

Russia, Islam, and the War on Terrorism: An Uneasy Future

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The terrorist attacks on the United States have forced many countries to confront their own Islamic threats. Russia is one country that faces an uncertain future, surrounded by tough neighbors in an unstable geopolitical environment. As the birthrate of ethnic Russians plummets, the Muslim population is growing,¹ and radical Islamic forces are expanding into Russia proper, as well as in its sphere of influence in the former Soviet Central Asia. The challenge for the Russian leadership in the years to come is to develop adequate diplomatic, military, and security tools to halt the rise of the Islamist threat to Russia and its allies. Russia judges that it cannot stem the tide on its own, but its residual mistrust of NATO and the United States, as well as the current incompatibility of the military establishments that have been in place since the cold war era, stands in the way of cooperation. Russia will have to cooperate with the rising giant to the east, China, and with the United States and the European Union to secure its place within the crosscurrents of globalization and the Islamic maelstrom.

In the weeks after the attack on the United States, President Vladimir Putin started to address this challenge, taking Russia closer to the United States and the West in the war against terrorism.² Russia launched a supply operation for the Northern Alliance, a mostly Tajik force that was aligned with the pre-Taliban government of Afghanistan. For the first time since World War II, intelligence cooperation between the United States and Russia was exemplary. Moscow was instrumental in securing the agreement of Central Asian leaders to allow U.S. use of military bases in Central Asia. Russia also provided a necessary humanitarian relief operation in the first weeks of the war.³ But the long-term challenge facing the United States and the EU is whether they can reshape policies to seize this opportunity to integrate Russia into the Euro-Atlantic community.

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Victim of Its Own Success

The Russian two-headed eagle used to soar high in the land of Islam. After the final defeat of the Mongols in 1480, Russian subjugation of Muslim-controlled territories began with expansion against the steppe nomads in the late fifteenth to early sixteenth centuries. It continued with the conquest of the Volga valley under Ivan IV (the Terrible) in the second half of the sixteenth century. In 1552, Ivan took Kazan, the capital of the northern Tatar-Mongol khanate, a remnant of the Mongol Golden Horde that ruled Russia for more than 250 years (1227–1480). “The Mongol yoke” left indelible scars on the Russian national psyche. Ivan then swept down the river and took Astrakhan in the lower Volga, thus establishing the Russian empire, which included Muslims.

Thus, the northern frontier of Islam lies deep in the steppes of the Russian Northern Caucasus and stretches as far north as Kazan, the ancient capital of the Turkic Muslim kingdom in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, an hour-plus plane ride from Moscow. There are no geographical barriers, such as mountains, to stop the spread of radical Islam into Russia.

After a long hiatus to fight Poland and Sweden in the west during the second half of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, Russian expansion east and south continued. The Romanovs subjugated the Kazakhs in the steppes east of the Volga, and in the second half of the eighteenth century, Catherine the Great’s ex-lover Prince Alexander Potemkin captured the Crimean Tatar khanate on the Black Sea from its Ottoman vassal rulers. This was followed by a series of exceedingly nasty and protracted frontier wars in the Northern Caucasus from the 1780s through the 1850s. The rebellion by Imam Shamil of Daghestan in the eastern part of Northern Caucasus lasted forty-seven years and included “ethnic cleansing” by the Russians, such as the expulsion of half a million mountaineers to the Ottoman Empire. Russia’s slow but steady military conquest of the Central Asian khanates of Khorasm, Khiva, and Boukhara continued through the second half of the nineteenth century.

During the expansion phase, Russia surpassed the Muslims educationally and technologically. Slavic birthrates equaled or exceeded those of the Muslims, and Russian military domination was unquestionable. Under the Bolsheviks, centers of Islamic learning in the Muslim world were cut off from the majority of Russian and Soviet Muslims. The links with the global Islamic community, the *‘Umma*, were difficult at best. Anti-Soviet resisters were either killed or exiled, the most extreme case being the forcible and brutal deportations of the “punished peoples” at the end of World War II. In 1944, Joseph Stalin exiled all Crimean Tatars, Chechens, Meskhetian Turks, and dozens of other ethnic groups to Central Asia and Siberia. All of them were unjustly accused of collaboration with the Nazi invaders, and up to a third died in transit of disease and malnutrition. This was no way for communist Russia to win friends among its Muslim citizens, even after the reversal of most exile decrees and the return of the Chechens and other Caucasus peoples to their ancestral homelands in the second half of the 1950s.

