

# How Russia sees the World

*Ministry of Foreign  
Affairs of the  
Russian Federation*

*Russia's revised Foreign Policy Concept was published on 31 March 2023. This excerpt is taken from the unofficial translation published on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. It spells out Russia's public position in relation to its neighbours around the world in rather less strident terms than many other public pronouncements by President Putin and Foreign Minister Lavrov. Ukraine is mentioned once elsewhere in the document:*

'Considering the strengthening of Russia as one of the leading centres of development in the modern world and its independent foreign policy as a threat to Western hegemony, the United States of America (USA) and their satellites used the measures taken by the Russian Federation as regards Ukraine to protect its vital interests as a pretext to aggravate the longstanding anti-Russian policy and unleashed a new type of hybrid war.'

\* \* \*

## **Regional tracks of the foreign policy of the Russian Federation**

### **Near Abroad**

49. The most important for the security, stability, territorial integrity and social and economic development of Russia, strengthening its position as one of the influential sovereign centres of world development and civilization is to ensure sustainable long-term good-neighbourly relations and to combine the strengths in various fields with the CIS

[Commonwealth of Independent States] member states, which are connected with Russia by centuries-old traditions of joint statehood, deep interdependence in various fields, a common language and close cultures. With the purpose of further transformation of the near abroad into a zone of peace, good neighbourliness, sustainable development and prosperity, the Russian Federation intends to give priority to:

1) preventing and resolving armed conflicts, improving inter-state relations, and ensuring stability in the near abroad, including preventing the instigation of ‘colour revolutions’ and other attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of Russia’s allies and partners;

2) ensuring guaranteed protection of Russia, its allies and partners under any military and political scenario in the world, strengthening the system of regional security based on the principle of indivisibility of security and Russia’s key role in maintaining and strengthening regional security, the complementarity of the Union State [with Belarus], the CSTO [Collective Security Treaty Organization] and other formats of interaction between Russia and its allies and partners in the defence and security sphere;

3) countering deployment or reinforcement of military infrastructure of unfriendly states and other threats to Russia’s security in the near abroad;

4) deepening integration processes, which serve Russia’s interests, and strategic cooperation with the Republic of Belarus, strengthening the mutually beneficial comprehensive cooperation system based on combined CIS and EAEU [Eurasian Economic Union] potentials, as well as developing additional multilateral formats, including a mechanism for interaction between Russia and the states of the Central Asian region;

5) establishing an integrated economic and political space in Eurasia in the long term;

6) preventing and countering unfriendly actions of foreign states and their alliances, which provoke disintegration processes in the near abroad and create obstacles to the exercise of the sovereign right of Russia’s allies and partners to deepen their comprehensive cooperation with Russia;

7) unleashing the economic potential of good-neighbourliness, primarily with the EAEU member states and states interested in developing economic relations with Russia in order to form a broader integration contour in Eurasia;

8) comprehensively supporting the Republic of Abkhazia and the Republic of South Ossetia, promoting the voluntary choice, based on international law, of the peoples of these states in favour of a deeper integration with Russia;

9) strengthening cooperation in the Caspian Sea zone, proceeding from

the premise that the solution of all issues relating to this region falls within the exclusive competence of the five Caspian states.

### **The Arctic**

50. Russia is seeking to preserve peace and stability, enhance environmental sustainability, reduce threats to national security in the Arctic, create favourable international conditions for the social and economic development of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation (including to protect the original habitat and traditional livelihood of the indigenous people living there), as well as to advance the Northern Sea Route as a competitive national transport corridor making possible its international use for transportations between Europe and Asia. In pursuing these aims, the Russian Federation is going to focus on:

1) peacefully resolving international issues, related to the Arctic, proceeding from the premise of the special responsibility of the Arctic states for the sustainable development of the region and the sufficiency of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea dated 10 December 1982 for regulating interstate relations in the Arctic Ocean (including protecting the marine environment and delimitating maritime areas);

2) counteracting the unfriendly states' policy aimed at militarization of the region and limiting Russia's ability to exercise its sovereign rights in the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation;

3) ensuring the unalterability of the historically established international legal regime of the inland maritime waters of the Russian Federation;

4) establishing a mutually beneficial cooperation with the non Arctic states pursuing a constructive policy toward Russia and interested in international activities in the Arctic, including developing infrastructure of the Northern Sea Route.

### **Eurasian continent**

#### **The People's Republic of China, the Republic of India**

51. A comprehensive deepening of ties and enhancement of coordination with friendly sovereign global centres of power and development, which are located on the Eurasian continent and committed to approaches which coincide in principle with the Russian approaches to a future world order and solutions for key problems of the world politics, is particularly important for achieving strategic goals and major objectives of the foreign policy of the Russian Federation.

52. Russia aims at further strengthening the comprehensive partnership and the strategic cooperation with the People's Republic of China and

focuses on the development of a mutually beneficial cooperation in all areas, provision of mutual assistance, and enhancement of coordination in the international arena to ensure security, stability and sustainable development at the global and regional levels, both in Eurasia and in other parts of the world.

