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## The New Face of Russia's Military

Back in 2008 a majority of experts tended to take Russia's military reform as a potential failure and an adventurist step by the Russian political leadership. At that time proclamations about its fast failure were quite popular, but today a majority accepts that the prognosis of failure was premature. In actual fact, today it is becoming evident that the reform is not only succeeding but is already starting to affect the entire state's military system. The actions of the reformed Russian armed forces in Crimea and eastern Ukraine, a strong willingness to continue with changes in their defense forces, and an extension of the reform into other state institutions show that the Russian political leadership is dedicated to finish what has been started and there are no signs of any changes in course. All this raises the following questions: why is Russia ready to sacrifice huge resources and to go to such effort to create an essentially new military and to create an effective mechanism to run the state in wartime, and what situation would be the most suitable for the use of those assets.

### Introduction

Back in October 2008 Russia declared the start of reforms in its defense forces. At that time a majority of comments related to this issue in Russia and the West viewed the reform as one in a row of ordinary, cosmetic reforms destined to fail and only represent the bold ambitions of the Russian political leadership<sup>1</sup>. But even at that time, a closer look taken on how all the preparations for the reforms were conducted, what efforts were made to move it forward, and after examination of the initial results, it became obvious that this conclusion was premature. This was among the main messages in my studies from 2011<sup>2</sup> and 2012<sup>3</sup>. Since then, quite a number of changes have happened and a new Russian military face has started to appear.

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<sup>2</sup> Evaluations and ideas presented in this article exclusively belong to the author and can never be considered an official position of the Ministry of National Defense of the Republic of Lithuania or its departments.

<sup>3</sup> Эдуард Воробьев, Виталий Цымбал „Привычка идти зигзагами на попятную – неистребима“, НГ-НВО, 04.03.2011

<sup>2</sup> Daivis Petraitis, "The Russian Military Reform 2005-2015", *Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review* 2010-2011<sup>4</sup>, vol. 9, p. 29-54.

<sup>3</sup> Daivis Petraitis, "Reorganisation of the Russian Armed forces (2005-2015)", National Defense University, Department of Strategic and Defense Studies, Working papers No. 43, Helsinki, 2012.

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Russian military reform and its most important component, a reform of the forces belonging to the Ministry of Defense, continues. Today it is entering into a stage where all the reformed forces will be optimized and rearmed. As it was written, I tend to divide the reforms into the following stages: preparation for the reforms (2003-2008); reform at a tactical level, a new brigade (2008-2010); reform at the operational and strategic levels, an operational command and a joint strategic command (2010-2012) and an optimization of the state's military structure – the Ministry of Defense and other state institutions (2012-2015). Alongside the changes in the structures, rearmament efforts were run through at the same time as well. Those obviously fit into two stages. The first started in about 2010 and is directed at rearming the reorganized forces with modernized weapons. The second stage is supposed to start at around 2015 and continue until 2020. The main task there will be to rearm the forces with new generation or new design arms.

Only primary Russian open sources will be used in this study. Western open sources are not used deliberately, because in a majority cases they only repeat the Russian sources or provide conclusions based on those primary sources. This study is a continuation of studies performed in 2011 and 2012 and will provide analysis on the most recent changes to have taken place in the operational and other forces of the Ministry of Defense and an extension of the reforms into other state institutions. It will provide a brief prognosis on how the situation might look after the reforms are finished as well.

## 1. The End of Reform in the Operational Forces

As a result of the analysis of changes that have taken place and are being carried out in Russia, one should conclude that Russia is carrying out a Revolution in Military Affairs, RMA. A similar revolution had been performed in the USA in the beginning of the previous century and is being conducted in China (in parallel or sometimes overtaking Russia) since the beginning of 2000. While conducting the RMA, the Russian political military leadership is implementing structural changes in its military as required by this revolution.

In the Ministry of Defense system, as a result of changes one might see a division of forces into two broad groups: fighting or operational forces and support forces, so-called institutional forces. The first stages of the reform (2008-2012) were devoted to restructuring the old type of fighting forces. When this was done, the time for creation of absolutely new operational forces came. This process is running its course now and will be finished close to the

end of 2015. Nevertheless, already today the operational forces are acquiring a shape as presented in Figure 1<sup>4</sup>.

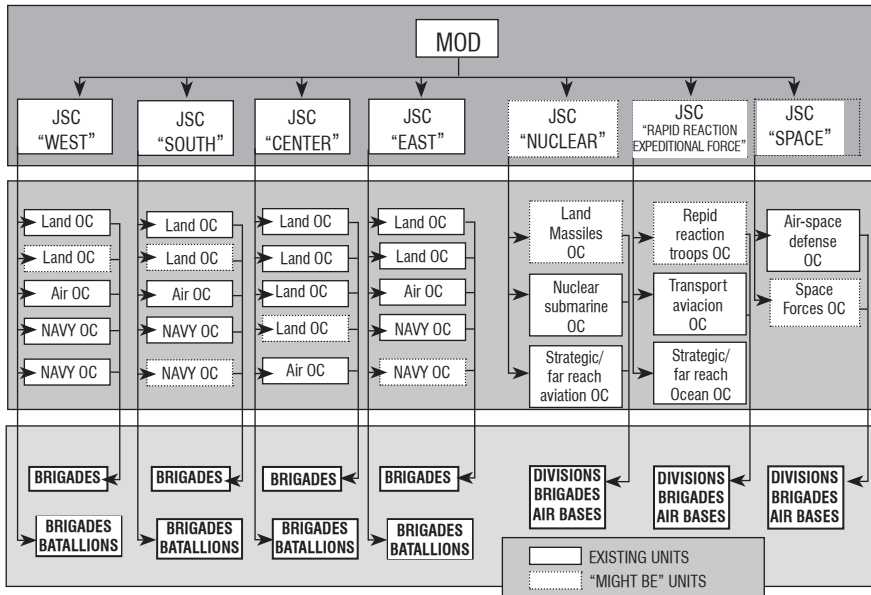


Fig. 1. Russian operational forces after reform

Russia remains a country that prefers to keep secrets and mysteries and likes to use different forms of deception. There might be a number of explanations as to why Russia behaves in this way. Among these is its legacy from previous military traditions or the particularities of the Russian military philosophy, or the desire to postpone showing success for some time, or perhaps wishing to hide some of its failures. Regardless of whether one or another explanation is accurate, it is a fact that Russia deliberately postpones officially making an announcement about the creation of any new block of operational forces, even though facts show that such a block has already been created. Indicators that allow us to conclude that a block has been finished are quite obvious. At first, one sees that besides military units at a tactical level, HQs in other levels have been established and are functioning. In the case of Russia, this means having operational commands and joint strategic commands (abbreviated as OC and JSC henceforth). These commands are responsible for command and control of assigned HQs and tactical units, for organizing and conducting training and exercises, being responsible for logistics and so on

<sup>4</sup> Ibidem.

and so forth. The block has its own C2 system, which is interoperable with C2 systems from other blocks and state level strategic C2. For example, in the beginning of the reform all four general JSC (“West”, “East”, “South” and “Center”) all got the same C2 system.