However, Russian domination could not last forever. Ironically, the Russian expansion began almost half a millennium ago in the then-Muslim lands in the

Volga, and the beginning of the end of the empire came during an attempt to conquer a Muslim land: Afghanistan. Overextended, fast becoming an economic basket case, and a victim of the U.S.–supported *mujahideen*, the USSR began to collapse as the bodies of Soviet soldiers were flown home in zinc coffins. Islamic propaganda spilled over the northern border into Soviet Central Asia, together with drug trafficking and arms smuggling for the future jihad. The rest is recent history.

As the Soviet Union collapsed, nationalism soared among the Muslim Turkic peoples, Farsi-speaking Tajiks, the Chechens, and other Caucasus inhabitants. The Soviet-era nomenklatura established corrupt and authoritarian secular regimes in the five Central Asian countries, as well as in Tatarstan and Bashkortostan.

Post-Soviet Development: Islamization

Direct Russian rule ended in Central Asia only ten years ago, with the collapse of the Soviet Union. The turbulent processes of Islamic revival and radicalization have caused policymakers in Moscow to regard Russia's soft Islamic underbelly as a long-term and serious problem. The nationalist Chechen war of 1994–96 quickly escalated into the Islamic fundamentalist rebellion of 1999–2001.

As far as the Russian Federation and the former Soviet Union are concerned, the geopolitical appetite of radical Muslims is tremendous. For example, the Chechen radical Islamic leaders Shamil Basayev and Jordan-born Khattab, and affiliated organizations called for the establishment of a North Caucasus Islamic republic to include Chechnya, Dagestan, and all the western Muslim autonomies in the area. Such a state would span the area from the Black Sea to the Caspian, would control energy exports from the Caspian basin, and would destabilize oil-rich Azerbaijan. These forces receive ideological and financial support from the conservative Arab states, primarily in the Gulf and Saudi Arabia. Some are the same Islamic "charities" that finance and arm Osama bin Laden and his terrorist networks. The Russian government has been saying for at least five years that there were operational links between al Qaeda and the radical wing of the Chechen nationalist movement.⁴

Russia's allies in Central Asia, secular postcommunist autocracies, are also under attack. Radical Muslim movements, such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, have worked closely with the Taliban, trained hundreds of fighters and terrorists, and infiltrated them into the territory of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Collective Security Treaty partners, which are Russia's allies.

A broader radical Islamic movement, Hizb-ut-Tahrir (Army of Liberation), established by a Palestinian Arab in Jordan in 1952, calls for the establishment of an Islamic Shari'a state in the Fergana valley, which borders Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. It also stands for the establishment of a united and absolutist Islamic state, a califate, throughout Central Asia. Such an entity, if established, would command vast natural resources and technical expertise and might have access to weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

If constituted, a Central Asian califate could serve as a platform for the

takeover of all Muslim areas within Russia and expansion into the Middle East. However, because Hizb-ut-Tahrir does not openly call for armed struggle, and because the rulers of Central Asia often persecute and prosecute its supporters, it often is defended, not only by the NGO community but also by some U.S. congressional committees dealing with the region. In the longer term, radical Islam could threaten the Volga-Urals region, as the Russian-Kazakh border is not patrolled, and new generations of Tatars and Bashkirs find themselves torn between Westernization and Islamic fundamentalism.

It is difficult to predict how successful the Islamization of Russia and Eurasia will be. Alexei Malashenko, the Islamic affairs expert of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Moscow, believes that Islamists will not achieve their goals and that the process of struggle and the image of being fighters for the true faith, standing in opposition to the non-Islamic world, are more important to them than practical politics.⁵ However, experience elsewhere in the world, from Algeria to Gaza to Kashmir, indicates that the Russian state and its Central Asian neighbors may well be facing an implacable foe in a decades-long struggle.

