

# Changing International Architecture: Rethinking Russian-Western Relations

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The topic of this paper will particularly be the US-Russian relations in the world after September 11. I am not going too much into the issues that ambassador Pedauyé was talking about. The EU integration and enlargement processes are certainly extremely exciting, the deepening as well as the broadening of the European Union is something that we have always supported with all the difficulties that it often presents for us whether in trade or security or political issues. It is a big deal and an extremely positive evolution that strengthens the whole world and something that we really support. I look forward to seeing that happen. I look forward to watching Russia's role for that matter in that process too. The most exciting element of that in many ways is what ambassador Pedauyé talked about - the sharing of sovereignty. It is the truth. I lived in the two European Union countries in the Netherlands and in Spain and the sharing of sovereignty is really quite remarkable. The idea that a Dutchman could have something to say about olive trees in Andalusia or that a Spaniard could have something to say about pig manure in the Netherlands is quite remarkable. I think when it gets to sort of revising German beer standards it goes a little bit too far but that is an internal discussion for the EU. However, the sharing of sovereignty that is taking place between the EU in such a structured way is really a reflection of the actual sharing of sovereignty that takes place throughout the entire world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century simply because of globalisation, because of the shrinking of the world, because of the diminishing importance of borders. Working here as I do in South East Europe, I think there are many positive lessons that can be drawn by all the people living in this region about the virtues of sharing sovereignty and the virtues of diminishing borders and the virtues of working together for a common good that is very good in some of its parts. I am, of course, particularly pleased that ambassador Pedauyé men-

tioned that one of the light motives of the Spanish EU presidency will once again be a deep cooperation with the United States. I have the privilege of being the Deputy Chief Admissioner of our embassy in Spain during the last EU presidency where Trans-Atlantic Cooperation and the Trans-Atlantic Charter were in fact one of the major achievements of the Spanish presidency, certainly from our perspective. Therefore, I know that Spanish EU presidency is always a good thing for the United States and for Europe. Finally, just a brief comment on the Middle East. As ambassador Pedauyé said both the Vice President and General Zini are active in the region right now. There are not a huge amount of cards to play on the table as he correctly said for anybody from the outside. We are doing our best but it really revolves around somebody taking the courageous and human decision to reduce this spiral of violence, and we can only hope and pray that that will happen and certainly we shall be working as our European colleagues and our Russian colleagues to try and make that the case.

I would like to thank both of my ambassador colleagues for their expressions of solidarity and condolence once again six months after September 11. Anger and sadness remain in the USA. Those of you who have been to the USA since then or watched the American television perhaps somewhere will see how much Americans are still preoccupied more so than the people outside the US by what happened on September 11. That creates a continuing sense of sadness, the continuing sense of anger, but also, as ambassador Pedauyé know, the continuing sense of resolve to deal with this threat once and for all and to do it in the right way. We are committed to doing it the right way, working with the entire world including both Russia and our European colleagues on this.

## September 11 as Turning Point

The consequence of September 11 is the concept that ambassador Pedayuy mentioned and I would like to follow up on. Because six months after those tragic events it has become a cliché to say that everything changed on that day. A cliché is a cliché but it is also true. Sometimes clichés are true. And this is certainly the truth on a wide range of critical issues. Certainly one extremely important international relationship on which the events of September 11 had a great effect, and I would say largely positive effect is that of the relationship between my own country and the Russian Federation which is the one of the most important international relationships that there is. Ambassador Kuzmin summed up by asking "are relationships between US and Russia on a positive track, are they developing positively and constructively?" He said, "Yes", and I would say, "Yes", too. I recognise this assessment of the relationship looking at it from the other side. There are differences in perspective but also a huge degree of commonality and cooperative effort on both sides.