Let’s begin from the nuclear forces block. There have been no official announcements that the new structure has been established, only general statements regarding the creation of “a strategic nuclear triad” or “strategic nuclear forces”. But the new structure indeed exists. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October 2012, “Red Star” magazine wrote that, “for the first time in the history of the new Russia, under the direct command of the president, a full flesh exercise of all the Russian nuclear forces was conducted. Full flesh means that all nuclear forces in the sea, air and on land were acting according to one scenario”<sup>5</sup>. Usually this kind of exercise is not planned or run from a brigade HQ. This means that the president was commanding the exercise from a strategic level HQ, simply to say, from a newly established JSC. And presidential orders were transferred to lower level strategic aviation, strategic submarine and strategic land missile HQs (OCs). In turn, those OCs commanded and controlled units assigned to them. It looks like the exercise was a final test before approving the new structure. As soon as it was approved, activities designed to strengthen it gained a new stimulus. C2 systems were first in line. For example, strategic aviation OC announced that all subordinated assets like nuclear capable Tu-160, Tu-95, TU-22M3 bombers would be commanded and controlled by a new digitalized C3 system named “Wing A” (Russian name Крыло-А)<sup>6</sup>. Strategic land missiles OC followed by announcing the beginning of the acquisition of a new, modular and digitalized, automated C2 system “An Appeal” (Russian name Воззвание). The system was designed to reach all mobile and ground based ballistic missile units<sup>7</sup>. The JSC, in its turn, declared that the automated C2 system named “A Perimeter” (Russian name Периметр), and nicknamed in the West “A dead hand”, would be modernized<sup>8</sup>. This system is designed to conduct active launches of all missiles to retaliate in case nobody is alive after

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<sup>5</sup> Андреев Д., „Триаду проверили на прочность“, Красная звезда, 22.10.2012. Orig. „Впервые в новейшей истории России под непосредственным руководством Президента Российской Федерации – Верховного Главнокомандующего Вооружёнными Силами РФ проведены полномасштабные учения Стратегических ядерных сил. Это значит, что вся триада – Дальняя авиация, моряки-подводники, стратегические ракетчики – действовала по единому замыслу“.

<sup>6</sup> Михайлов А., „ВВС России переходит на SMS-управление“, Известия, Московский выпуск, 14.06.2013.

<sup>7</sup> Михайлов А., „Россия создает цифровую систему управления ядерными ракетами“, Известия, 18 06 2013.

<sup>8</sup> Валагин А., „Гарантированное возмездие: как работает российская система «Периметр», Российская Газета, 22.01.2014.

the first strike. No doubt that something similar must be going in the naval nuclear submarine forces as well. Add to all of this the steps taken to rearm and the new equipment entering the nuclear units, and a conclusion becomes evident – the Russian strategic nuclear forces are already a reality.

The second, officially non-existent but today already functioning, is a rapid reaction forces block. It consists of two components: direct action troops and forces responsible for bringing those troops to any potential operation place. Delivering capabilities have existed for some time. One of those is the so-called transport aviation. Among the most important functions of the transport aviation newly created in first stages of reform was to provide air transport to combatants. Then, in the beginning of 2013, Major General V. Benediktov<sup>9</sup> was appointed as a commanding officer of transport aviation, he received 290 different transport aircrafts located in two air bases assigned to the OC plus units responsible for maintenance, logistics and communications<sup>10</sup>. A decision regarding transportation of troops by sea came shortly. In March 2013 Defense Minister S. Shoygu sounded a decision to establish a permanent naval unit to be located in the Mediterranean Sea<sup>11</sup>. Most probably the unit is the first one to be subordinated to a new “blue ocean” OC, which would conduct all movements by sea. The MOD claims that a bulk of forces assigned to the OC would consist of sea landing ships, the number of those is planned to increase<sup>12</sup>, French “Mistral” helicopter carriers, and ships providing fire and logistic support.

Efforts to create direct action troops started in the first years of the reform, as well, but the steps in their creation were more reminiscent of a Hollywood scenario. The point is that in the Soviet Army there were a number of troops naming themselves as direct, special or rapid reaction troops. These were air-borne troops, main military intelligence directorate special reconnaissance troops (SPECNAZ), and naval infantry. All of them thought themselves as being the best. During the reform, the backbones of every one of these troops had to be broken and were broken. For example, a number of SPECNAZ brigades were disbanded and others re-subordinated to JSCs, stubborn commanders of air-borne troops were dismissed, officers set in their ways of thinking were retired, and all the other steps gave results. Today new, direct rapid reaction troops have obtained a place in the reorganized structure. To step back a little bit, it is worth mentioning that already at the end of 2012,

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<sup>9</sup> „Командующим Военно-транспортной авиацией ВВС России назначен генерал-майор Владимир Бенедиктов“, ИНТЕРФАКС-АВН, 18 01 2013.

<sup>10</sup> Владыкин О. „Парк самолетов обновится“, НГ-НВО, 07.06.2013.

<sup>11</sup> Воронин Н., „Совещание по проблемам ВМФ“, Красная звезда, 11.03.2013.

<sup>12</sup> Воронин Н., „Особое внимание - десантным кораблям“, Красная звезда, 04.03.2014.

some representatives from the general staff and MOD suggested using Western experience to create something similar to a Special Forces command. At the beginning of 2013 the chief of general staff Army General V. Gerasimov talked about the decision to create a Special Forces command<sup>13</sup>, which would lead direct action troops made up from air-borne, SPECNAZ and naval infantry soldiers. In the beginning of the summer of 2013 such a command was established<sup>14</sup>. Since then, one could see cooperation of previous competitors in training, exercises and operations.

It has been a little bit more challenging to create a JSC. Like in the case with Special Forces OC, a breakthrough happened in the beginning of 2013, when a commander of the Russian airborne troops General Colonel V. Shamanov told journalists that the supreme airborne troops HQ would be like a framework for a new JSC. Officers from the navy, naval infantry or air force would serve hand in hand with former paratroopers. The JSC would be in charge of the Special Forces, transport aviation and “blue ocean” OCs.<sup>15</sup> Most probably today such a JSC already exists. Even more, it is likely that a final test for this block to be “baptized” happened during a snap check of the combat readiness of troops in the central military district on the 21-27<sup>th</sup> June, 2014. Like in the nuclear block case, during the exercise held under the snap check umbrella, the new JSC and OCs had to prove their ability to plan and run an independent operation<sup>16</sup> and to use their own C2 system<sup>17</sup>. The last was represented by the airborne troops C2 system “Andromeda D”. During the exercises, mobile communication and C2 points were activated and the JSC used those to run an operation and to command all OCs, which, in turn, commanded a division, two brigades<sup>18</sup> <sup>19</sup> and assigned transport aviation assets. It took 72 hours for the JSC and OCs to plan and conduct an independent operation in an area located at a distance of thousands of kilometers away from places where the participating units usually stay<sup>20</sup>. Traditionally, the operation was named a

<sup>13</sup> Гаврилов Ю., „Генштаб уполномочен сообщить, Россия создает Силы специальных операций“, РГ, Федеральный выпуск, №6025 07.03. 2013.