In a way, there is little new here; the history of Russian conflict with Islamic forces in the North Caucasus spans two centuries. Two of Russia's nineteenth-century literary icons, Mikhail Lermontov and Leo Tolstoy, wrote some of the best poetry and prose in Russian literature about their military experiences against Muslim fighters in the Caucasus. Today, however, the conflict has escalated beyond cavalry and rifles. The threat of terrorism against civilians and use of unconventional weapons is high indeed.

The Challenge of Rising Islam

The world of Islam crosses Russia's southern border, where it claims the allegiance of 20 million citizens of Russia, primarily Tatars, Bashkirs, Chechens, the peoples of Daghestan, and others. Islamic emissaries with new ideas and deep pockets came to Russia through porous post-Soviet borders, with little to stand in their way. Another 80 million Muslims, primarily of Turkic origin, live to the south of the Russian border, from Azerbaijan on the shores of the oil-rich Caspian Sea and farther east to the former Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan.

The Russian security response to the surge of radical Islam in Central Asia and the Northern Caucasus included recognition of the threat in two important documents: the national security doctrine and the defense doctrine. Both were developed during Vladimir Putin's tenure as head of the Russian National Security Council, head of the Federal Security Service (FSB), and then later as prime minister.

The documents single out terrorism and "illegal military formations" (typical of radical, politicized Islam) as threats to the Russian state. The doctrine recognizes the preparation of terrorist groups and organizations in foreign countries and their dispatch against Russia as a specific form of aggression that needs to be countered "with all the might of the Russian state and its armed forces." The doctrine states that the armed forces will be used in the territory of the Russian Federation "if existing conflicts are threatening and destructive" to the state.⁶

As a part of preparing to fight the Islamist threat, Russia and the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States have created a CIS Anti-Terrorism Center in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan. China decided to join the center at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization meeting in April 2001. Under this arrangement, several countries of the CIS and the Collective Security Treaty will each earmark a battalion to create a rapid deployment antiterrorism force of 1,500–1,700 soldiers.

There are also domestic and legal challenges related to fighting the Islamist security threat. According to Sergey Mel'kov, a Russian security expert at the Military University, Russia proclaims its adherence to the principles of territorial

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integrity enshrined in the constitution, and the supremacy of federal law in conflict resolution on its territory, and has promulgated a number of laws, including the 1998 Law on Fighting Terrorism.⁷ This act provides a definition for “terrorism” and “antiterrorism operations” and puts the government (the cabinet) of Russia, the Ministry of Defense,

the FSB, the Foreign Intelligence Service, border guards, and other state institutions in charge of fighting terrorism. In addition, twelve articles of the Criminal Code are relevant and prohibit terrorism, hostage taking, mass rioting, attacks against state and government officials, seizure of power, rebellion, instigation of national and religious hostility, violation of the state border, genocide, illegal changes in state borders, and so on.

However, the challenges posed by the Islamist resurgence go much deeper than the immediate security threat. They could, in fact, result in a clash of juridical values and legal systems that could endanger Russia’s very nature as a state. Russia basically is a continental law country, meaning a country whose laws are rooted in the Roman legal system and the Code Napoléon. Although its courts are often inefficient and corrupt, they follow a legal system similar to those of other countries in Europe. Putin’s legal reforms are aimed at harmonizing Russian civil and criminal law with norms accepted in the European Union. This is an important legal and civilizational step, solidifying Russian connections to the West.

Radical Islamists, however, demand the introduction of Islamic law, the *Shari’a*, in their areas of residence. As Muslim consciousness grows, Islamic politicians demand the introduction of Islamic courts as well as *Shari’a* law. In some areas, supporters of tribal or traditional law want a combination of *Shari’a* and local customary law.⁸

Experimentation with *Shari’a* in the territory of the Russian Federation is viewed with concern by experts. In 1992, Islam was pronounced a state religion by the Chechen constitution. In summer 1996, *Shari’a*-based criminal law was

passed by the local parliament in then de facto independent Chechnya. That criminal code was copied from a Sudanese act. In spring 1997, the first public executions took place and were broadcast by Russian television. In 1997–98, a region in Russian-controlled Daghestan influenced by radical Islamists began applying Shari'a law in direct contradiction to the Constitution of the Russian Federation.