On the September 11<sup>th</sup> itself of course, president Putin was the first foreign leader who spoke with president Bush on September 11, after the attacks have taken place to express his sympathy and his solidarity. He was not just talking. He backed up the words of solidarity with an unprecedented offer of political, military and intelligence support and sharing. And that is what has happened in the last six months. Russia has been a real partner for the US, for the alliance countries and for all the other countries that are engaged in the global effort against terrorism in ways that we might not really have imagined just a few years ago, both ways which are really evocative and indicative of the changes that have taken place for the better not just in Russia but in the US and in the world I would say. The change pattern of interaction between Russia and the US, between the US and Russia since September 11 has led many people to say that somehow September 11 was a turning point. It was a watershed. It is completely different since September 11. I would argue that there is some merit, but only a partial merit, to such an argument because even before September 11, we believe that president Putin himself had made strategic choice about Russia's place in the world and about Russia relationship with the US and other countries of the West. And his conclusion in our judgement was essentially that Russia's future economic growth and its political influence could best be assured to closer relations with Europe and the US, rather than any other competitive or confrontational approach.

That was certainly president Bush's judgement, and it is the judgement on which we have been acting in the recent period. US relations with Russia have improved over the past year and they are really quite strong today. Two presidents have met several times since mid-2001. Our Secretary, Foreign Ministers, Secretary of the State, Foreign Minister have met. Many other senior leaders have met. In those meetings they found a great deal of common ground even while acknowledging and speaking frankly about areas of continuing concern. Things do not change over night and there are areas of concern. But we have been expanding cooperation between our two countries across a broad agenda of transnational and regional matters, which include but are by no means limited to, as Ambassador Kuzmin analysed in some detail, the reduction of strategic nuclear arms and the threat that they pose bringing stability to different regions of the world including South Asia, and including Southeast Europe as well and promoting Russia's integration into the WTO and really into the world economy. There has a lot of progress been made in all those areas. I see in front of myself the kind of good cooperation that we have been talking about in working with ambassador Kuzmin and with his colleagues here in the embassy in our Article 11 Commission and group which coordinates our approaches to questions relative to Croatia's integration into European and Euro-Atlantic structures, which deals with problems stemming from the legacy of the war. I have also seen the cooperation myself between the US and Russia certainly very unimaginable cooperation from previous days in the excellent relations that exist between American and Russian soldiers who are working together in multinational brigade area Eastern Kosovo, an area in which I spent an awful lot of time. The Russian troops there worked extremely closely with the American troops in that area to a common goal, which was good for all of this region. Our assessment is that Russia has turned the corner, especially economically with an emerging little class, entrepreneurship growing and the prerequisites for further positive change falling into place of the past 18 months. Ambassador Kuzmin described large numbers of economic reforms and really a new mind set in the leadership of Russia, which is leading to a new open type of economy. We agree with that and we think that is wonderful. Although there is a lot of analysts out there to be sceptical, lot of commentary, we think that it is pretty clear that president Putin is firmly in control of Russia, that he has the full support of Russian people, and that he personally has made a conscious strategic choice to re-orient Russian foreign policy towards integration and

cooperation with the West. Certainly evident in Russia's non-confrontational approach to what was for Russia very difficult decision with which it still disagrees, of course, which is our decision to withdraw from the ABM Treaty. It is also evident in Russia's full support for the anti-terrorist coalition, active support, not just rhetorical support, and its desire to forge more systematically with NATO, which as ambassador Kuzmin described in exactly the same terms I would describe it. It is a very, very positive outcome.

### **US-Russia's Deepening Relations**

Some people have suggested that post-September 11 deepening of the relationship between the US and Russia might be ephemeral, perhaps that moment of solidarity and good feeling in the tragedy that nobody could disagree about the both sides were using it as a tactical device in some way in their relationship. That argument perhaps goes that with anti-terrorist operations to Afghanistan slowing down the basis for that kind of temporary alliances are disappearing and perhaps our differences will once again take centre stage. First of all, with regard to Afghanistan I think the events of the past week or so, operation "Anaconda", and a really difficult battle with Qaeda and Taliban in the Pakistan border area has shown that the struggle in Afghanistan itself is not over. We paid with the lives of our servicemen and it is a reminder that the war on terrorism is far from finished and requires continued global determination. But beyond that, my view is that a kind of cynicism or pessimism which I would detect in nag, analysis which one does see is unwarranted because I think that the facts say otherwise, and they are constantly repeating, US Russian relations have undergone a remarkable positive transformation in the recent period. The fundamentals of our relationship are strong. The relationship is based not just on the negative, on the need to fight the common enemy, but it also reflects a positive, which is sharing interest in defending and extending common values of the democracy and the rule of law. That has led to a significant redefinition of the relationship between our two countries as we launch in to this new century. We now share a determination to enter the new century on the basis of common interest and a commitment to many shared values. Cold War - that is finished. There is no more zero sum relationship between the US and Russia. Instead of that we are looking forward to a close and mutually beneficial partnership, one that can prove the lasting security and well-being for both countries and through that relationship

can also augment all of the other processes of integration, whether it is European integration or cooperation that takes place in other regions of the world.

