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## RUSSIA AND NATO

### *Theses of the Russian Council on Foreign and Defense Policy*

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O presente artigo foi seleccionado para publicação, com a concordância do autor, a quem é devida uma palavra de reconhecimento, nomeadamente, pela tradução para inglês que elaborou a partir do seu comentário em língua alemã, expressamente para a revista Nação e Defesa.

#### Resumo:

Na primeira parte do artigo faz-se uma análise e comentam-se as teses que foram objecto de discussão por um grupo de altas entidades russas – políticos, investigadores e jornalistas – que se reuniu no «Council on Foreign and Defense Policy», em Maio do corrente ano. Na segunda parte do artigo são as referidas teses apresentadas em detalhe incluindo-se, no seu final, a relação das entidades presentes e os cargos que desempenham.

Fundamentalmente, aponta-se a discordância quanto ao alargamento da NATO no sentido da Europa Central e de Leste, e a intenção de estabelecer o diálogo com os Estados membros da Aliança, a fim de evitar uma nova confrontação no relacionamento com a Rússia.

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## RUSSIA AND NATO

### *Theses of the Russian Council on Foreign and Defense Policy*

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– *Comments by Christoph Royen* –  
[Prepared for «*Nação e Defesa*», November 15, 1995]<sup>(1)</sup>

The enlargement of NATO with regard to Eastern Central Europe, even more so to the three Baltic states: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, encounters, by now, a broad front of resistance in Moscow. However, the theses «Russia and NATO», published in June 1995<sup>(2)</sup> by the «Council on Foreign and Defense Policy» (Sovet po vneshney i oboronnoy politike [SVOP]), merit particular attention. The Council, initiated in 1992 by Sergey Karaganov, Deputy Director of the «Institute of Europe» of the Russian Academy of Sciences and Member of the Presidential Council, unites important representatives of Moscow's foreign policy elite, i.e. politicians, researchers, and journalists. Two earlier general evaluations of Russia's foreign policy, which were presented by the Council in 1992 resp. in 1994<sup>(3)</sup>, had aroused considerable attention, in particular because of their criticism directed at Foreign Minister Kozyrev. The present theses focus more narrowly on the actual discussion of NATO's enlargement.

Western observers and participants in the discussion should become acquainted with the theses. Therefore this contribution to «*Nação e Defesa*» is augmented by the original Russian text's English translation distributed by the Council in Moscow. The translation corresponds exactly to the Russian original.

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(1) Based on the original German version: Christoph Royen, *Russland und die NATO: Thesen des russischen Rates für Aussen- und Verteidigungspolitik (SVOP) - Kommentar und Wortlaut*, unpublished short analysis of the «*Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik*» (SWP-KA 2912), Ebenhausen, July 1995.

(2) *Nezavisimaja Gazeta*, nr. 89, June 21, 1995, p. 2.

(3) *Strategiya dlya Rossii (Strategy for Russia)*, in: *Nezavisimaja Gazeta*, nr. 158, August 19, 1992, pp. 4-5; *Strategiya dlya Rossii (2) (Strategy for Russia [2])*, in: *Nezavisimaja Gazeta*, nr. 98, May 27, 1994, pp. 4-5.

The authors and signatories of the document emphasize their intention to engage in a dialogue with partners in the member-states of NATO as well as in Eastern Central Europe<sup>(4)</sup> in order to avoid a new confrontation in the relationship with Russia. Nevertheless, it appears warranted to introduce the Council's text by some critical remarks and comments to draw attention to the questionable and debatable elements of the theses.

COMMENTS ON THE THESES OF THE RUSSIAN COUNCIL ON FOREIGN AND DEFENSE POLICY (SVOP):  
«RUSSIA AND NATO»

