January 1998 The Duma proposes to the president and government that a national programme of resistance to NATO expansion be drawn up.

23 January 1998 Viktor Chernomyrdin holds talks with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl at the meeting of the Council of Baltic Sea States on Russo-German economic cooperation.

23 January 1998 Defence Council secretary Andrey Kokoshin signs military cooperation agreements in China.

23 January 1998 Deputy foreign minister Georgy Mamedov and the US Ambassador James Collins meet to discuss bilateral issues, including arms control and the next meeting of the Gore-Chernomyrdin commission.

24 January 1998 Latvian Radio reports that 32,000 Baltic Russians have emigrated to Russia since 1991.

24 January 1998 Yevgenny Primakov discusses oil pipeline routes with Chevron. They discuss the Tengiz-Novorossiysk route.

25 January 1998 Russo-Turkmen talks in Moscow on gas transit fail to reach a result.

26 January 1998 Yevgenny Primakov attends the first session of the Russia-EU Cooperation Council in Brussels.

26 January 1998 A meeting of the Chiefs of the General Staffs (CGS) of the armed forces of the OSCE member states meets in Vienna. The Russian delegation, headed by CGS Anatoly Kvashnin, seeks to enhance the OSCE's role in European security.

26 January 1998 Macedonian President Kiro Gligorov arrives in Moscow. He and Yel'tsin sign a joint declaration on cooperation and friendship.

27 January 1998 Deputy foreign minister Viktor Posuvalyuk goes to Baghdad to present a message from Yel'tsin to Iraqi leaders. 29 January 1998 he meets Saddam Hussein.

27 January 1998 Yevgenny Primakov calls on the USA to show restraint towards Iraq.

27 January 1998 Yevgenny Primakov visits France.

27 January 1998 Ivan Rybkin, secretary of the Security Council meets OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities Max van der Stoel. They discuss Russians living outside the Russian Federation in the former Soviet Union.

27 January 1998 The MFA denies that Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic has found refuge in Russia.

28 January 1998 Defence minister Igor Sergeev visits Germany to discuss military cooperation.

28 January 1998 Swedish prime minister Goeran Persson attends the Council of Baltic Sea States session in Riga. He calls for Russia to become more involved in developing the Baltic region.

29 January 1998 Yel'tsin speaks out in favour of ratifying START-2 as soon as possible.

30 January 1998 The Council of CIS defence ministers meets in Moscow to discuss military cooperation. They discuss collective security, peacekeeping, the peacekeeping forces in Tajikistan and Abkhazia.

30 January 1998 Primakov has talks with US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright on Iraq.

30-31 January 1998 Yel'tsin holds informal talks in Moscow with President Kuchma of Ukraine.

31 January 1998 Yel'tsin sends deputy foreign minister Viktor Posuvalyuk to Iraq to try and get more concessions from Saddam Hussein.

31 January 1998 Head of the Russian Space Agency Yury Koptev says in Washington that Russia has no government sanctioned contacts with Iran that help Iran's missile programme.

31 January 1998 At the World Economic Forum (WEF) at Davos, Viktor Chernomyrdin complains about trade discrimination. At the WEF Chernomyrdin has talks with the Bulgarian president over gas supplies.

## February

2 February 1998 Sergey Yastrzhembskiy claims that Iraq has shifted its position and has made concessions.

2 February 1998 Yel'tsin talks to Clinton on Russian mediation efforts with Iraq. Yel'tsin also talks to French President Jacques Chirac.

2 February 1998 Primakov discusses the Iraqi crisis with the Iranian foreign minister over the telephone.

2 February 1998 The Lebanese foreign minister visits Russia.

2 February 1998 The Russian Ambassador to Cyprus says that Russian S-300 anti-aircraft missiles will be delivered to Cyprus on time.

3 February 1998 Deputy foreign minister Grigory Karasin visits China.

3 February 1998 The Liberal Democratic Party says Russia should drop UN sanctions against Iraq if the USA uses force. Vladimir Zhirinovskiy says that Russia should provide military aid to Iraq.

3 February 1998 The Duma begins a closed session on Iraq. It votes for a resolution to ignore UN sanctions if force is used against Iraq. Primakov says that the government will not accept the Duma's resolution.

3 February 1998 A Russian Ministry of Defence (MOD) official says that Russia is ready to carry out inspection flights over Iraq.