Since 1994, President Ruslan Aushev of Ingushetia, a former Soviet general considered loyal to Russia, has issued decrees suspending the application of some parts of Russian federal law and prescribing the introduction of Islamic law, allowing for polygamy and the purchase of brides. He also enacted a law on justices of the peace, who could adjudicate based on "local custom" and "principles of Shari'a" as well as the Russian law.

Although it is conceivable that Muslims may apply principles of their faith-based family law to their personal lives to the extent that it does not contradict the laws of the Russian Federation, the rejection of the secular legal system as a whole by a religious minority is threatening and may lead to alienation and separatism. Moreover, if Shari'a applied, Islamic judges could legitimate the argument that armed struggle against the infidel (*kafir*) state dominated by non-Muslims (Russians), a state that "occupies" lands belonging to Muslims, is a religious duty of the faithful. This is a key dilemma not only in Russia, but also in all those states with significant Muslim minorities. If a radical reading of the Islamic law is applied by Islamic scholars (*ulema*), all such states, from Bosnia to Israel to India, may face a religious-separatist challenge to their sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Geopolitical Dilemma

After the terrorist attacks on the United States on 11 September 2001, perceptions of the violent Islamist threat became clearer on both sides of the Atlantic. The Kremlin and other key Russian players, such as the security services and the military—both potential U.S. allies in the newly declared war on terrorism—began debating the proper course to take to deal with that threat.

Putin recognizes that implacable Islamic fundamentalism is a great threat to Russia. Furthermore, he believes that siding with the West may bring other benefits, such as more foreign investment, a greater share of the global energy market, and more international understanding for Russia's position on Chechnya.

The Russians reacted with great emotion and sympathy to the carnage in America. As of this writing, Putin seems to have placed Russia squarely in the antiterrorist camp. Since the tragic events of 11 September, Putin and Bush have had many telephone conversations, and their October 2001 meeting in Shanghai was positive. According to media reports and personal interviews with high-level Russian officials in Moscow, Putin immediately ordered intelligence on ties between bin Laden and the Taliban to be passed on to the United States. He has stated Russia's willingness to cooperate with the United States on search-and-rescue missions and has encouraged Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and other Central Asian states to allow the United States to use air corridors and military bases on their territory. Putin appears to have concluded that in the long run it is in Russia's interest to stick with the West.

Putin's cooperative position is supported by both Sergey Lebedev, director of the Foreign Intelligence Service, and Federal Security Service chief Nikolai Patrushev, both long-time Putin confidants. Patrushev claimed that his Federal Security Service thwarted a plan by Chechen leader Movladi Udugov and a radical Muslim organization, a-Jama'at al-Islami, which has links to the Taliban, to crash a plane into the Kremlin. A number of security-services generals have called for intelligence sharing and cooperation in the fight with Islamic terrorism.

The leaders of Russia believe, in the terrible light of 11 September, that their earlier positions—casting conflicts in locations such as Kosovo, Bosnia, Macedonia, and Chechnya in terms of confrontation with radical Islamist forces—are validated. Russian prosecutor-general Vladimir Ustinov, in a recent meeting with the European Council delegation, repeated claims that Chechen fighters have been trained in terrorist camps in Afghanistan that were run and financed by Osama bin Laden. He stressed that the Taliban regime was one of very few that formally recognized Chechen independence. But although the Kremlin wants more understanding from the West for its position on Chechnya, it in turn understands that uprooting and defeating Islamist terrorist networks, which also target Russia, are very much in its own interests.

But not all of Moscow's leaders have been on the same page. At stake are conflicting approaches to the future of Russia as a Eurasian versus a Euro-Atlantic power. The war against terrorism presents a unique opportunity to integrate Russia with the West and NATO, in terms of security and in other ways, and so to transcend the cold war paradigm. But it will not be easy.

The unreformed military resists efforts to shift Russia's orientation westward and covets Middle Eastern weapons markets. At a conference in Moscow organized by the Adenauer Foundation, which took place after 11 September 2001, representatives of the Russian military were still preoccupied with the alleged threat to Russia of NATO enlargement, instead of focusing on the tasks at hand. And civilian Russian military analysts say that it is high time to abandon the intelligence-gathering approach to all contacts with NATO and Western militaries.