<sup>14</sup>Криворучек А., „Элитные войска Минобороны получают отечественную форму“, Известия, 15. 07.2014.

<sup>15</sup> Мухин В., „Владимир Шаманов готов к быстрому реагированию“, НГ-НВО, 19.04.2013.

<sup>16</sup> „Шойгу доложил Путину, сколько войск можно оперативно перебросить на расстояние в три тысячи километров“, <http://www.newsru.com/>, 02.07. 2014.

<sup>17</sup> “Армии подняты по тревоге“, НГ-НВО, 27.06.2014.

<sup>18</sup> „Мимотворческая бригада ЦВО приведена в боевую готовность“ Сайт Минобороны РФ, 23.06.2014.

<sup>19</sup> Гаврилов Ю., „Десант - за Урал“, Российская газета, 23.06.2014.

<sup>20</sup> Гаврилов Ю., „Сергей Шойгу подвел итоги внезапной проверки войск“, Российская Газета, 30.06.2014.

peacekeeping one, because this title is becoming more and more fashionable to use and most probably will be used for all Russian operations planned abroad.

The last block from the newly created operational forces is a Space Forces block. It is being finished today also. A commander of the Russian Air Forces, General Lieutenant V. Bondyrev recently announced that the block would be finished on 1 January 2016<sup>21</sup>. Only some remaining issues like the assignment of space satellites or the incorporation of new capabilities like cyber troops into particular OCS<sup>22</sup> are being discussed today. Despite those minor delays, the Russian enterprise “Almaz-Antey” which is responsible for the creation of different types of equipment and armament for air and space defense, has already received an order to create a new C2 for the Space JSC<sup>23</sup>. Based on all this, one could conclude that the creation of the Russian operational forces is coming to an end and the main emphasis will move to finishing the institutional component.

## 2. Reformation of the Institutional Forces

The creation of these forces started in 2008 as well, but in the beginning emphasis was put on the demolition of old capabilities. Changes in military administration, military education, maintenance and logistics, military science, research and development of new armaments and so on were aimed at disbanding, destroying or reducing old structures and preparing new concepts or designs. This process lasted, depending on the area, from 2008 to 2011 and only after it was finished did building of new institutional forces start.

One of the most important areas where a very intensive reformation took place was military administration and command and control. Since all operational forces came under administration and C2 of adequate JSCs, the supreme HQs of old military branches and troops became obsolete. Liquidation cases began. Good examples of these liquidations are stories of the transfer of Naval C2 from city to city or general staff command post reformation. These cases were discussed in previous studies, but today there is new evidence. Most probably, after the reform former supreme commands of military branches and troops will shrink and loose command over their forces. They will be responsible for a wide range of issues related to general branch or troops support, specific research, military education, preparation of normative documents,

<sup>21</sup> „Воздушно-космические силы будут созданы в РФ 1 января 2016 года“, РИА Новости, 19.07.2014.

<sup>22</sup> Калинин И., „Из взломщиков в генералы“, Московский комсомолец, 08.07.2013.

<sup>23</sup> „Единую систему воздушно-космической обороны начали проектировать в РФ“, РИА Новости, 15.07.2014.



manuals for technical requirements for armament and equipment, and so on. The general staff has changed as well. Since the president of Russia signed new regulations for the general staff back in 2013, the staff enlarged the list of its responsibilities. Previously, in peacetime, the general staff was engaged in only strategic C2 for the forces belonging to the MOD. Now it will perform strategic C2 for all state institutions. To implement this, a command post of old general staff is being transformed into a new creature – a national center for coordination of state defense (NCCSD)<sup>24</sup>. This process began in July 2013. In March 2014 the center began to work and is planned to reach its final operational capabilities at the end of 2014<sup>25</sup>. Not the last in the list of priorities while creating a new state level C2 is a technical status of that system. Already back in 2009 a document named “A strategy of military information system development” was approved. The strategy foresees a full renovation of an entire C2 by implementing new digital and optical technologies. At the end of 2012 already more than five hundred C2 command posts at different levels in the MOD were updated<sup>26</sup>.

A system of training of military specialists and officers, which has been almost destroyed in the beginning of the reform, is almost reformed and regains its scale. There was a time (in 2010) when admission of new cadets into military schools was almost postponed, but since 2013 the system has regained strength and has started to increase numbers of new cadets. As the MOD state secretary Army General N. Pankov pointed out in his interview, there were more than 15,000 cadets admitted into military schools and other training institutions in 2013. Almost two thousand more potential officers were enrolled into military chairs in civilian universities and institutes, of which there are 68 operating today. The system is planned to be complete before the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2014<sup>27</sup>, therefore this year the number of new cadets will be even greater. In some places it will increase not by percentages but by times. For example, the air-borne troops school in Riazane will take in around 2,400 cadets, compared to 1,300 in the year 2013; the air defense school located in Tver will accept 258 cadets instead of 78 taken in 2013; the helicopter pilot training school in Syzran, where the training process was almost terminated in previous years by training only 15-20 pilots, will get back to normal courses<sup>28</sup> and a military school belonging to the Air-Space block will almost double its numbers com-

<sup>24</sup> In Russian: „Национального центра управления обороной государства (НЦУОГ).

<sup>25</sup> Никитина Е., „Павел Попов продолжает курировать создание центра управления обороной“, Известия (Московский выпуск), 11.11.2013.

<sup>26</sup> Худолеев В., „Надёжная связь – залог победы“, Красная звезда, 19.10.2012.

<sup>27</sup> Тихонов А., „Приоритеты расставляет время“, Красная звезда, 24.04.2014.

<sup>28</sup> TV, RTR planeta, *Vesti Nedeli*, 13.07.2014 19: 00.



pared to 2013 by accepting more than two thousand new students<sup>29</sup>.

The creation of a system of combat training of units has also started<sup>30</sup>. The foundation of the system would be combat training centers located in each military district (JSCs). The first such center is planned to start in JSC "West" in December 2014<sup>31</sup>. It will be capable of training an entire brigade at once and the annual number of trained soldiers will be around 30,000.