With its theses the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy aims to prevent a NATO decision to enlarge, or hopes to contribute, at least, to NATO's postponement of a decision for another four or five years. This particular time frame occurs several times in the document, but without an explanation why the authors - despite their basic disapproval - select just this specific period. Another recurrent element of the text consists in the assertion that Russian society rejects NATO's enlargement and, hence, that enlargement would merely serve anti-Western and anti-reformist forces in Russia's political spectrum (1.3.2., point 3 / 1.3.4., point 1)<sup>(5)</sup>. This assertion has become a Russian standard argument since the presentation of the «Primakov Report» in late 1993<sup>(6)</sup>, despite some surveys suggesting rather plausibly that many Russians worry more about how to feed themselves and their families than about foreign policy problems<sup>(7)</sup>. Apparently, the Council expects to influence President Yeltsin to adopt the theses in a policy statement as the official Russian view (2.3.8., par.2), thus reducing the competence of the criticized Foreign Ministry (2.2.6.) under Andrey Kozyrev. In this context it is suggested (2.3.1., par. 2) to set up a special body directly at the presidential staff, that would work out and

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(4) This author uses the term «Eastern Central Europe» for the four members of the «Visegrád group», i.e. Poland, Czechia, Slovakia, and Hungary. The SVOP-document, instead, uses throughout the entire text the term «Central and Eastern Europe (CEE)» which seems to comprise all former Warsaw Pact countries, except East Germany.

(5) References in brackets refer to the enumeration both in the Russian original and in the English translation.

(6) Cf. *Izvestiya*, November 26, 1993, p. 4; *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, November 26, 1993, p. 1/3. Evgeniy Primakov is the director of the Russian External Intelligence Service (*Sluzhba Vneshney Razvedki*).

(7) According to surveys conducted by the respected Russian sociologist, Igor' *Klyamkin*, people in Russia hardly care even for developments within the «Commonwealth of Independent States» (CIS); cf. *integratsiya nachinaetsya «snizu»* (Integration starts «from below»), in: *Delo*, nr. 30, July 1994, p. 1-2.

coordinate policy. This body, in turn, should have a special division for European Security and NATO policy.

Among the many signatories, whose consent<sup>(8)</sup> with the theses is not surprising (among others Aleksey Arbatov, Aleksandr Konovalov, Andrey Kortunov, Evgenly Kozhokin, Vladimir Lukin, Sergey Rogov, Vyacheslav Nikonov, Aleksey Pushkov, Pavel Zolotarev; also, for example, Oleg Bogomolov and Vitaliy Zhurkin), are also Dmitriy Trenin, who has expressed more than once a different view<sup>(9)</sup>, and Sergey Jushenkov, who recently, too, had argued in an more differentiated way<sup>(10)</sup>.

Below those passages of the SVOP's text will be adduced, which deserve special interest. Some of the points have not been raised before.

## I.

In the first section defining Western, as well as East Central European and Russian interests, one finds an intriguing characterization of Germany (1.1.1., par. 5), for which NATO extension to the East is

«the proper form of a German zone of influence in the region».

However, in a certain logical contrast to this statement, the authors claim (1.2.2., point 3), the East Central Europeans hope

«to partly counterbalance the dominating role of Germany in the region through membership in a common alliance».

In another passage (2.2.1.) we read, the argument of the advocates of enlargement

«is morally rewarding: NATO should respond to the pleas of Central and East European countries which have suffered the most from the 'Yalta politics' and the Cold war».

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<sup>(8)</sup> In an accompanying note the editors of the theses explain (see below pp 155) that in addition to the members of the Council also some experts invited as guests have signed the document, but that not every signatory necessarily identifies himself with all the passages of the text.

<sup>(9)</sup> *Budet li NATO rasshiryat'sya na Vostok* (Will NATO Enlarge towards the East?), in: *Novoe Vremya*, nr. 43, October 1994, p. 18-20.

<sup>(10)</sup> *Integratsiya s NATO – blago dlya Rossii* (Integration with NATO – a blessing for Russia), in: *Novoe Vremya*, nr. 23, June 1995, p. 22. Jushenkov, who is the Chairman of the Duma's Defense Committee, argues for an «associated» NATO-membership of his country.

But instead of thus explaining the fundamental interest of the East Central Europeans correctly and adopting the idea of a special historical responsibility of Germans and Russians for the sufferings of «Zwischeneuropa» [= «Europe in between»], the quoted passage merely serves to qualify it as a minority opinion. The position of the East Central Europeans is additionally devalued by giving (1.2.2., point 2) as one of their reasons to seek NATO membership,

«hopes (almost certainly futile) to come closer to the main goal, that is the EU membership, through membership in NATO».

