

Russia in a Wider Europe

Grigory Yavlinsky

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I express my gratitude to the President of Lithuania Mr. Valdas Adamkus and Lithuanian Government and the Bertelsmann Foundation for the possibility to speak to such an audience and to share with you the most important things about die security in Europe and in the world.

This conference surely underlines the openness and new spirit of Vilnius that was discussed yesterday and today in the beginning of die conference. I think that this conference can prove it.

The very fact that we Starr our discussion after this very interesting overview that was given by Carl Bildt shows that Russia is really important in the European and global security, as well as how difficult and how complicated is the case of Russia and security in Europe.

As for today, I would like to stress that since the last presidential elections there has happened the most dramatic, the most deep change in the area of security in Russia. I would say, the most visible and the most difficult change.

The fact that the West is not the enemy of Russia is coming slowly, step by step, into the Russian political thinking and the Russian elite. It's a very serious change in Russian mind, and this is a very difficult step from the point of view of the new President. If you look back, only two years back before the 11th of September, for example, the symbol of Russian foreign policy was the bulletproof train with the Chairman of North Korea travelling around Russia for two months.

Now Russia has completely changed its political mentality. For hundreds of years the West was the main enemy of Russia. Not any more. And this change is very significant. Real facts support this opinion. Because the position taken by the President Putin after the 11th of September to join antiterrorist actions, especially in the operation in Afghanistan, shows the practical results, and now we can rely on very practical things which are happening around Russia. It was a very strategic decision of the Russian President to solve important problems of the Russian security with the 100 per cent help from the side of the USA. It was maybe the first time in the Russian history that the tough problems of the Russian security were solved with the help of someone else. If you remember the mid 2000, the Russian government was considering the decision to bomb Afghanistan because of the terrorist camps were located in Afghanistan. So that was an unprecedented decision taken by the President and when the absolute majority of the Russian political elite was not on that side. These developments certainly change Russian relations with the key players in the world security and first of all with the US, NATO and the EU.

If Russia wants to be a part of Europe, a member of the European Union, [be it in 10 years] it is absolutely crucial for Russia to establish a new kind of relations with the USA. The door to Europe for Russia is in Washington, whether somebody likes it or not. That means that Europe has well-established relations with the US. Although there are some difficulties for the moment, but well-established relations is a fundamental thing. If Russia wants to have close and workable relations and wants to be a member of European security, political and economic system - Russia has to establish transparent, clear and fundamental relations with the US. Precisely, what Russia is doing after the 11th of September. We all have to be very sensitive to the difficulties which we have in this area, because it is clear for everybody that the US is the country that is taking not only the first place in the area of political, economic and military possibilities, but, I would put it in such a way- is taking the first, second, third... all top ten places in the military, political and economic areas in the world. And that must be accepted and understood well.

To play the game that divides Europe and the USA - to play with Europe against the USA, or with the USA against Europe - is counterproductive. But that used to be the Russian policy for 50 years. And what Russia and Europe should do at the moment, is not to play anti-American cards but try to find intellectual arguments, and in the disputes and in the discussions try to push the US policy away from unilateral decisions and from attempts to act in isolation.

The other issue, which I think is extremely important, is the Russian-NATO relation. You can see that Russia acts in a very positive way in regard to NATO expansion, differently from what Russia was doing even 2 or 3 years ago. First of all, the Russian political elite has a very

positive experience with those countries that became NATO members 3 and half years ago. Look at the Russian-Polish relations - they are much better now than they were before Poland became a member of NATO. We expect the same analogy with the Baltic States and their membership in NATO. In a way, for psychological reasons [those psychological reasons are very important in politics]. Next, we all understand that NATO as a structure has many problems. It became clear especially after the events of 11th of September: NATO's inability to act in the operations in Afghanistan in the same way the Americans were acting. It is a long story to discuss the reforms and changes necessary for NATO. But it is worth discussing. These are very special topics. We see new responsibilities for NATO, a new NATO role in Europe, and the military challenges, especially in European countries, balance between the economic possibilities and military needs.