With the decision made to reject a mass mobilization army and to switch to professional military forces with a new reserve system, which is very similar to the US reserve system, the creation of a new reserve system is gaining speed. The legislative base is already finished. The Russian parliament (Duma) made the necessary changes in laws<sup>32</sup> regarding the principles of formation and numbers of reserves. This was followed by governmental decisions<sup>33</sup> and documents from the MOD<sup>34</sup> regarding organization of the activities of the reserves<sup>35</sup>. One way or another, but it is planned that a new MOD system established on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2013 of reserve preparation will guarantee a first wave of 250,000-300,000 reservists (50-60 brigades). In total, the general staff plans to have 800,000 reservists (180 brigades). To realize these figures, other state institutions will have to be involved. As an example, a system of students training as reservists<sup>36</sup> just started and is supposed to provide 100,000-160,000 reservists annually. The reformed "Voluntary support to army, aviation and navy" organization (Russian name DOSAAF)<sup>37</sup> will prepare around 100,000 reservists annually, plus it will get more than a couple of million more involved in other different military related activities. All reserve issues at the JSC level will be taken care of by the newly established, one per JSC, reserve OC, which will supervise all reserve brigades in the military district<sup>38</sup>.

Changes are taking place in other areas as well. A system of logistic and other supply of units in peacetime locations is almost finished. It is based on

<sup>29</sup> Воздушно-космическая оборона РФ усиливается, сообщило Минобороны, РИА Новости, 03.05.2014.

<sup>30</sup> Тихонов А, "Подготовка кадров: системный подход", Красная звезда, 06.12.2013.

<sup>31</sup> „Центр боевой подготовки в Мулино должен начать функционировать в декабре 2014 года, - Сергей Шойгу“, Новое Телеграфное Агентство Приволжье, 06.02.2014.

<sup>32</sup> Президент России Владимир Путин подписал федеральный закон «О внесении изменений в отдельные законодательные акты Российской Федерации по вопросам создания мобилизационного людского резерва», Интерфакс-Авн, 09.01. 2013.

<sup>33</sup> Гаврилов Ю. „Солдаты на время «Ч», Российская газета, 22.09.2011.

<sup>34</sup> Куликов В. „Годеи про запас“, Российская газета, 27.08.2013.

<sup>35</sup> Гаврилов Ю. „На службу -раз в месяц“, Российская газета, 30.10.2013.

<sup>36</sup> Мухин В. „Шойгу подготовил для студентов «дорожную карту», Независимая газета, 16.01.2014.

<sup>37</sup> „ДОСААФ подготовит армии 110 тысяч специалистов“, НГ-НВО, 29.09.2011.

<sup>38</sup> Ищенко, С. „Итоги-2013: тень Сердюкова терзает армию“, Свободная пресса, 26 12 2013.

so-called “outsourcing” by transferring a majority of functions to civilian and commercial institutions.

A system orientated at providing an entire life cycle of maintenance and service for all military equipment and armament using the military industrial complex capabilities, is being created now<sup>39</sup>. Another supporting system, orientated at providing maintenance and service for military equipment and armament by using MOD capabilities, is also being established. Deputy Defense Minister J. Borisov told journalists that the MOD would keep only 26 out of 133 factories to repair military equipment and arms. The rest would be transferred to the military industrial complex with adequate contracts for repair and maintenance signed at the same time<sup>40</sup>. Newly re-established repair and maintenance structures in units will be responsible for on-going maintenance and repair in their own units<sup>41</sup>. The military arsenal system will change as well. The new one foresees standardized arsenals spread among JSCs with approximately 400 soldiers in each. At the end of 2014 at first there will be nine such arsenals, and at the end of 2015, the total number would grow up to 15<sup>42</sup>.

A system of medical support is being built in a fast mode as well. Today it foresees 33 medical brigades/groups<sup>43</sup> under the JSCs and MOD, being ready to act in emergencies and other cases. Education of military medical personnel has been renewed. After four years of pending, military-medical institutes accepted around 600 students in 2013. Plans for the year 2014 are 400 students plus 200 more after a new medical faculty is due to open in Penza. Old specialists are being recalled with around 150 military doctors called back to serve<sup>44</sup>. Systems of daily military medical care and prophylaxis medicine have also been renewed.

### 3. The Reform of the State’s Military System

As we see, almost all the structural changes in the MOD are almost finished. At the same time it becomes evident, that the military reform in Russia covers more than just the MOD and is turning into an entire state military reform. This was seen already in the beginning, then time to time different initiators of the reform kept stating that not only the MOD would be changed.

<sup>39</sup> Тихонов А., „Векторы приложения сил“, Красная звезда, 01.07.2014.

<sup>40</sup> Воронин Н., „Российская армия: перевооружение“, Красная звезда, 03.07.2014.

<sup>41</sup> Тихонов А., „Исправность «железных коней»“, Красная звезда, 04.07.2014.

<sup>42</sup> „Вооруженные силы РФ получат 15 новых arsenалов“, Интерфакс-Авн, 13 12 2013.

<sup>43</sup> Гаврилов Ю., „Сергей Шойгу подвел итоги внезапной проверки войск“, Российская Газета, 30 07 2014.

<sup>44</sup> Тихонов А., „Разговор за здравие“, Красная звезда, 01.07.2014.

Since 2008, messages about changes in the Ministry of Interior Forces or other force institutions kept appearing, but a real move showing the reform being much broader was the signing of a state defense plan for 2013-2015. The plan was signed by the president on the 24<sup>th</sup> of January 2013. It is worth noting that the plan is the first such plan in the history of the new Russia<sup>45</sup>. It prescribes all actions not only for the MOD. There are around fifty state ministries and institutions (some talk about 47, some about 49), which have their own armed units or that are deeply involved in defense related business, included in the plan.

The already mentioned national center for coordination of state defense became responsible for mastering the plan. The center integrates all the different ministerial and institutional C2 centers mentioned in the plan. Besides a main command post and supporting structures, the bulk of the center will be three divisions named as cells. The most important, a supreme political leadership cell, will be a main working tool for the president and Russian Security Council. A second, military actions coordination cell will coordinate all the activities of the defense forces, including nuclear forces. The third, military actions support cell will supervise the activities of all other state institutions. The center does that in peace and wartime<sup>46</sup> and this means that the MOD performs a permanent daily control of all the other state institutions and no mobilization is required in the case of war. The center's tentacles will run down to the other ministries or even tactical units at C2 posts. In case of necessity, the center can inject itself and overrun other C2s<sup>47</sup>. To support functioning, every cell will have its own independent managerial group in the command post. The only thing similar to the center structure which ever existed was a governing body Stalin had during the WWII. It was called STAVKA and was controlling everybody and everything. After the war STAVKA was disbanded and total daily coordination abounded. In case of war, the general staff had to mobilize, take the lead and become something similar to STAVKA again.

General Colonel P. Popov became a commander of the center. Before, for a number of years, he commanded a similar center in the Russian Ministry of Emergencies. That center was authorized to coordinate all activities during emergencies. Now the general was ordered to move his expertise to the highest of state levels. The defense minister himself has placed a symbolic capsule at the center's construction site.

Similar to all new JSCs cases, the final test and baptism of fire for the

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<sup>45</sup> Генерал-полковник Владимир Зарудницкий, "На передовой управления войсками", Красная звезда, 19.02.2013.

<sup>46</sup> Никитина Е., "Павел Попов продолжит курировать создания центра управления обороны", Известия (Московский выпуск), 11.11.2013.