The EU member-states, on the other hand, which are not interested in the enlargement of the EU, would offer the East Central Europeans NATO membership as a sort of «compensation» (1.1.1, par. 7) [this explanation, to be true, is also to be found among various American opponents of NATO's enlargement].

The authors criticise (1.2.2., point 1)

«an almost complete negligence displayed by the Russian diplomacy in [the Central and East European] region»,

that

«the new Russia ... could not change the negative image that she had inherited from the USSR»,

and maintain (2.1.7),

«Russia is interested not in control, but in good-neighborly relations with these states».

They declare even<sup>(1)</sup> (2.3.2., par.1, point 3), Russian policy should find,

«compromises that would as much as possible meet the interests of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe».

However, traditional Russian-Soviet security thinking is revealed in the theses (1.3.4., point 4) that the:

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<sup>(1)</sup> Somewhat difficult to reconcile with this resolve, however, is the passage, where the authors insinuate that «a small part of the political elite, as usual, is looking forward to high ranking and well-paid posts in NATO structures» (1.2.2., point 7).

«elimination of the belt of *de facto* neutral, and as a rule, weakly armed states which has taken shape in the center of Europe following the demise of the Warsaw Pact, will deprive Russia of a major advantage achieved by her sorting out of the Cold war: this will ... also revive fears».

The quintessence, therefore, is contained in the following passage (1.2.3.):

«Russia does not consider these countries' membership in NATO as an optimum and well-balanced response to their anxiety: in this case, security of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe will be achieved at the cost of security interests of Russia.»

Yet, as in all other available Russian statements until now, also the Council's theses fail to provide plausible scenarios which would explain potential dangers in order to open an honest discussion with NATO on how to meet understandable and reasonable Russian concerns.

Equally ambivalent appear the SVOP's remarks concerning the three Baltic states<sup>(12)</sup>. On the one hand (2.3.5.4.) we read:

«Initiating and promoting rapprochement with the Baltic states is of extraordinary importance. As a far more powerful country, Russia can afford to neglect some fairly predictable, although often annoying and seemingly provocative symptoms of 'growing pains' in these states. This obviously does not mean to ignore the violation of minority and other human rights.»

On the other hand, however, the authors warn (1.3.6.):

«The wish of the Baltic states to join NATO, which will only become stronger if the Alliance extends to Central and Eastern Europe, as well as any discussions and maneuvers around further enlargement, will create a potential hotbed of real crisis in the center of Europe.»

In the description of Russia's interests the «geopolitical» argument frequently used by Russian spokesmen to claim that a foreign alliance system

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<sup>(12)</sup> Admittedly, as far as the Baltic states are concerned, also in the West only a few are advocating the extension of the Atlantic alliance. See however Carl Bildt, *The Baltic States Belong Inside the Line Between NATO and Russia*, in: *International Herald Tribune*, May 6, 1995, p. 6.

next to Russia's borders necessarily means a hostile alliance, is expressed (1.3.3., par. 3)<sup>(13)</sup> in a particular apodictic variant:

«The West did not (and could not) find arguments which would convince the Russian society that the advance of NATO to the borders<sup>(14)</sup> of Russia by embracing the former allies of the USSR ... would vitally serve the interests of Russia.»

The idea that NATO's eastward extension means above all the export of democratic stability to Eastern Central Europe and that it should be in Russia's own interest to have neighbors, which gain self-confidence from being members of the Atlantic alliance, thus is brushed aside.

Further we read (1.3.4., point 2) – though hardly tenable from the position of international law<sup>(15)</sup>, that the West's decision to enlarge NATO

«contravenes an obligation, that went without saying [*in the Russian original: samo soboy razumevshikhsya obyazatel'stv*], not to enlarge the Atlantic Alliance after the Soviet Union gave its consent to the reunification of Germany».

## II.

The second part of the SVOP theses, containing recommendations, starts with those policies which should be *avoided*. In this context the authors – while criticizing official government representatives which early in 1995 had created the impression, Russia was ready to seek a compromise – postulate (2.1.2., par. 1):

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<sup>(13)</sup> In the Russian original par. 4.