The concerns of the Russian military-industrial complex and the nuclear energy ministry, Minatom, about the future of their markets in Iran, Iraq, and other rogue states have been publicly aired in the Russian media. Some Russian experts have already claimed that the United States does not really need a ballistic missile defense if the threat is low-tech. Apparently they disregard the possibility that terrorist states and organizations might acquire WMD-tipped missiles along with low-tech weapons.

As long as he holds the portfolio, Defense Minister Sergey B. Ivanov's position is crucial to securing Russia cooperation. Yet after the 11 September terrorist attack, he wavered and seemed out of sync with his own boss, President Putin, who declared that Russia and NATO are prepared to act jointly against terrorism. Later, speaking at the CIS Collective Security Treaty Ministerial in Yerevan, Armenia, Ivanov said that Russia would not allow NATO troops to deploy in the territories of Collective Security Treaty members, nor would it participate in retaliatory ground attacks. Russia may simply not have enough forces to pursue a two-

theater engagement: in Central Asia and in Chechnya. The harrowing experience of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan is still fresh in the memory of Russian generals. However, speaking after the defense minister's speech, Foreign Minister Igor S. Ivanov did not rule out limited and mutually agreed deployment of some elements of the U.S. military for a limited time. This was understood as Russian agreement to deploy U.S. tactical aviation and special forces and to cooperate in support of the Northern Alliance. And, most crucially, Putin supported deployment of U.S. assets into bases in Central Asian CIS states and Georgia.

In Russia, elsewhere, politicians and journalists have tried to shift blame for the assaults on New York and Washington onto the shoulders of the United States, or Israel, or nefarious "international corporations." Two Russian politicians identified in the Russian media as being on the payroll of Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi lobby in Moscow, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and Alexei Mitrofanov, even called for use of the Russian nuclear shield to protect radical Islamic regimes from American ire.⁹ Other nationalist and communist politicians have called for Russia to support the Islamic world against Western imperialism. However, persons that I interviewed in Moscow in late September 2001 and February 2002 indicate that the majority of Moscow's political elite rejects such rhetoric. Indeed, Russian elite attitudes were markedly more pro-American than those of the French or liberal-left Germans, Britons, and Italians.

Significance of the Debate

A broad partnership with NATO could be a golden opportunity for the United States to bring Russia into the Euro-Atlantic environment. For Putin, the benefits of supporting a U.S. campaign in Afghanistan are more important than the supposed strategic insecurity that would result from adopting the Eurasianist world view, which includes an anti-Western stance. Eurasianists' idea of insecurity is based on the assumption that Russia and the United States are doomed to be strategic and civilizational competitors, and it traces its roots to the controversies of the nineteenth century between pro-Western reformers and anti-Western Slavophiles.

Russia felt frustrated that with the end of the cold war it lost its great power and prestige and, with it, much of its leverage with the United States. Even with its rusting nuclear weapons, Russia came to be treated as a nuisance, neither friend nor foe. But U.S. operations against the Taliban changed all that. The sustained U.S. campaign to break the back of the Taliban regime included massive Russian support for the Northern Alliance, a coalition of anti-Taliban forces operating south of the old Soviet-Afghan border. This support had both operational and symbolic value. Removal of the Taliban denies sanctuary to the ringleaders of the attacks on the United States while serving as a warning to others who might provide aid and comfort to terrorists. And for the Russian military, it provides some measure of revenge for their losses in Afghanistan.

Russian cooperation allowed the United States to build up an anti-Taliban capability much more quickly than it otherwise could have. But the U.S.–Russian cooperation may develop beyond the mountains of Hindu-Kush, to the

corporate boardrooms of transnational energy companies. Instability in the Middle East provides an opportunity to partially substitute Russian energy for that of the Persian Gulf. Russia wants to be seen as a more dependable source of supply for both natural gas and oil. This cooperation may also lead to a Washington-Moscow understanding that, among other things, would allow Russia once again to ask to reschedule the Soviet-era \$100 billion debt. The United States also is likely to spend several billion U.S. dollars sustaining its allies in Central Asia, including the Russians, the Uzbeks, the Kyrgyz, and the Tajiks, paying for air bases and fuel.