<sup>47</sup> Тихонов А., „Центростремительное ускорение“, Красная звезда, 20.01.2014.

center happened during an exercise. This exercise took place in March 2014 and was named as a national armed forces C2 exercise. All command and control of strategic nuclear forces and even separate tactical units was done from the NCCSD. The center proved itself as being able to allow the supreme commander to observe and if required interfere into the entire C2 process. The Russian president demonstrated that by giving direct orders to strategic bombers, submarines and even artillery units from JSCs “Center” and “South” to engage their enemy<sup>48</sup>. And then, one of the flame-thrower teams failed to fire, the president noticed that at the moment and ordered the commander of the JSC to clear the situation<sup>49</sup>. It is worth mentioning that Putin invited some his colleagues from CIS countries to observe this exercise. Even though the militaries of those countries were not involved in the exercise, close military integration of these countries under CSO allows assuming that some time in the future the center might command the forces of those countries as well.

A recruitment process for duty officers to work in the center has already started. All those selected will get training in the general staff academy and will be issued with broad rights. As the minister of defense himself said, they would be authorized to make decisions and even sanction a use of forces<sup>50</sup>. The center will be expanded and its capabilities strengthened. The best proof of this is a creation of capabilities responsible for the technical safety and effectiveness of the center’s C2. These capabilities will be represented by “cyber” units consisting of groups of programmers, computer and EW, secure communication and other specialists. Elements of those units will be in each JSC and OC. The commander of such troops is already appointed<sup>51</sup>.

## 4. A Rearmament of Forces

As it was mentioned already, rearmament of the reformed forces is being conducted in parallel with structural changes. We may divide the entire rearmament process into two stages. The first ((2010-2015) stage is orientated at increasing as fast as possible the combat capabilities of the forces. This is being done via mass rearmament with modernized weapons. From each category of

<sup>48</sup> „Президент России Владимир Путин как Верховный главнокомандующий провел плановую тренировку по управлению Вооруженными силами РФ“, Интерфакс-Авн, 08. 05. 2014.

<sup>49</sup> Криворучек А., „Причиной отказа «Буратино» мог стать старый снаряд“, Известия, 08. 05. 2014.

<sup>50</sup> <http://warfiles.ru/show-50700-dezhurnye-centra-oborony-smogut-otdavot-priказы-ob-ispolzovanii-voysk.html>.

<sup>51</sup> Вооруженных силах РФ созданы войска информационных операций“, ИТАР-ТАСС, 12 05. 2014.

weapons, one or two models were selected, modernized and sent into the units. As an example, a tank T-72 was selected as a base and modernized up to the T-72 B2/B3 levels, which are almost equal to the new T-90 A and C models<sup>52</sup>. Similar things are being done with armored personnel carriers BMP3 and infantry fighting vehicles BTR, artillery systems, aircrafts MIG, SU and so on. All of them are being modernized in a fast manner. This decision allowed providing units with sizable numbers of comparatively modernized weapons. For instance numbers of the modernized T-72s provided to units since 2012 ranges from 150 to 300 annually. The factory located in Arzamas and producing BTR-82A infantry fighting vehicles states it is able to produce up to a thousand BTRs per year<sup>53</sup>.

As it was mentioned, this stage will end in around 2015-2016. Quite a few different leaders made statements that from 2015-2016, emphasis would be put on a new generation weapons. Recently Deputy Defense Minister J. Borisov confirmed that by stating that a production of around 20 percent or weaponry types recently placed in units will be terminated and that those weapons would be substituted by new ones.<sup>54</sup>

The second stage will start in 2015-2016. One of the most important criteria for any new type of weapon will be standardization by using the same platforms to create different types of weapons. Of course, a lot depends on Russia's success and ability to create new weaponry. There are a plenty of ideas and wishes but not everything goes as smoothly as once expected. For example, the fifth generation jet T-50 keeps experiencing problems during flight-testing<sup>55</sup>. A new "Armata" tank prototype planned to be presented already back in 2013, and taken into an armament of units in 2015<sup>56</sup>. Today "Armata" is still surrounded by mysteries. Some say that everything is going according to plan and the MOD will acquire the first 16 tanks for field testing as planned in 2014<sup>57</sup>, others contrarily state that there is no progress and all date lines will be moved to the right<sup>58</sup>.

One knows that an organizational structure of a unit depends on the weapons and equipment it possesses. Back in 2010-2011 first messages about plans to change structures of new brigades appeared<sup>59</sup>. Experimentation has been going on for some years already and the first drafts of the reorganized

<sup>52</sup>Тихонов А., „Один насыщенный заезд“, Красная звезда, 16.07.2014.

<sup>53</sup><http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zxht3z8Va3U>.

<sup>54</sup>Воронин Н., „Российская армия: перевооружение“, Красная звезда, 03.07.2014.

<sup>55</sup>Денисов А., „Тонка перевооружений“, Совершенно секретно, No.8/303: 26.07.2014.

<sup>56</sup>Владыкин О., „Танк «Армата» придет вовремя“, НГ-НВО, 14.09.2012.

<sup>57</sup><http://www.rg.ru/2013/06/26/voorujenie-site.html>.

<sup>58</sup>Путилов С., „И танки наши медленны“, Новые известия, 01.10.2012.

<sup>59</sup>„В Сухопутных войсках РФ к 2020 г появится 47 соединений нового образца“, РИА Новости, 15.03.2011.

new brigades exist. Some time ago the commander of land forces General Colonel A. Postnikov said in his interview that depending on the weaponry it possesses, the land forces would have only light, medium and heavy brigades<sup>60</sup>. Most probably, the light brigades would be armed with light-wheeled transport vehicles, such as the crossovers “Tigr”, “Skorpion”, “Volk”, or vehicles built on a new “Taifoon” platform. Those brigades would have light anti-tank, anti-aircraft defense weapons as well<sup>61</sup>. Medium and heavy brigades would rely on larger-wheeled and tracked platforms. The experimental wheeled platform was named “Bumerang”, the tracked platform for medium brigades was named “Kurganec”, and for heavy brigades, the platform name was “Armata”<sup>62</sup>.

A similar situation exists in other categories of arms (air, naval, air defense, missiles and so on) as well. The only difference to land weaponry is that here it takes longer to get a new generation of a weapon, and at the same time all these types of weapons possess a greater modernization potential. But the tendencies remain the same. The emphasis is put on enhanced modernization and increasing supplies to the forces. At the same time, the creation of new types of arms is progressing and a new generation ships or planes are put on the production lines as soon as all the designs have been completed.

To guarantee an ongoing rearmament process and to ensure that orders will be fulfilled on time, the famous NCCSD center is involved as well. A special event, the so-called “day of acceptance of new armaments into the forces” was held at the center recently. During it the defense minister received reports from different factories about fulfilling orders and himself distributed new jets or tanks into units.<sup>63</sup> Such events will most probably continue because the second stage of rearmament supply of new weaponry must become massive<sup>64</sup> just to reach the level of 70 percent of new arms in the forces as marked by the MOD for 2020.