<sup>(14)</sup> As long as NATO's extension is limited to Eastern Central Europe, Russia would be bordering on extended NATO territory only with Poland in the exclave of the Kaliningrad (former North-Eastern Prussia). In this context, one should be aware of recent Russian announcements to fortify the *Kaliningradskaya oblast'* into a bastion of Russian military power.

<sup>(15)</sup> Already in his unpublished letter to the governments of four major NATO countries in September 1993 President Yeltsin had argued, «the spirit» of the Two-plus – Four Treaty on Germany's Reunification of September 1990 with its limitations for NATO activities on East German territory «precludes any eastward extension of the alliance»; cf. the unofficial translation of Yeltsin's letter in the Czech daily *Mladá Fronta Dnes*, December 2, 1993, p. 9. However, such a fundamental restriction of NATO's freedom can never result from the interest of only one of the contracting parties nor from a mere conversation with other parties. After all, Gorbachev at that time did not even think of a dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and therefore just did not bother to preclude NATO's future expansion to other Soviet allies, like Poland, in written form. Cf. Vladimir *Simonov*, Gorbachev i NATO (Gorbachev and NATO), in: *Delovoj Mir*, May 27, 1995, p. 7.

«Official or even semi-official talks on ‘compensating’ Russia for NATO enlargement should be avoided at all costs. Such talks would only make an impression of Russia’s consent to enlargement ... Nearly all kinds of ‘compensation’ will most probably anyway be given to Russia in case of enlargement».

Therefore the authors emphasize (2.1.3.):

«Russia should not yield to pressure of proponents of enlargement, that aim to gradually involve Russia into cooperation with NATO without giving firm guarantees that at least the actual decision on enlargement will not be taken in the next 4 or 5 years.»

Thus, the authors of the theses clearly are concerned with closing the ranks at home in a broad front of opposition to NATO enlargement. This emerges also from the following sentence (2.1.4., par. 1, point 1) which at the same time – though unintentionally – reveals, that the stereotype insistence on dangers Russia must connect with NATO’s enlargement, are hardly based on objective reasons:

«It is unrealistic to hope that the development of Russia-NATO cooperation can go in parallel with the enlargement of the Alliance: firstly, all attempts to enhance cooperation make the enlargement much easier, since they implicitly remove the problem of Russia’s objection.»

Consequently, the SVOP authors maintain (2.1.4., par.4)<sup>(16)</sup>, that the «Partnership for Peace» programme

«can play a positive role only in case it substitutes NATO enlargement».

Compared, though, with some of the most radical Russian voices a realistic admission is contained in the following admonition (2.1.6.):

«Speaking of possible countermeasures, we should not bluff and claim to undertake such unrealistic and costly steps as massive buildup or re-deployment of conventional forces. High-priced military countermeasures can only finally undermine our economy.»

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<sup>(16)</sup> In the Russian original: par. 6.

Apparently, however, no bluff is intended with the consideration (1.3.4., point 8), that as the result of a decision to extend NATO,

«Russia will probably be compelled to examine the possibility of greater political reliance on nuclear ‘containment’ in Europe».

Simultaneously, the Council appears rather confident, where the authors state (2.2.1, par. 1):

«There is no consensus in the ruling circles of the West as regards the expediency of NATO enlargement. One can even assume that the advocates of enlargement are in minority»,

and conclude, since NATO is operating on a consensus principle (2.2.1., par. 2),

«such nature of the alliance gives vast opportunities to influence its evolution».

Hence they emphasize (2.2.1., par. 4):

«A stronger voice of opponents of enlargement largely depends on the position of Russia ... Those skeptical of the enlargement already prevail in defense ministries of most NATO countries, and in political circles of a centrist and moderately conservative kind.»

Quite openly the SVOP points (2.2.2) to particular promising fields for reinforcing Western opposition to NATO's enlargement:

«Positions of potential opponents of enlargement are particularly strong, if not prevailing, in such countries as Portugal, Spain, possibly Italy, Great Britain, France, and definitely Greece. In these countries, they fear either the drain of resources, or the decline of NATO's strategic attention to problems, which are most imminent for them, such as the threat of spill of instability from ex-Yugoslavia, instability and migration from the countries of North Africa, etc.»

Thus it is obvious that the signatories do not intend to use the time-span of the next four or five years in order to adapt Russia to NATO enlargement. On the contrary, they hope to gain the time to mobilize resistance sufficient to kill the enlargement project definitely.