4 February 1998 Yel'tsin says that Clinton is being too heavy handed over Iraq. He warns that the use of force could lead to a world war.

4 February 1998 Gennady Zyuganov says that it would be premature to ratify START-2 given the Iraq crisis.

4 February 1998 Chairman of the Duma International Affairs Committee, Vladimir Lukin, condemns Duma interference over Iraq.

5 February 1998 Yel'tsin says that the Iraq crisis is past its peak.

5 February 1998 The Iraqi National Assembly invites a Duma delegation to inspect presidential palaces.

6 February 1998 Foreign minister Yevgenny Primakov discusses the Middle East situation with the secretary of the executive committee of the PLO, Mahmud Abbass.

6 February 1998 Primakov warns that diplomacy has not yet won out in the Iraqi crisis.

7 February 1998 Russia's ambassador to the UN, Sergey Lavrov, says that a Russian plane will deliver humanitarian aid to Iraq on 8 February. It will also carry a Duma delegation. The flight is postponed as Iran will not provide a flight path.

8 February 1998 Yevgenny Primakov says that Iraq has now agreed to allow UN inspections.

9 February 1998 Yel'tsin arrives in Italy.

9 February 1998 The MFA expresses concern that Turkey has sent a large contingent of troops into Iraqi Kurdistan.

10 February 1998 Yel'tsin says that military action against Iraq could lead to large-scale conflict.

10 February 1998 Lev Rokhlin says that Russia should close down her military bases in Georgia.

11 February 1998 A Duma delegation arrives in Baghdad.

11 February 1998 Yel'tsin telephones Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze after the assassination attempt on the latter.

12 February 1998 US defence secretary William Cohen visits Moscow for talks with defence minister Igor Sergeev.

12 February 1998 Talks between Russia and Bulgaria on prices for gas supplies and gas transit facilities are proceeding badly.

12 February 1998 The MFA denies an article in The Washington Post which claims that Russia is helping to develop Iraq's biological warfare capability.

12 February 1998 Gazprom claims that Ukraine owes it \$1.1 billion for gas.

13 February 1998 The speaker of the Polish parliament, Maciej Plazynski visits St Petersburg. He calls for closer links between Polish and Russian regions.

13 February 1998 The Russian Orthodox Church expresses opposition to any possible visit by the Pope to Russia.

14 February 1998 Interior minister Anatoly Kulikov denies any Russian link in the attempt to assassinate Eduard Shevardnadze.

15 February 1998 Yevgenny Primakov visits Greece. He discusses Russian gas supplies.

16 February 1998 The Russian MOD denies that it has any agreements with Middle East contracts pertaining to missiles.

17 February 1998 In his state of the nation address Yel'tsin warns the Baltic states against joining NATO.

17 February 1998 Yel'tsin receives Chinese prime minister Li Peng in Moscow. Trade turnover between Russia and China was slightly over R6 billion in 1997.

18 February 1998 Primakov visits Hungary.

18 February 1998 Atomic Energy Minister Viktor Mikhaylov says that Russia will build the Iranian nuclear power station in Bushehr on a turnkey basis. He says that Russia will also cooperate with Syria and Indonesia in the peaceful development of nuclear energy. He also criticises the US-Russian deal of 1993, under which the USA buys uranium from Russian nuclear warheads.

19 February 1998 IMF director Michel Camdessus meets Yel'tsin.

19 February 1998 Russian deputy foreign minister Viktor Posuvalyuk meets Saddam Hussein.

19 February 1998 The head of Lukoil, Vagit Alekperov, and Turkish energy minister Cumhuriyet Ersumer hold talks in Moscow on the transport of Russian oil via Turkish territory and Lukoil operations in Turkey. Turkey desires to interest Lukoil in a project to build a pipeline from Baku to Ceyhan.

19 February 1998 Viktor Chernomyrdin holds talks with Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma in Kiev. They agree on the issue of the transit of Turkmen gas via Russia. They initial an economic treaty for 1998-2007.

20 February 1998 A Russian delegation headed by Justice Minister Sergey Stepashin and atomic energy minister Viktor Mikhaylov visits Syria.

20 February 1998 Russian and Turkish foreign ministry officials hold talks on strategic stability in Moscow.

20 February 1998 Yel'tsin says that a military treaty could be signed with Ukraine. He says Russia has no more claims on Ukraine.

21 February 1998 Primakov meets UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

21 February 1998 Duma chairman Gennady Seleznev calls on Iraq to obey UN resolutions and destroy all weapons of mass destruction.