The Russians have worked very hard to link the events of 11 September to Chechnya. They have argued that the same radical Islamist circles fund both bin Laden and the Chechen rebels, and that a successful counterattack will require a parallel solution to their Chechen problem. Since the Chechen issue is closely linked to the situation in Georgia's Pankisi Gorge, where several hundred Chechen fighters have established a base, Moscow has suggested U.S.-Russian cooperation in eradicating a terrorist presence there. As Georgia allowed the Chechens to move across its territory into the secessionist Georgian autonomy of Abkhazia, Russia expressed extreme displeasure and reportedly sent aircraft to bomb the rebels. So far, however, the United States has sent military trainers to Georgia and refused offers of Russian cooperation.

Finally, some analysts in Washington suggested that the Kremlin is likely to demand from the Bush administration recognition of its political predominance in the region from the Black Sea to the Chinese border. This would allow Russia to be the decisive voice influencing the outcomes of succession struggles in Tbilisi and Baku and shaping the environment in Central Asia. So far, it has not happened, at least not in the open.

Positioning Russia as an integral part of the Western alliance could bring substantial political dividends for Putin. Certainly, a rich and contented West would be preferable as a partner for Russia than a resource-starved and insecure China. But so far, Putin has done little to present his case to the Russian voters.

Russia's relatively dovish liberal reformers are Westernizers who took a beating from the communists, the nationalists, and people such as former prime minister Evgeny Primakov. The liberals would see this as an opportunity to revive a Western orientation and alliance with the United States. On the other hand, Russian nationalists are viewing potential rapprochement with a jaundiced eye. Initially, they viewed the war in Afghanistan as an opportunity to revive a Warsaw Pact-like sphere of influence in the Caucasus and Central Asia. However, Putin, knowing more about the real Russian power—or lack thereof—than the chattering classes in Moscow, failed to make a strong pitch to establish such a zone.

The military might have thought of trying to bar further NATO enlargement and preserve the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in return for Russian cooperation. However, the military is too weak, corrupt, and poorly performing in Chechnya to make any demands. Thus, Putin apparently has come to the conclusion that it is in Russia's interest to support the war against terrorism without preconditions.

Conclusion

The Russian government and political elites face a policy choice. On one hand, many of them reject and fear a world in which American power rules. On the other, the United States came out a decisive victor in Afghanistan and is likely to remove Saddam Hussein in the future, and they want Russia to be on the winning side. Most important, they perceive radical, terrorist Islam as a real threat to their country and to their allies in the region.

Westernizers in Russia argue that this is the moment to lock in their preferred orientation. Some Eurasianists believe that the short-term gain may turn into a long-term loss. If the United States wins, it will quickly forget Russia's interests, they argue. Moscow often complains that the U.S. withdrawal from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, the pending NATO enlargement in 2002, and the desire to store, not dismantle, nuclear warheads indicate that the Bush administration is not taking Russian demands seriously. Still, the intensity of U.S.–Russian contacts indicates that the war against the Taliban and Islamic terrorism is yielding some rare U.S.–Russian military and intelligence cooperation.

For the United States and the EU, it is important to recognize that for the first time since the end of World War II there is a natural “fit” between American and Russian interests. This partnership is important for reasons that go well beyond the war against terrorism, and it is imperative that the two sides seize this chance to solidify the relationship. Certainly, cooperation in the fossil and nuclear energy sectors would bring advantages to both sides and would allow the United States to end the tilt of its foreign policy that arises from the need to placate Middle Eastern oil exporters.

The Bush administration can and should address Russian concerns about U.S. involvement in operations in Central Asia by referring to and drawing parallels with the much-revered U.S.–Soviet cooperation in World War II. It also should point to the positive Russian presence in Bosnia and Kosovo. It should engage the Russian military and intelligence services in cooperative operational planning in cases where Russian assets can be involved.

The Bush administration should further increase its efforts to integrate Russia in the antiterrorism coalition. The U.S. intelligence agencies should work for cooperation with their Russian, Uzbek, and other Central Asian counterparts. In addition to the short-term goal of using the intelligence networks of these countries against al Qaeda, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, and other terrorist organizations, there is the long-term need to work against Islamist fundamentalism throughout the region. In addition, Russia and its Central Asian allies have a wealth of language and area expertise, as well as some intelligence assets, that could be very helpful to the CIA and the FBI.