### III.

The concluding section «What Should Be Done» (2.3.) is largely dominated by repeating, without any new elements, Russia's favorite schemes for a European system of collective security and the pertinent roles for NATO and the OSCE (2.3.4.). For the security concerns of Eastern Central European countries the authors offer the following six solutions (2.3.6):

- (1) Bilateral security guarantees by Russia and NATO
- (2) Unilateral guarantees by NATO
- (3) Unilateral security guarantees by the United States, Germany, and other states, possibly codified as treaties
- (4) Simultaneous, although postponed, enlargement of the EU, WEU, and NATO
- (5) Enlargement of WEU in the first turn
- (6) Finally, as a last resort, enlargement of political, not of military organization of NATO to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe [i.e. the «French» model].

While the first three «solutions», above all the first, disregard the Eastern Central Europeans' and the Balts' unfortunate experiences with «guarantees» by outside forces and betray a complete lack of understanding, why these countries never again will agree to be objects of agreements by others, the fourth «solution» on first glance appears as indicating readiness to compromise. However, as we saw above, the proposed «postponement» in the intention of the authors is merely meant to lead to eventual cancellation.

It is noteworthy, that the Council (1.3.4., point 6) rejects the idea of a partnership between two defense alliances, i.e. the «Euro-atlantic» NATO and the «Eurasian» CIS,

«since Russia will be left with weak and poor allies».

With regard to the well-known problem of the «flanks» in the CFE Treaty, the theses contain the following position (2.3.7.):

«It is urgent to find ways for a unilateral or contractual solution of the problem of flank quotas with NATO countries, or at least for a temporary revision of the CFE Treaty and its conditions (until the 1996 Conference). The formal violation of the Treaty by Russia can be heavily exploited by her opponents, as well as by advocates of NATO enlargement.»

IV.

The conclusion is warranted that the number of dissidents in the Russian discussion on NATO's eastward extension is clearly dwindling. Moscow's foreign policy elites assembled in the SVOP constantly refer to the allegedly negative attitude of Russian society and criticise (2.1.5, par. 3) NATO, because «regrettably, hasty statements about the intention to enlarge the alliance have reversed the trend of NATO's image changing to the better in the eyes of the Russian public». However, the SVOP authors do not ask, whether they themselves, despite their long established high degree of familiarity with Western policy and NATO's workings, have failed<sup>(17)</sup> to help their own society to overcome still existing prejudices against NATO and to explain the positive consequences of NATO enlargement to Eastern Central Europe and the Baltic states for a democratic Russia. By refraining from such an engagement they ultimately participate – the brutal war in Chechnya is only once (1.1.5.) mentioned as a problem – in Yeltsin's policy to cover the poor results of domestic reforms by resorting to foreign policy and to claim respect for Russia's big power status and Russian «spheres of influence».

Therefore, the governments of the Atlantic Alliance, which - together with the member-candidates in Eastern Central Europe - have declared their willingness to include Russia as partner in European security, will still have to show much perseverance and patience to engage this partner in an open dialogue.

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<sup>(17)</sup> Cf. also Poland's former Defense Minister Janusz *Onyszkiewicz* in an interview in the Polish daily *Rzeczpospolita*, June 22, 1995, p. 24.

*Theses of the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy*<sup>(1)</sup>

1. POLITICAL CONTEXT: INTERESTS OF THE WEST, CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE, AND RUSSIA

The plans of NATO enlargement by admitting a number of countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), which have provoked a lively and sometimes hard debate on both sides of the Atlantic, can lead to a serious crisis in the relations of Russia and the West – in fact, to first such crisis after the end of the Cold war.

Now when Russia has outgrown her pro-Western romanticism of previous years, that hampered the establishment of a balanced partnership with the West, she is endangered by an opposite extreme: a Soviet-type rhetoric of confrontation that will infringe Russia's national interests in all senses.

The danger of isolation or isolationism is quite real. There are political groups in the West awaiting Russia's *faux pas* that could provoke a new Cold war. In Russia, too, various forces seek to provoke crisis in our relations with the outside world, so that the country would once again find herself in a malign encirclement, haunted by the «complex of besieged»: for some of them, this is the only available way to power, for others, this is the means to strengthen their hold on power with an «iron hand».