21 February 1998 Japanese foreign minister Keizo Obuchi visits Moscow. A fishing accord is signed. The Russo-Japanese peace treaty is discussed, as is Asia-Pacific security.

21 February 1998 Russian minister for emergencies, Sergey Shoygu, visits Cuba. He signs an economic agreement at the second session of the Cuban-Russian Intergovernmental Commission for Trade, Economic and Scientific-Technological cooperation.

21 February 1998 Moscow mayor Yury Luzhkov says that Sevastopol must be returned to Russia.

22 February 1998 A Duma delegation headed by Gennady Seleznev flies to Israel on an official visit. It will then fly to Syria.

23 February 1998 The MFA welcomes the Iraqi-UN agreement, and says it should lead to the eventual lifting of sanctions.

23 February 1998 Duma chairman Gennady Seleznev calls for an international parliamentary conference to solve all the problems relating to a Palestinian state at a meeting with Yassir Arafat.

24 February 1998 Iranian foreign minister Kamal Kharrazi visits Moscow on a three day visit. He discusses economic cooperation and Tajikistan. Russia may reconsider military ties with Iran if the USA uses force against Iraq. They also discuss the Caspian Sea.

24 February 1998 Viktor Chernomyrdin says he is unpleasantly surprised at the claim made by Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze that the terrorist act against him had allegedly been planned in Russia. Defence minister Igor Sergeyev's planned trip to Georgia at the end of February is postponed.

25 February 1998 Yevgenny Primakov says that there are no grounds for talk of using force against Iraq. An MFA spokesman says that Russia will disagree with a new UN Security Council resolution sanctioning force against Iraq if it violates the recent UN-Iraq agreement.

26 February 1998 Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma arrives in Moscow on an official visit and signs an economic cooperation agreement up to 2007. They issue a joint statement on the CIS. Kuchma says that a strategic partnership is taking shape between Russia and Ukraine.

28 February 1998 Yel'tsin appoints Sergey Kislyak as ambassador to Belgium and permanent representative to NATO.

March

2 March 1998 Deputy foreign minister Nikolay Afanasiyevskiy says that Russia will not place her troops in the SFOR force in Bosnia under NATO command.

2 March 1998 Defence minister Igor Sergeyev tells journalists that he is prepared to withdraw Russian troops from Georgia.

2 March 1998 Israeli trade minister Nathan Sharansky, visiting Moscow, holds talks on trade and the Middle East.

2 March 1998 The Russian government has signed an agreement with Germany for the supply of highly-enriched uranium for a nuclear research reactor.

3 March 1998 A MFA source says that Russia and North Korea may sign an interstate treaty this year.

3 March 1998 Deputy prime minister Viktor Bulgak visits Iran for a meeting of the Russo-Iranian commission for trade and economic cooperation. Russia will build two more reactors at the Bushehr nuclear power station, but will not build any more nuclear power plants until Bushehr is completed.

3 March 1998 Deputy foreign minister Grigory Karasin visits Pakistan.

3 March 1998 The Russian MFA expresses bewilderment at not being invited to a foreign ministers' meeting held in Turkey on 1-2 March to discuss the transport of oil and gas from the Caspian Sea to world markets. Iran was also not invited.

4 March 1998 Boris Nemtsov visits Germany.

4 March 1998 Yevgenny Primakov holds talks with Polish foreign minister Bronislaw Geremek in Moscow.

4 March 1998 Yevgenny Primakov condemns the brutal dispersal of a rally of Russian pensioners in Riga.

4 March 1998 The Duma passes a draft resolution asking Yel'tsin to consider sending the Russian Navy to Iraq on a friendly visit

4 March 1998 The Duma issues an appeal to the Turkish parliament calling on Turkey to grant special political status to Kurdish regions.

6 March 1998 The CIS heads of government council meets in Moscow. Viktor Chernomyrdin says that Russia's trade turnover with the CIS was \$30 billion in 1997. The Council agrees to set up transnational corporations in the CIS.

6 March 1998 Ukraine agrees a debt repayment schedule with Gazprom.

6 March 1998 Russia requests that UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan appoints a Russian representative as deputy head of the UN special commission on Iraq.

6 March 1998 The MFA urges Belgrade and the Kosovo leaders to refrain from using force in Kosovo. It says that problems must be solved within the framework of Yugoslavia's territorial integrity. Primakov discusses the Kosovo crisis with his US, French and German counterparts.