## 5. A New Personnel Policy

With the reforms still ongoing, the MOD is experiencing a dilemma as to how to get people into the reformed units. Let us start from the lowest

<sup>60</sup> „В Сухопутных войсках РФ появится около 50 соединений нового образца“, 16 03. 2011, <http://topwar.ru/3738-v-suxoputnyx-vojskax-rf-poyavitsya-okolo-50-soedinenij-novogo-obrazca.html>.

<sup>61</sup> „Унифицированные боевые платформы“, *Millitary Russia.Ru*, 25.03.2012.

<sup>62</sup> Владыкин О., “«Армата» — это платформа для многих боевых машин”, ИГ-НВО, 15.03.2013.

<sup>63</sup> Тихонов А., „День, когда Россия стала сильнее“, Красная звезда, 18.07.2014.

<sup>64</sup> „Сухопутные войска начнут массовую закупку принципиально новых образцов вооружения с 2016 года - Минобороны РФ“, ИНТЕРФАКС-АВН, 2 02. 2014.

levels. In the past the base for providing soldiers was mass conscription. Now conscription is not able to provide and guarantee an adequate quality of personnel. Despite conscription still being able to provide the requested numbers of soldiers to perform the simplest duties like riflemen or sailors, it fails to provide grounds for motivation. Changing the ways of working with conscripts is supposed to improve that situation. To improve morale and make service more attractive, the MOD is going to special effort, starting from establishing a military chaplain or deputy commanders for soldiers' issues positions, and ending with creating parental committees in units. Service conditions are being improved by offering free selection catering, establishing tearooms, installing shower cabins and laundry facilities. It was decided to settle on greater amounts of pocket money for ordinary conscripts – 2,000 rubles<sup>65</sup> – and 2,400–2,600 rubles for conscript specialists<sup>66</sup> as well.

On the other hand, changes are being introduced to make the administration of conscription more efficient. Efforts aimed at discouraging young people to avoid or ignore conscription are being reined in. At first, some steps are being taken to change legislation in such a way, that a person who has not served would feel uncomfortable later. For example, he/she would not be eligible for state employment<sup>67</sup>. Proposals are also being made to issue special electronic call-ups for potential conscripts and to send them by e-mail, or to start registration of conscripts already in high school. Besides intensified military service advertising, it is being promoted in other ways as well. Examples here might be an option to “serve” while studying at university or any other educational institution<sup>68</sup>, to serve within the defense minister's new invention of a so-called “Science Company”<sup>69</sup>, or to allow a conscript to choose to serve one year as a conscript or to sign a two-year (instead of the usual three-year) contract<sup>70</sup>.

It is obvious that Russia would never refuse conscription, but it relies more and more on contract soldiers. As proof, the number of contract soldier positions in the armed forces will reach 425,000 in 2017. At the same time, efforts are made to realize this achievement. There were 205,000 contract soldiers in the Russian forces back in 2013, so to reach the planned numbers it is

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<sup>65</sup> Владыкин О., „Новые стимулы к военной службе“, НГ-НВО, 11.07.2014.

<sup>66</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>67</sup> Гаврилов Ю., „Уклонистов от армии ждут новые трудности“, <http://www.rg.ru/2013/11/22/zakon-site.html>.

<sup>68</sup> Никольский А., „Куда призавут студентов“, Вестник, 16.12.2013.

<sup>69</sup> Потехина А., „Бой ведёт научная рота“, Красная звезда, 18.07.2014.

<sup>70</sup> Мохов В., „Один по призыву или два по контракту“, Красная звезда, 15.01.2014.



necessary to recruit about 50,000 new soldiers annually. To achieve this a new, unified system of recruiting is being created by establishing special recruiting centers in the country's regions. Their number amounted to 74 in 2013<sup>71</sup>. At the same time efforts are put into making the conditions of service better and more attractive. For instance, a new contract soldier's workload regulation prescribes that a normal workday for a soldier is from 9 am to 6 pm. During exercises or operations this does not apply, but a system of compensation also exists. The minimum salary for a contract soldier is 25,000 rubles<sup>72</sup>. The possibility for conscripts to choose between a pure conscription and a shortened contract also makes service by contract more attractive. Still, despite all these efforts, keeping up with the foreseen contract soldier plan is proving to be tough. Different sources state that from 15,000<sup>73</sup> to 35,000<sup>74</sup> contracts were terminated in 2013 alone. Keeping in mind that the general staff plans to have close to half a million contract soldiers in the armed forces<sup>75</sup>, new ideas and moves have to be made to make service by contract more appealing.

Finally, maintaining the necessary number of officers has also been under consideration. At first, the decision to extend the service period limit by five years was taken<sup>76</sup>. This allows officers to serve longer and to receive a larger retirement package. Quite a few already retired officers, especially technicians and specialists, have been called back to service. Students have the possibility to become officers by enrolling into military chairs in universities and institutes and by signing contracts with the MOD. Only the last decision allows the MOD to expect to get more than 10,500 reserve officers within the upcoming two and a half years<sup>77</sup>. To maintain its highest level of expertise, the MOD re-established the so-called general inspectors group at the MOD. Today it accounts for 26 officers having the rank of general colonel or higher<sup>78</sup>. And of course, the last step to ensure the requested numbers of officers is an increased admission of cadets at military schools.

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<sup>71</sup> Семенов Д., „Служба по контракту: законодательные аспекты“, Красная звезда, 17.12.2013.

<sup>72</sup> Тихонов А., „Армия: модернизация продолжается“, Красная звезда, 02.12.2013.

<sup>73</sup> Гаврилов Ю., „Контрактник под расчет“, Российская газета, 11.11.2013.

<sup>74</sup> Мухин В., „Каждый шестой контрактник уволился из армии в минувшем году“, Независимая газета, 08.11.2013.

<sup>75</sup> Литовкин В., „К 2020 году в войсках будет 500 тысяч контрактников“, Независимая газета, 03.12.2013.

<sup>76</sup> Семенов Д., „Служба по контракту: законодательные аспекты“, Красная звезда, 17.12.2013.

<sup>77</sup> Фалалеев М., „Солдат с дипломом“, РГ (Федеральный выпуск), N6434, 22.07.2014.

<sup>78</sup> Тихонов А., „Подготовка кадров: системный подход“, Красная звезда, 09.12.2013.

## 6. A New Armed Forces Training Policy

The reformed military forces that are gradually being manned by new personnel must train and exercise. In the beginning of the reforms, individual combat training was done in different combat training centers and military units. Collective combat training depended on different CPXs, LIVEXs or experimental exercises planned and performed at tactical, operational, and strategic levels.

Since Army General S. Shoygu became the minister of defense, collective combat training has been strengthened by the establishment of new combat training centers. To make individual and collective combat training better a number of new ideas have been implemented.