The U.S. military finds the Soviet-era air bases in Central Asia, such as Manas in Kyrgyzstan and Hanabad in Uzbekistan, particularly attractive for flying missions, staging rapid deployment forces, making emergency landings, and refueling. It has already secured overflight rights over Russia, Kazakhstan, and other Central Asian republics. Russia can play a key role in providing safety for elements of the U.S. military in those areas. Moscow already has its 201st Divi-

sion—eleven thousand strong—in Tajikistan guarding the Tajik-Afghan border. It may provide security and logistical support to the U.S. Air Force and other elements that may be deployed in Central Asia. The U.S. government should also expect to pay the cash-strapped countries in the region for services rendered.

No effort should be spared to destroy opium poppy cultivation and heroin production and storage in Afghanistan. The United States should integrate the Drug Enforcement Administration in fighting drug exports from Afghanistan. Russia and the United States, together with law enforcement agencies from other countries in Europe and Eurasia, should develop and implement a strategy for rolling up the distribution networks that are pushing heroin from Afghanistan.

The true tests of the new U.S.–Russian partnership will arrive when they deal with the countries that are at the nexus of terrorism and that are armed with weapons of mass destruction: Iraq and Iran. Moscow has already signaled that it values its economic interests in Iraq over the survival of the Butcher of Baghdad. A deal can be made recognizing Iraq's Soviet-era debt to Russia and Russian oil majors' contracts signed with the Iraqi energy ministry. Iran did not even graduate from being an irritant in U.S.–Russian relations to being a topic of serious negotiations. But that will happen, too.

A collision of geopolitical and cultural-religious tectonic plates occurred on 11 September when mass murder was committed in America by radical Islamic terrorists. The anti-jihad war of the twenty-first century was forced on the United States, just as the anti-Nazi crusade in which Moscow and Washington cooperated. In the new, upcoming conflict against totalitarian regimes armed with weapons of mass destruction, as well as radical Islamic terrorists, the United States must reach out to new allies, including Russia, to win. And Moscow is beginning to understand that it can secure its own future by closely cooperating with the West in the field of national security. There will be difficulties along the way. Nevertheless, for the first time in fifty-five years, and now unencumbered by ideology, there exists a real basis for a U.S.–Russian strategic rapprochement.

NOTES

1. The National Intelligence Council and the Bureau of Intelligence and Research of the U.S. Department of State, "Russia's Physical and Social Infrastructure: Implications for Future Development," December 2000, <http://www.cia.gov/nic/pubs/conference_reports/russia's_infrastructure.html>.

2. "Russia: Putin Backs Antiterrorism Effort, Seeks To Join NATO," *RFE/RL*, 26 September 2001, <<http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/2001/09/260926122945.asp>>.

3. Ariel Cohen, "Issues 2002: Russia and Eurasia," Heritage Foundation, <http://www.heritage.org/issues/russiaandeurasia/russia_background.html>.

4. Vladimir Bobrovnikov, "Islam na Post-Sovetskome Prostranstve (Dagestan) Mify I Realii" (Islam in the post-Soviet space (Daghestan): Myths and realities), in *Islam na Post-Sovetskome Prostranstve: Vzliad Iznutri (Islam in the post-Soviet space: The view from inside)*, ed. Alexei Malashenko and Martha Brill Olcott (Moscow: Carnegie Center, 2001), 76–83.

5. Alexei Malashenko, "Islamskie Orientiry Severnogo Kavkaza" (Islamic orientation points of North Caucasus), Moscow Carnegie Center, 2001; see specifically ch. 5.

6. Sergei Mel'kov, "Transformatsia Voennoy Politiki Rossii pod vliyaniem Islamsko-

go factora" (Transformation of Russian foreign policy under the influence of the Islamic factor), in *Islam na Post-Sovetskom Prostranstve*, 58–59.

7. *Ibid.*, 60.

8. Leonid Sukiyaev, "Naydetsia li Shariatu Mesto v Rossiiskoi Pravovoi Sisteme?" (Will there be a place for Shari'a in the Russian legal system?), in *Islam na Post-Sovetskom Prostranstve*, 15.

9. Based on the my personal interviews in Moscow 2001-02. Also see Susan B. Glasser, "In Zhirinovskiy, Hussein Finds a Russian Partner," *Washington Post*, 10 September 2002.