6 March 1998 Goskomstat states that foreign investment in Russia in 1997 amounted to almost \$10.5 billion, 61% up on the \$6.5 billion invested in 1996. As of 1 January 1998, overall foreign investment stood at \$12.8 billion. The leaders in investment in 1997 were: the USA (\$2.81 bn); Britain (\$2.3 billion); Switzerland (\$1.72 billion); Germany (\$1.54 billion). Russian investments abroad totalled \$447.1 million in 1997.

6 March 1998 Viktor Chernomyrdin and Kazakh prime minister Nurlan Balgymbayev discuss the Caspian Sea, Russia's debt for leasing Baykonur and Russian military supplies to Kazakhstan.

7 March 1998 First deputy foreign minister Igor Ivanov says the Kosovo crisis is Yugoslavia's internal problem.

9 March 1998 Viktor Chernomyrdin denies that Russia has transferred missile or nuclear technologies to Iran.

9 March 1998 Duma defence committee head Lev Rokhlin criticises NATO manoeuvres which include troops from Central and Eastern Europe plus Lithuania. The scenario for these exercises is repelling an attack in northern Europe, plus restoring peace in a regional conflict in the south.

8 March 1998 The chairman of the Duma International Affairs committee, Vladimir Lukin, says that the GUAM alliance is an artificial alliance aimed at upsetting Russia.

9 March 1998 Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov flies to London from Baku.

9 March 1998 The contact group on former Yugoslavia meets in London to discuss the Kosovo crisis. Nikolay Afanasiyevskiy, deputy foreign minister, represents the Russian Federation.

10 March 1998 The MFA expresses concern over the treatment of Serbs in Croatia.

10 March 1998 Viktor Chernomyrdin arrives in Washington for a meeting of the Gore-Chernomyrdin commission.

10 March 1998 Russian Navy Chief Admiral Vladimir Kuroyedov criticises NATO naval exercises.

10 March 1998 Yevgenny Primakov calls for dialogue in Kosovo. He calls for rights for Kosovo within Yugoslavia.

10 March 1998 Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov visits Britain.

10 March 1998 The MFA appeals to the UN, OSCE, Council of Europe over human rights violations in Latvia.

10 March 1998 The Israeli newspaper Yediot Aharanot alleges that Russia will supply Syria with a nuclear reactor and anti-aircraft and anti-tank systems. This follows the recent visit of Russian atomic energy minister to Syria.

11 March 1998 Deputy foreign minister Grigory Karasin says that Russia is prepared to mediate in the Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan.

11 March 1998 Russia will join the Friends of Colombia group, which aims to end the civil war in Colombia. The Colombian foreign minister has just been visiting Moscow.

12 March 1998 Yel'tsin's planned visit to Indonesia in April has been postponed.

12 March 1998 Norway expels five Russian diplomats. The Norwegian prime minister postpones his visit to Moscow planned for 17-18 March.

11 March 1998 Defence minister Igor Sergeyev opposes sending peacekeeping forces to Kosovo.

11 March 1998 The Duma passes a resolution calling for a peaceful settlement in Kosovo.

13 March 1998 Sergey Yastrzhembskiy says that the next Russian-US summit can take place once the Russian parliament has ratified START-2.

13 March 1998 The Duma will send a delegation to Kosovo.

16 March 1998 The deputy director of the MFA's Asian department, Valentin Moiseyev, says that the new Russo-North Korean treaty is not ready for signing.

16 March 1998 The MFA criticises a rally of the Latvian SS legion in Riga.

16 March 1998 Vladimir Zhirinovskiy visits Libya.

17 March 1998 Yel'tsin postpones a CIS summit due to illness.

17 March 1998 Yevgenny Primakov visits former Yugoslavia. He will visit the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Bosnia, Croatia and Slovenia. He discusses Kosovo with the FRY leadership. On 16 March he spoke on the telephone with foreign ministers of the Contact Group.

17 March 1998 Dmitry Ushakov addresses the 54th UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva, and calls for an end to Latvia's harrassment of ethnic minorities.