A responsible leadership of Russia, as well as the Russian society should prevent any kind of «freezing» the cooperation with the West (a «cold peace»), or pushing the country to a new military and political confrontation with the West. In the meanwhile, long-term interests of Russia should not be violated, which could be the case in the event of NATO enlargement. In this respect we should pursue a triple goal:

- to understand the others – i.e. the motivations and interests of our partners in NATO, countries of CEE and the CIS in the question of NATO enlargement,
- to understand ourselves – i.e. to identify our national interests as they apply to this issue,
- to choose the optimum parameters of political conduct for ourselves and to offer our partners mutually acceptable common solutions.

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(1) See below p.155.

1.1. INTERESTS OF THE WEST

1.1.1. Underlying the willingness of part of the ruling circles in the West to enlarge NATO is a complex of varying interests. The principal one (roughly speaking, it accounts for more than a half of all interests behind the determination to enlarge) is the attempt to preserve the viability of the Atlantic Alliance, and to build up the basis for the common foreign and security policy, defined by the Maastricht Treaty. Another interest shared by all Western countries is to reinforce NATO as an instrument to keep the United States in the European system. Admission of the countries of CEE to NATO is also considered as an instrument of control over the policies of Germany in this particular region.

With its former principal goal – containment of the military and ideological threat of the Soviet Union – no longer valid, NATO entered a period of unavoidable systemic crisis. All attempts to find a new role for the Alliance («containing» the threat from the South, peacemaking, etc.) did little in terms of substituting its principal goal. In the meanwhile, there's a lack of political will in the NATO circles to start such a radical transformation of the Alliance which could place it at the heart of the new system of collective security in Europe.

Considering this, a large part of political, academic and bureaucratic circles connected with NATO and dependent on it put forward the slogan which reads «enlargement or death». According to this ideology, enlargement of the Alliance will provide it with new goals and prolong its life-term.

Such ideology is particularly strong in the United States, where the obligations under the North Atlantic Treaty are considered to be the basis for the U.S. military and political presence in Europe and the main instrument of supporting the American influence on the continent. This is of particular importance since this influence fades away, and other centers of power, first of all Germany, are on the rise.

Germany, too, has special interests in the enlargement. In Bonn, membership of the countries of CEE in NATO is seen as a proper form of the German zone of influence in the region, since the rest of the West and nations of CEE themselves will be reassured by the possibility to keep Germany at bay through the mechanisms of the Atlantic Alliance.

Beside this, according to some concepts, the EU and WEU can not be enlarged without a simultaneous expansion of NATO, although the advocates of such view do not insist on an immediate NATO enlargement.

Having learned of immense costs of pulling up former socialist economies to Western standards in the course of the German reunification, West Europeans have de facto revised the schedule of admitting the countries of CEE to the European Union. While earlier it was promised to take place by the end of the century, now it has been postponed for an indefinite period, and NATO membership is being offered as sort of a compensation to the East Europeans.

1.1.2. The countries of Western Europe, especially Germany, are also interested in reinforcing their near periphery, especially since reforms in Russia are slowing down, and the threat of instability still persists.

1.1.3. Alongside with this, there is an intention, particularly noticeable in the United States, to capitalize on the geopolitical acquisitions achieved through the «victory» in the Cold war, so that Russia, even after sorting out of the current crisis, would not be able to proportionately increase her political influence in Europe.

1.1.4. One should not dismiss the hopes of an absolute minority of Western politicians to provoke a new, let even a farcical, Cold war, in order to revive, at least temporarily, the main «organizing principle» of NATO: the premise of the «threat from the East».

1.1.5. The arguments of proponents of NATO enlargement, both in the West and in CEE, have been buttressed, and the positions of the Russian diplomacy have been substantially weakened by a number of faults on Russia's home front, first of all by the armed conflict in Chechnya, by the manner of decision-making on starting it, as well as by methods of engagement in it.

## 1.2. INTERESTS OF THE COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

1.2.1. The interest of the higher political leadership in the countries of CEE to join NATO has been to a large extent initiated and is still stimulated by the Western proponents of enlargement.