53. Russia will continue to build up a particularly privileged strategic partnership with the Republic of India with a view to enhance and expand cooperation in all areas on a mutually beneficial basis and place special emphasis on increasing the volume of bilateral trade, strengthening investment and technological ties, and ensuring their resistance to destructive actions of unfriendly states and their alliances.

54. Russia seeks to transform Eurasia into a continental common space of peace, stability, mutual trust, development and prosperity. Achieving this goal implies:

1) comprehensive strengthening of the SCO's [Shanghai Co-operation Organisation] potential and role in ensuring security in Eurasia and promoting its sustainable development by enhancing the Organization's activities in the light of current geopolitical realities;

2) establishment of the broad Greater Eurasian Partnership integration contour by combining the potential of all the states, regional organizations and Eurasian associations, based on the EAEU, the SCO and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as well as the conjunction of the EAEU development plans and the Chinese initiative 'One Belt One Road' while preserving the possibility for all the interested states and multilateral associations of the Eurasian continent to participate in this partnership and – as a result – establishment of a network of partner organizations in Eurasia;

3) strengthening of the economic and transport interconnectivity in Eurasia, including through the modernization and increased capacity of the Baikal-Amur Mainline and the Trans-Siberian railway; the rapid launch of the International North–South Transport Corridor; improvement of infrastructure of the Western Europe–Western China International Transit Corridor, the Caspian and the Black Sea regions, and the Northern Sea Route; creation of development zones and economic corridors in Eurasia, including the China–Mongolia–Russia economic corridor, as well as increased regional cooperation in digital development and establishment of an energy partnership.

4) comprehensive settlement in Afghanistan, assistance in building it as a sovereign, peaceful and neutral State with stable economy and political system which meets the interests of all the ethnic groups living there and

opens up prospects for integrating Afghanistan into the Eurasian space for cooperation.

### **The Asia-Pacific region**

55. Given the dynamically growing multifaceted potential of the Asia-Pacific region, the Russian Federation is going to focus on:

1) increasing economic, security, humanitarian and other cooperation with the states of the region and the ASEAN member states;

2) establishing a comprehensive, open, indivisible, transparent, multilateral and equitable architecture of security and mutually beneficial cooperation in the region based on a collective and non-aligned approaches as well as unleashing the region's potential aiming at the establishment of a Great Eurasian Partnership;

3) promoting constructive non-politicized dialog and interstate cooperation in various areas, including with the help of opportunities provided by the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum;

4) countering attempts to undermine the regional system of multilateral security and development alliances on the basis of ASEAN, which rests upon the principles of consensus and equality of its participants;

5) developing a broad international cooperation to counter policies aimed at drawing dividing lines in the region.

### **The Islamic world**

56. The states of friendly Islamic civilization, which has great prospects for establishing itself as an independent centre of world development within a polycentric world, are increasingly in demand and more reliable partners of Russia in ensuring security and stability as well as in solving economic problems at the global and regional levels. Russia seeks to strengthen the comprehensive mutually beneficial cooperation with the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, respecting their social and political systems and traditional spiritual and moral values. In pursuing these aims, the Russian Federation is going to focus on:

1) developing the full-scale and trustful cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran, providing comprehensive support for the Syrian Arab Republic, and deepening the multifaceted mutually beneficial partnerships with the Republic of Turkey, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Arab Republic of Egypt and the other Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, given the extent of their sovereignty and constructiveness of their policy toward the Russian Federation;

2) establishing a sustainable comprehensive regional security and

cooperation architecture in the Middle East and North Africa, based on combining the capacities of all the states and interstate alliances of the regions, including the League of Arab States and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Russia intends to actively cooperate with all the interested states and interstate associations in order to implement Russia's Collective Security Concept for the Persian Gulf Region, viewing the implementation of this initiative as an important step toward a sustainable and comprehensive normalization of the situation in the Middle East;

3) promoting interfaith and intercultural dialogue and understanding, consolidating efforts to protect traditional spiritual and moral values, and combating Islamophobia, including via the Organization of Islamic Cooperation;

4) reconciling differences and normalizing relations among the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, as well as between these states and their neighbours (primarily the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Arab countries, the Syrian Arab Republic and its neighbours, the Arab countries and the State of Israel), including within the efforts aimed at a comprehensive and lasting solution to the Palestinian question;

5) helping resolve and overcome consequences of armed conflicts in the Middle East, North Africa, South, Southeast Asia and other regions where Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation are located;

6) unleashing the economic potential of the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation with a view to establishing the Greater Eurasian Partnership.