Underscoring the remarks of ambassador Kuzmin - Russia's relations with NATO and NATO's relations with Russia should reflect increasingly shared security interests. The Russian vision he described of this relationship largely matches my own government's view. In the new century in my view it is clear that members of NATO and Russia face very similar challenges, in fact, in many cases the same challenges to their security. We are both increasingly acting as allies against terrorism and other new threats which threaten us both: organised crime, transnational threats of all sorts. The NATO-Russia relationship should reflect that common purpose in our judgement. Our mutual task now is to devise new mechanisms for cooperation, for coordinated action and for joint decisions that can integrate Russia more closely in the NATO's work. We view the NATO-Russia relationship from an American perspective as complementary to our own bilateral efforts to develop the new framework of US-Russian relations, which is underway. The NATO-Russia Council at 20 idea, as ambassador Kuzmin described, is something that was discussed by presidents Bush and Putin and endorsed by NATO and by foreign minister Ivanov. It is to create a new form in which NATO's current 19 members and Russia work together as a group of 20 equal partners on issues where our shared interests make it sensible to do so. The new council will really be a qualitative step beyond today's 19+1 format, which was the truth of the Madrid summit actually, in which NATO formulates its position before engaging with his Russian partners. Instead, the concept now will be to formulate decisions on specific issues and projects to early engagement of all 20 countries, not 19+1 but 20 countries sitting together and working together. We look to this mechanism and know that this mechanism will offer Russia the opportunity to participate in shaping the development of cooperative mechanism in areas that the alliance chooses through discussions such as counter-terrorism. These are just some examples of areas where this could be active, civil emergency preparedness, airspace management, joint training and exercises and I am sure many other transnational issues will come to the attention of the Council of 20. The Council of Twenty is not designed to give Russia an ability or tool to veto or control NATO actions in any areas. I do not think that is Russia's objective, and, as ambassador Kuzmin stressed, that is not anything that Russia is looking for or wants. It will be an extraordinarily new and we hope fruitful

cooperative mechanism. We hope that that new mechanism will be operational by the spring.

### **Work - not Completed**

United States and Russia, in summing up then, are closer today politically, economically and militarily than in any time in our history. It does not mean that there is no difference between us. Ambassador Kuzmin, just as one example, noted different perceptions between our two countries on NATO enlargement: how that should proceed, what are the benefits or costs of it and so forth. This kind of difference will not disappear over night. That is normal. Otherwise all of these diplomats would be out of their job, but it is something we are all working on normally and that is what diplomats do and that is what we are doing and that is what our national leaders do. We may not agree in full either on the next steps in the anti-terrorist campaign although here I would stress that my own government is taking of decisions on where next in any case. The work in Afghanistan is not yet completed. And we may still have concerns about issues that seem to depart from the largely positive trends in Russia's march towards democracy, things like military tactics in Chechnya, pressures on independent media, uneven performance on non-proliferation issues. But again, all of us face difficult challenges today and they sum up in the current environment in one question which is - how do we preserve our most cherished freedoms as we combat with this terrorism that respects no human rights and is not the clash of civilisations but the clash of civilisation against the lack of civilisation. I am confident that Russia and the US will continue to be engaged in honest and candid dialogue on all these issues, as I know our two presidents are. I believe that the tension that has often characterised our relationship even since the end of the communist period is something that is fading and that recent developments offer strong promise that those tensions can and will be addressed in the spirit of partnership, realism and common interest and that in turn can lead to real enduring progress in the bilateral relationship and in our relationship with Russia and in Russia's place within the entire Euro-Atlantic community which is where it most firmly belong. Thank you very much!