1.2.2. Alongside with this, the countries of CEE have their own reasons to seek to join NATO. One can cite a number of those:

- the desire to speed up integration into the Western community, to «return into Europe», if not through the main door, the EU, then at least through the «side door», which is NATO; finally, to fill in the vacuum that have emerged in CEE, largely due to an almost complete negligence displayed by the Russian diplomacy in this region (the new Russia, that has not made an appearance in the region, could not change the negative image that she had inherited from the USSR);
- hopes (almost certainly futile) to come closer to the main goal, that is the EU membership, through membership in NATO;
- the desire to partly counterbalance the dominant role of Germany in the region through membership in a common alliance;
- fears of Russia's and/or Ukraine's turn towards aggressive policies or internal instability in those countries; one should not also disregard plain anti-Russian sentiment;
- the wish to partially secure themselves against the possibility of an internal social unrest;
- a fairly to partially secure themselves against the possibility of an internal social unrest;
- a fairly small part of Central and East European advocates of NATO enlargement also have vague hopes that this development will provoke confrontation with Russia and turn their countries into «front-line states», with the subsequent increase in political and economic support, etc.;
- finally, a small part of the political elite, as usual, is looking forward to high-ranking and well-paid posts in NATO structures.

1.2.3. Most of these interests are understandable and legitimate, as well as the desire of countries of CEE to join NATO or any other alliance. In principle, Russia is interested in stability in the countries of the region, so that their political leadership feels relatively secure. But then, interests of Russia and the countries of CEE begin to diverge: Russia does not consider these countries' membership in NATO as an optimum and well-balanced response to their anxiety: in this case, security of the countries of CEE will be achieved at the cost of security interests of Russia.

### 1.3. MAIN INTERESTS OF RUSSIA

1.3.1. *The key geostrategic interest of Russia* is to preserve and develop good relations, if not a strategic alliance, with leading Western countries and their coalitions. Taking into account the present and especially the prospective geostrategic position of Russia, her economic concerns, cultural and historical traditions, our country is vitally interested in a close strategic alliance with the rest of Europe, and in a full-fledged participation in a common European system of collective security.

NATO enlargement can initiate a security process in which there will be no place for a full-scale participation of Russia. However, an effective and reliable security system in Europe is unimaginable without both NATO and Russia partaking in it.

1.3.2. The situation would be different if Russia became a full member of NATO. In this contingency, the road would be open for a real, not a declarative, full-scale cooperation of Russia and NATO. A realistic assessment of this possibility, though, attests to its low feasibility:

- firstly, NATO countries are not interested in such a development, at least until the situation in Russia becomes more stable and predictable;
- secondly, this will be opposed by the political leadership of the countries of CEE, fearing to find themselves in Russia's shadow even within NATO;
- thirdly, one must admit that many groups of the Russian society are not ready for such a development; also, this idea is rejected by a large part of the military leadership.

1.3.3. Russia is nevertheless interested in the existence of NATO in its current capacity as a guarantor of stability in the relations along the West-West axis, and also in reforming and strengthening it as a reliable mechanism of European stability that can become one of the pillars of the new collective security architecture of the continent. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization as a defensive military and political union of democratic states is not a military threat for a democratic Russia.

However, Russia can not disregard her *other key interest*: achieving and strengthening social, political and economic stability inside the country. It is from this point of view, which is political and psychological, that NATO

enlargement contradicts Russia's national interests. The danger lies in the emergence of the feeling of military and political isolation of Russia, in the revival of anti-Western and militaristic trends in the public.

This is even more true, since the West did not (and could not) find arguments which would convince the Russian society that the advance of NATO to the borders of Russia by embracing the former allies of the USSR, speculating on the idea of «Russian imperialism», would vitally serve the interests of Russia – especially considering the fact that Russia herself is left out by expanding Atlantic Alliance.