### **Africa**

57. Russia stands in solidarity with the African states in their desire for a more equitable polycentric world and elimination of social and economic inequality, which is growing due to the sophisticated neo-colonial policies of some developed states towards Africa. The Russian Federation intends to support further the establishment of Africa as a distinctive and influential centre of world development, giving priority to:

1) supporting the sovereignty and independence of interested African states, including through security assistance, inter alia food and energy security, as well as military and military-technical cooperation;

2) assistance in resolving and overcoming the consequences of armed conflicts in Africa, especially inter-ethnic and ethnic ones, advocating the leading role of African states in these efforts, based on the principle 'African problems – African solution';

3) strengthening and deepening Russian-African cooperation in various

spheres on a bilateral and multilateral basis, primarily within the framework of the African Union and the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum;

4) increasing trade and investment with African states and African integration structures (primarily the African Continental Free Trade Area, the African Export-Import Bank and other leading subregional organizations), including through the EAEU;

5) promoting and developing links in the humanitarian sphere, including scientific cooperation, training of national personnel, strengthening health systems, providing other assistance, promoting intercultural dialogue, protecting traditional spiritual and moral values, and the right to freedom of religion.

### **Latin America and the Caribbean**

58. Given the progressive strengthening of the sovereignty and multifaceted potential of Latin American and Caribbean states, the Russian Federation intends to develop relations with them on a pragmatic, de-ideologized and mutually beneficial basis, giving priority attention to:

1) supporting interested Latin American states under pressure from the United States and its allies in securing sovereignty and independence, including through the promotion and expansion of security, military and military-technical cooperation;

2) strengthening friendship, mutual understanding and deepening multifaceted mutually beneficial partnership with the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Republic of Cuba, the Republic of Nicaragua, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, developing relations with other Latin American states, taking into account the degree of independence and constructiveness of their policy towards the Russian Federation;

3) increasing mutual trade and investment with Latin American and Caribbean States, including through cooperation with the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, the Common Market of the South, the Central American Integration System, the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of the Americas, the Pacific Alliance, and the Caribbean Community;

4) expanding cultural, scientific, educational, sports, tourism and other humanitarian ties with the states of the region.

### **European region**

59. Most European states pursue an aggressive policy towards Russia aimed at creating threats to the security and sovereignty of the Russian Federation, gaining unilateral economic advantages, undermining

domestic political stability and eroding traditional Russian spiritual and moral values, and creating obstacles to Russia's cooperation with allies and partners. In this connection, the Russian Federation intends to consistently defend its national interests by giving priority attention to:

1) reducing and neutralizing threats to security, territorial integrity, sovereignty, traditional spiritual and moral values, and socio-economic development of Russia, its allies and partners from unfriendly European states, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the European Union and the Council of Europe;

2) creating conditions for the cessation of unfriendly actions by European states and their associations, for a complete rejection of the anti-Russian course (including interference in Russia's internal affairs) by these states and their associations, and for their transition to a long-term policy of good-neighbourliness and mutually beneficial cooperation with Russia;

3) the formation of a new model of coexistence by European states to ensure the safe, sovereign and progressive development of Russia, its allies and partners, and durable peace in the European part of Eurasia, taking into account the potential of multilateral formats, including the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

60. Objective prerequisites for the formation of a new model of coexistence with European states are geographical proximity, historically developed deep cultural, humanitarian and economic ties of the peoples and states of the European part of Eurasia. The main factor complicating the normalization of relations between Russia and European states is the strategic course of the USA and their individual allies to draw and deepen dividing lines in the European region in order to weaken and undermine the competitiveness of the economies of Russia and European states, as well as to limit the sovereignty of European states and ensure US global domination.

61. The realization by the states of Europe that there is no alternative to peaceful coexistence and mutually beneficial equal cooperation with Russia, an increase in the level of their foreign policy independence and a transition to a policy of good neighbourliness with the Russian Federation will have a positive effect on the security and welfare of the European region and help European states take their proper place in the Greater Eurasian Partnership and in a multipolar world.

### **The US and other Anglo-Saxon states**

62. Russia's course towards the US has a combined character, taking into account the role of this state as one of the influential sovereign centres of



world development and at the same time the main inspirer, organizer and executor of the aggressive anti-Russian policy of the collective West, the source of major risks to the security of the Russian Federation, international peace, a balanced, equitable and progressive development of humanity.

63. The Russian Federation is interested in maintaining strategic parity, peaceful coexistence with the United States, and the establishment of a balance of interests between Russia and the United States, taking into account their status as major nuclear powers and special responsibility for strategic stability and international security in general. The prospects of forming such a model of US-Russian relations depend on the extent to which the United States is ready to abandon its policy of power-domination and revise its anti-Russian course in favour of interaction with Russia on the basis of the principles of sovereign equality, mutual benefit, and respect for each other's interests.

64. The Russian Federation intends to build relations with other Anglo-Saxon states depending on the degree of their willingness to abandon their unfriendly course toward Russia and to respect its legitimate interests.

### **Antarctica**

65. Russia is interested in preserving Antarctica as a demilitarized space of peace, stability and cooperation, maintaining environmental sustainability and expanding its presence in the region. For these purposes, the Russian Federation intends to give priority attention to preservation, effective implementation and progressive development of the Antarctic Treaty System of December 1, 1959.