Let us start by saying that S. Shoygu decided to increase by five times the amount of ammunition used for training. Now soldiers and crews perform much more different types of shootings. Officially this was presented as a way to enhance soldiers' and crews' professionalism, but it also provides the possibility to get rid of old ammunition as well. At least one might come to that conclusion when hearing about training accidents caused by old ammunition. At the same time, the increased norms of fuel, oil and lubricants allowed to intensify individual and collective training in the air, on land and seas up to levels close to Western standards.

Now let us to explore some of the other defense minister's innovations. One of these is a snap check of combat readiness in units. Those are performed at the OC, JSC and state levels. Usually all these snap checks end with different level exercises. This new or perhaps even forgotten in the West form of combat training is being used more and more often. According to the author's data, seven snap checks were done in 2013 and already ten were conducted in the first half of 2014<sup>79</sup>. Even though Russia claims informing the West about its snap checks (that is, only after a snap check has already started), any such check raises concerns. Large numbers of soldiers and weapons raised by alarm, moved over great big distances, units immediately starting sizable, often two-sided exercises in unknown training grounds do not add to building the West's confidence in Russia.

Changes in the organization of exercises have also been implemented. It was decided not to conduct "paper" CPX anymore. Since then, all CPXs are echoed by units' tactical exercises in polygons. Another new invention is the so-called two-sided exercise, where units "fight" each other at the operational

<sup>79</sup> Here only strategic, JSC and OC level snap checks are counted.

and tactical level. All two-sided exercises are run according to different scenarios, mediators from the general staff or higher commands estimate their success in performing marches, conducting offense or defense actions, and so on. Everything is crowned by live shooting. As it has already been mentioned, this type of exercise is increasingly becoming the final phase of snap checks done for regiments, brigades or even corps and armies<sup>80</sup>. One such recent event happened in our neighborhood in Kaliningrad back in March 2014. It was a two-sided exercise involving the 36<sup>th</sup> naval infantry, the 79<sup>th</sup> motorized infantry brigades and the 7<sup>th</sup> separate motor rifle infantry regiment<sup>81</sup>.

One more innovation is an event called educational tactical shooting (In Russian - тактико-огневые учебные стрельбы (ТОУС). During these, company or battalion battle groups are formed and they perform live shooting on targets arranged according to different scenarios. This means that not only marksmanship is the object of the training exercise, but coordination of fire and movement as well.<sup>82</sup>.

But the peak of all innovations was the initiative to start military competitions orientated at boosting individual training and morale. Annual competitions among officers as commanders of motorized riflemen and tanks, artillery, reconnaissance and other units have already been arranged in the Russian armed forces. Here officers demonstrated their individual fitness and professional knowledge. Today such competitions are being continued and even extended into new areas (military psychology, for example<sup>83</sup>). But as soon as contract soldiers appeared, it became especially important to find something to ignite the spirit of competitiveness and to evaluate the level of individual training. All of this started with the famous "Tank biathlon". At first glance, it is a simple competition where tank crews have to drive through an obstacle path and to shoot down different targets. But quite soon it became very addictive. To prepare for the annual "Tank biathlon", crews from tank and motorized riflemen brigades started to compete at first in brigade and later in OC and JSC tank biathlon competitions. Quite soon the idea was moved into other branches of the military forces. At first similar individual professionalism competitions appeared in the air force as the "Aviadarts"<sup>84</sup> game and were followed by a "biathlon of radiolocation station crews"<sup>85</sup>. Later they expended into the naval

<sup>80</sup> Гаврилов Ю., «Армия приступила к масштабным учениям», Российская Газета, 28. 02. 2014.

<sup>81</sup> Тихонов А., «По вводным Генштаба», Красная звезда, 03.03.2014.

<sup>82</sup> Павлюткин В., «Гарант безопасности на Балтике», Красная звезда, 16.05.2014.

<sup>83</sup> Воронов Р., «Я не из тех, кто сидит в кабинете...», Красная звезда, 14.07.2014.

<sup>84</sup> Пинчук А., ««Авиадартс»: наземный этап», Красная звезда, 21.05.2014.

<sup>85</sup> Хайруллин Ш., «КамАЗы бездорожья не боятся», Красная звезда, 21.07.2014.

infantry's "Sea Derby"<sup>86</sup>, a truck driver biathlon<sup>87</sup>, combat engineers<sup>88</sup> and even airborne troop crew<sup>89</sup> competitions. The only difference compared to the officers' competition is that teams or crews compete against each other and the task is very simple – to demonstrate the ability to avoid destruction by moving fast and "killing" an opponent by sharp shooting. Winners are greeted, rewarded (cars and motorcycles feature on the prize lists) and made as examples for others, so no doubt, this initiative will definitely grow...

This kind of useful idea is moving slightly into the civilian world as well. Since 2013 Russia has re-established the tradition for civilians to fulfill a set of physical fitness norms in a program called "Be Ready for Work and Defense" (Russian GTO). Under the flag of this program, the first individual civilian competition named "A Race of Heroes" was organized in September 2013. It was almost the same as what Russia's young recruits were performing during a militarized march by jumping over trenches, climbing walls and crawling under fences with explosions and mud around. Around 400<sup>90</sup> civilians attended "A Race of Heroes" and a majority are potential candidates for an armed forces contract.

## 7. The New Russian War-Fighting Concept

The reforms are not finished yet, but already now it is becoming evident that after they are complete, the manner of going to and fighting in a war will be changed. Based on the thoughts, writing, and speeches made by a number of Russian retired generals, military academics and leaders, it is obvious that there would be a number of changes. Those, presented below, according my understanding, are the most important.

Russia always emphasizes that nuclear weapons are defensive and most essential in a case of aggression against Russia. Therefore the nuclear component of their operational forces is the one to be used for defense if the other forces fail or, in a second case, as a tool to terminate military actions. Despite being named as defensive, all other operational forces are more or less orientated at offensive actions. There is only one "but" here – Russia will use those

<sup>86</sup> Песоцкая С., „Под Калининградом пройдет Балтийское военно-морское дерби“, <http://www.rg.ru/2014/06/30/reg-szfo/tank-anons.html>.

<sup>87</sup> Рудык Т., „Больше биатлонов хороших и разных!“, Красная звезда, 05.02.2014.

<sup>88</sup> Бородин Ю., „Инженерный мастер-класс“, Красная звезда, 04.07.2014.

<sup>89</sup> Хвастов А., Тихонов А., „...И пляски «железных коней“, Красная звезда, 08.07.2014.

<sup>90</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1UyslJeW0cs>.

forces only after all other forms of leverage and means of soft power fail to achieve Russia's objectives. And this is no secret; it is openly written about in recent strategic documents and visible in Russia's actions. Even more so, despite their reformed forces, at the end of the day, being very capable, they would still lag behind the forces of the USA, joint NATO forces, or maybe even China. Understanding this, Russia could use its regular forces directly and with a much higher probability of success only if a particular international situation were to occur. Examples of such a situation might be the active involvement of the USA in a military conflict in the Asia-Pacific, or were NATO to split or disband, and so on. Until this happens, the reformed forces will be used mostly indirectly.