Now I am coming to the Russian-European relations. First of all, Russia is establishing its relations with the US in order to find its place in Europe. Russia has to have very developed relations with Europe in all areas - economic, political, security. Regarding security. For a very long time we had discussions about the security system in Europe. It seems to me and to some outstanding Russian political thinkers that security system is a system which prevents war in Europe. But not any more. And we now would advocate a common security agenda. This is our key proposal for this conference - to start discussing common security agenda between Russia and Europe. The common security agenda includes the common timetable in reaching the security goals, and a common 'road map' to the security goals for Europe and for Russia. What are the common security threats? There are 3 of them. First of all - terrorism. The real activities in this area have already started. In the framework of the NATO-Russia Council, the activities on the Russian-European anti-missile defence system have already started. For these steps we have been advocating since 1998. It is an extremely powerful step because it integrates not in words, but in deeds. And it uses the Russian territory and Russian military possibilities. This must be one of the priorities in a common security agenda. The second issue that must be one of the priorities - is the security control of airspace. Third, we have to understand that Russia has the longest borders in the world with the most unstable regions. And I dare to say that Europe has to understand that those no longer are just Russian borders, they are European borders. It does not matter if Russia formally is a member of the EU, or not. The border in the Central Asia, border with Caucasus, with China is not only a Russian border. And I am going to repeat a common task. No country in Europe would afford to secure these borders. Only Russia and Europe - all together in the long run, step by step can create a space of security on these borders.

And this is an answer to the question - what is a future role of Russia in the war against terrorism? I would say the formula is simple: a stronger Russia - less terrorism, a weaker Russia - more threats from the terrorism. One more remark: it is important not to be very excited with the war against terrorism. It must be very well balanced between human rights, freedoms on one side and fight against terrorism on the other side. Otherwise in the war we can lose the goals and values in the name of which we are fighting. I want to say, look what is going on: every country now has its own list of its own favourite terrorists. That means that governments use war against terrorism as a political instrument to solve the problems that are very far from real terrorism. And they are using it against political and other opposition - everybody who expresses separatist ideas are declared as terrorists. So, everybody must be very cautious. But anyhow we have to say that freedom and human rights are the main values for which we are fighting. Terrorists have only technical limitations, and we have the limitations of laws, our democratic values and our liberal views. We have to follow that, and not to forget it. So, in terms of security, besides the terrorism there are other issues - nationalism, xenophobia, illegal migration, etc. - all these issues are very important security issues for Europe. With our entire positive attitude towards the European Union enlargement, with all our understanding and acceptance of the expanding of NATO, I want to say that Russia is more and more in isolation. Now to go to Poland, to Czech Republic or Hungary [I am not talking about Baltic States - it is a completely different story] we need visas like visiting Portugal, Spain, France, Germany, etc. And that is a real problem. Look at the embassies - people are standing for hours, for weeks to get a visa, especially it is tough with the newcomers, as these countries want to show that they are very important. And bureaucracies in these countries want to show that they are more important than the ones in such "unimportant" countries like Germany. We understand Europeans who want to be secure from the Russian Mafia

and gangsters, but I want to assure you that none of those gangsters are standing in the line for a visa. How gangsters get visas, governments have to ask their embassies. "We want to say that it is necessary to make steps as soon as possible. We are partly satisfied what has been achieved with Kaliningrad. But it is not the main issue, it is a practical issue. The main issue is that a Russian who has a passport has the right to visit Europe, just as Argentinians or Japanese, or Colombians. We understand that we are not prepared for that, that we have many internal problems - in bureaucracy, in Russian foreign affairs, in the ministries, on borders, etc. But I think that it is the right time to include a timetable to solve these problems. This would be a part of the new common security agenda to resist nationalism, xenophobia, and to increase co-operation and integration. And the last but not the least issue in the security area is ecology. It is one of the most important security issues. I would like to draw your attention that now Russia "imports" nuclear waste from all over the world. It would be too late if not discussed thoroughly now. What kind of new threats that would create?

To finalise all that, I think that it would be a good practical step of this conference to put on the table a common security agenda for Russia and Europe, and a common security timetable, and to work out this agenda in the next year. We are ready for this agenda. We do not want to please somebody. It is our vital interest to move to this direction.

Thank you very much.