18 March 1998 Deputy foreign minister Boris Pastukhov calls for economic pressure on Latvia.

17 March 1998 Viktor Chernomyrdin holds talks with his Moldovan counterpart, Ion Ciubuc in Moscow.

17 March 1998 Fuel and Energy minister Sergey Kiriyenko says that Caspian oil should be piped via Russia.

17 March 1998 The state secretary of the Slovak Foreign Ministry, Jozef Sestak, visits Moscow for talks.

17 March 1998 Viktor Chernomyrdin confirms that Russia is prepared to allow the transit of 20 billion cubic metres of Turkmen gas to Ukraine via Russia this year.

18 March 1998 Yevgenny Primakov in Bosnia favours extending the foreign military presence there after SFOR expires in June 1998.

18 March 1998 First deputy prime minister Anatoly Chubays says that the EU must recognise Russia as a market economy before the end of March 1998.

18 March 1998 Deputy foreign minister Viktor Posuvalyuk embarks on a Middle East tour. He will visit Syria, UAE and Oman.

18 March 1998 Anatoly Adamishin, the minister for cooperation with the CIS, says he wants action to revive the "half dead" CIS. He says sound work is needed to create a free trade zone in the CIS.

18 March 1998 A group of supporters of former Georgian president Zviad Gamsakhurdia in exile in Moscow have been arrested and will probably be extradited to Georgia in connection with the attempted assassination of Eduard Shevardnadze. They include the former speaker of the Georgian parliament, Nemo Burchuladze. He is later released and promises to arrive in Tbilisi for interrogation.

18 March 1998 Gazprom cuts gas supplies to Belarus because of Minsk's failure to pay arrears in its gas bill.

19 March 1998 Sergey Yastrzhembskiy says that Russia is considering targeted sanctions against Latvia. This is denied by Viktor Chernomyrdin.

19 March 1998 The chairman of the Duma's Geopolitics committee, Aleksey Mitrofanov, says the Duma will debate imposing economic sanctions on Latvia in early April.

19 March 1998 The MFA expresses concern at the escalation of terrorist activity in Tajikistan.

19 March 1998 Sergey Yastrzhembskiy says that Moscow is pushing for a US-Russian presidential summit this summer. He says that START-2 must be ratified.

19 March 1998 Boris Nemtsov says that he is sure that Russia will eventually join the EU.

19 March 1998 The MFA says that there should be talks between Israel, Syria and Lebanon on an Israeli withdrawal from Golan and Lebanon.

20 March 1998 Gazprom and Bulgarian officials have reached a preliminary agreement to boost the transit and delivery of Russian gas.

20 March 1998 The MFA protests to the US Ambassador to Russia, James Collins, over his remarks on the Russo-Japanese territorial dispute.

22 March 1998 The Cuban foreign minister, Roberto Robaina Gonzalez, arrives in Moscow for talks. Primakov says Russia desires a normalisation of US-Cuban relations.

22 March 1998 Gazprom head Rem Vyakhirev visits Israel and discusses gas supplies.

23 March 1998 Israel will resume talks with Russia on Russian gas supplies to Israel via Turkey.

23 March 1998 Acting fuel and energy minister Viktor Ott says it is premature to expect Russia to follow OPEC in cutting oil output and exports.

24 March 1998 The co-chairmen of the Russo-Ukrainian strategic task force, deputy head of presidential administration Sergey Yastrzhembskiy and deputy secretary of the Ukrainian National Security and Defence Council Oleksandr Razumkov meet in Moscow to discuss bilateral cooperation.

24 March 1998 Yevgenny Primakov meets his US counterpart in Germany. Primakov is there for a meeting of the contact group on Yugoslavia.

24 March 1998 Dmitry Ayatskov, governor of Saratov region, visits Japan. He advocates direct ties between Japan and Russia's regions.

25 March 1998 Belarusian President Aleksandr Lukashenko visits Russian navy facilities in Severomorsk.

29 March 1998 UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan dicusses UN reform with Yel'tsin in Moscow.

30 March 1998 The Israeli deputy prime minister Moshe Qatzav says that Yel'tsin will attend Christmas in Jerusalem in January 2000 (sic).

26 March 1998 The Russo-Franco-German summit takes place in Moscow. Yel'tsin, Helmut Kohl and Jacques Chirac all attend.

31 March 1998 Yel'tsin holds talks with the Greek defence minister, Apostolos Tsokhatzopoulos, in Moscow.

30 March 1998 Norwegian foreign minister Knut Vollebaek visits Murmansk.

31 March 1998 Belarusian foreign minister Ivan Antonovich arrives in Moscow.

31 March 1998 A Duma delegation arrives in Belgrade on a fact finding mission.