An absolutely new phenomenon that shows how the reformed forces might be used indirectly is the use of private military companies along with governmental defense forces. After careful studies of the usage of private military companies in the USA, in China and in other Western countries, Russia developed its own approach to this. One of the first who started to discuss the potential of "non-traditional warfare" being used against NATO, already back in 2005-2006, was a retired Russian SPESNAZ colonel, V. Kvachkov. A retired Russian intelligence major general S. Kanchiukov used his ideas in exploring ways how private military companies might be used in the best interests of Russia. It is worth reminding that so-called private protection enterprises (In Russian "Частное охранное предприятие, ЧОП") do not belong to the armed forces and private military companies (PMC) officially do not exist. Saying that officially PMCs do not exist does not mean that they do not exist in reality. They are already established and successfully operating in a number of hot spots in the world today<sup>91</sup>. This allows and will allow even more in the future the Russian political leadership to use PMCs any time when the usage of governmental armed forces is uncomfortable or not rational. I do believe that Putin was not lying when he said that there were no Russian regular forces, at least on the front lines, in Crimea. Based on the behavior of armed personnel and other indicators, one might conclude that private military companies had been operating there and now they are fighting in eastern Ukraine<sup>92</sup>. Partially this is proved also by the fact that efforts to legitimize PMCs in Russia have intensified. The Russian parliament (Duma) has received a draft of a law on private military companies in Russia. The draft foresees the usage of private

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<sup>91</sup> Канчуков С., „Частные военные компании России“, /kanchukov-sa.livejournal.com/, 30.08.2012.

<sup>92</sup> „В предверии международного суда над «героями Майдана»: Русско-Украинской войны не будет, а бандеровцев зачмстят силами ЧВК“, <http://worldcrisis.ru/crisis/1426643>.

military companies to achieve Russia's political objectives and even mentions potential (hidden and official) subordination to the MOD<sup>93</sup>. At the same time, most probably, the MOD would also favor contract soldiers or officers "deciding to earn some extra money" and temporary joining such companies during their vacations or getting employed by them after retirement.

And secondly, if the number of private militants is not enough and a situation escalates, the Special Forces will most certainly be used<sup>94</sup>. And this course of action is given quite a lot of attention. The Russian military leadership is not hiding the fact that Special Forces will be used far before the official start of a conflict. This was shown in a Russian "RTR planet" TV program about the Russian Special Forces exercise in the Caucasus in the summer of 2013. During the report it was openly stated and shown how the Special Forces changed their uniforms into the uniforms of opponent troops, so officially they are absent.

And only in the terminal stages of an operation or conflict, when it becomes "official", will the regular forces come. In the beginning, most probably it will be other "Rapid Reaction" block forces operating under the peacekeeping flag. Later, when other issues like the Russian-speaking population's rights or something else pops up, regular JSCs' land, air or naval forces will join the conflict. Their coin for victory will be surprise, scale and speed and the results will be safeguarded by diplomacy and of course, nuclear deterrence. These are the scenarios the reformed and permanent readiness forces of the MOD are devoted to.

## Summing up

The Russian military reform is still underway. As we see, the creation of their operational forces is coming to an end, the nuclear and rapid reaction forces already exist, their ability to be operated has already been tested during exercises and now the elimination of shortcomings in their capabilities are in progress. Even though it seems that the so-called "Space" forces are lagging behind the announced term for its establishment (1 Jan 2016), they nevertheless nicely fit into the 2012-2015 period devoted to optimization and finalization of the system.

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<sup>93</sup> Криворучек А., „Контроль за частными военными компаниями отдадут Минобороны“, Известия, 07. 07. 2014.

<sup>94</sup> Квачков В., Вооруженные силы будущей России - Русская Армия.

Today is already obvious that differently from other countries, this reform covers the entire state. This message is not broadly advertised in open sources, but we see more and more cases showing the coordination and involvement of forces from other state structures in military exercises. This proves that some reorganization is going on inside those structures as well. The establishment of the National Center for the Coordination of State Defense (NCCSD) serves as the best proof that the MOD has become enforced not only by other state force institutions, but by civilian and other organizations as well.

The split of the rearmament of the reformed forces into two separate stages is obvious as well. Modernization programs have been created, the amount of modernized arms has increased, and the forces are intensively incorporating them into units, leading to an evident increase of military capabilities. Signs of a second stage, new armament creation and a delivery stage are also seen at the same time. Sparse information about “Armata” or fifth generation jets is not enough to get a real picture, but proves the process itself is going on.

Moves in personnel recruitment provided in the study support the assumption that the reforms are successfully moving forward. It is already a fact that Russia will keep a mixed professional/conscript military. The only unanswered question is how the ratio of recent contract-conscript soldiers differs from the ratio planned. Still, grounds for concern should be seen observing the increased appetite of the reformed military regarding officers and military specialists. Officially announcing that the military would be close to a million in size (1.8 million after mobilization), it is difficult to explain why the number of new military cadets is reaching Soviet period figures.

Changes in the training of the reformed forces are also evident. Next to old forms, a number of new methods were introduced. Sudden checks of combat readiness done in Soviet times has been reintroduced, the number and scale of different exercises has increased significantly, new forms of training orientated towards an increase in the quality of training and troop motivation forces one to think why they are going to all these efforts. One way or another, it demonstrates the changed position of the Russian political and military leadership in thinking about the usage of a military force. A “new thing” here is that a military, or so-called “hard” force is seen as a measure to be used only after the “soft” measures have failed. But the willingness to make use of a military force remains, and it seems that the threshold for this decision to be taken is quite low.

Even though this study does not elaborate on failures and problems, they certainly exist. While the reforms were being run, a number of miscalcu-



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lations and deviations took place. Even in the reformed forces, we still see cases of corruption, theft, bullying and military personnel involvement in criminal activities. Plans for gathering contract soldiers in the numbers required are slow to get underway and the number of those already contracted who end up breaking their agreements is quite large, plus the problem remains with young people trying to escape conscription and so on. But at the same time, the Russian political and military leadership's efforts to get problems solved are obvious. One must admit, those efforts are giving positive results and Russia keeps demonstrating its strong will to finish its reforms within the planned timeframe.

Moreover, the fact that the Russian military is becoming more capable and able to react quickly was recognized by the Chief of Joint Staffs, General M. Dempsey, recently<sup>95</sup>. Such an estimate was given after the reforms that are entering into their second phase doubled by a drastic increase in numbers of cadets accepted into military schools since 2013-2014, intensifying the supply of modernized weaponry, the undisputed prioritization of military issues and other indicators show that Russia, most probably, will have forces capable of performing planned tasks inside and outside the country in around 2017-2018. And if this goes to plan, if the reforms are successful, Russia might have military forces almost as capable as the forces of other leading countries by 2020.

*Trakai, July 2014*

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<sup>95</sup> Lee Ferran, "US Military Dusts Off Decades-Old 'Readiness' Plans for Russia", ABCNews, 25.07. 2014.