1.3.4. It is highly probable that the decision on expanding NATO eastwards will lead to *a number of negative consequences* both for Russia and the international security:

- this can have a decisive influence and prompt such changes in Russian domestic politics that would turn Russia into a revisionist power, interested not in strenghtening, but in undermining the emerging political order in Europe which does not meet her interests;
- this will radically undermine Russia's confidence in the policies of the West whose decision to enlarge NATO contravenes an obligation, that went without saying, not to enlarge the Atlantic Alliance after the Soviet Union gave its consent to the reunification of Germany, and is 'also in defiance of the claims of CEE countries to have no intention to join NATO after the disbandment of the Warsaw Treaty; consequently, this will not only reinforce the positions and arguments of radical anti-Western isolationists, but will also result in anti-Western evolution of even the most part of traditional pro-Western elites;
- such decision will undermine the geopolitical, as well as conceptual basis of most arms limitation regimes; everyone, including Russia, will lose: the military and political situation will become less predictable, and new channels for the arms race may emerge;
- elimination of the belt of *de facto* neutral, and, as a rule, weakly armed states which has taken shape in the center of Europe following the demise of the Warsaw Pact, will deprive Russia of a major advantage achieved by her sorting out of the Cold war: this will deepen the feeling of injustice, and also revive fears, strengthening the positions of militarists and militarist thinking on both sides;
- Russia may get an excuse and another reason to seek strategic allies, even if temporary, in the South and in the East; rivalry in Central Asia

beyond the frontiers of the former Soviet Union, and in the Middle East will intensify;

- Russia will be compelled to enhance her efforts at creating an effective system of collective security and defense in the framework of the CIS: a development which will not only deepen the division of Europe, but may entail additional extremely detrimental military expenditure, since Russia will be left with weak and poor allies;
- hard-line opponents of NATO expansion in Russia will get a chance to relate the mismanagement of domestic reform, as well as low profile of Russia in the contemporary world, to «unfairness» of the West, first of all the United States;
- in order to offset the possible increase of the feeling of vulnerability as a result of an even more drastic change of geostrategic balance, and to secure against the situation when her partners could be tempted to capitalize on this change, and she could become an object of political pressure, Russia will probably be compelled to examine the possibility of greater political reliance on nuclear «containment» in Europe.

1.3.5. If NATO enlargement takes place before a radical improvement of Russia's cooperation with the West on a broad range of issues, this will most likely further reduce the leverage of Russia in international relations, first of all in the dialogue with the West on political, economic and other issues.

1.3.6. Being a partial solution to just one problem in the center of Europe (diminishing the feeling of strategic uncertainty among the part of political leaders in CEE), NATO expansion will generate a number of much more serious problems. This implies turning the Baltic states and possibly Ukraine into the zone of bitter strategic rivalry. The wish of the Baltic states to join NATO, which will only become stronger if the Alliance extends to CEE, as well as any discussions and maneuvers around further enlargement, will create a potential hotbed of real crisis in the center of Europe.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

### 2.1. WHAT SHOULD NOT BE DONE

2.1.1. First of all, we should not take for granted the idea thrust on us, that the decision on NATO enlargement is inevitable, let alone enlargement itself.

It is far from true. An active and reasonable policy can enable to defer for a long time, or even to avoid the enlargement of the Alliance.

2.1.2. Official or semi-official talks on «compensating» Russia for NATO enlargement should be avoided at all costs. Such talks would only make an impression of Russia's consent to enlargement, would pave the way for making a decision on enlargement. Nearly all kinds of «compensation» will most probably anyway be given to Russia in case of enlargement. Beside this, such talks would prompt our Western partners to store up «bargaining chips», would defer or postpone solutions for problems which could have been found in a normal diplomatic process.

Regrettably, a number of statements by Russian representatives in January and February 1995 were interpreted by the West as the beginning of talks on «compensation» and as the reason to say of Moscow's consent to enlargement, which was to the detriment of the interests of Russia.

2.1.3. Russia should not yield to pressure of proponents of enlargement, that aim to gradually involve Russia into cooperation with NATO without giving firm guarantees that at least the actual decision on enlargement will not be taken in the next 4 or 5 years.

2.1.4. It is unrealistic to hope that the development of Russia-NATO cooperation can go in parallel with the enlargement of the Alliance:

- firstly, all attempts to enhance cooperation make the enlargement much easier, since they implicitly remove the problem of Russia's objection;
- secondly, Russian domestic reaction on NATO enlargement will invalidate the possibility of such cooperation.

Unfortunately, a rather distant perspective of enlarging the Alliance already now considerably narrows the possibility for Russia-NATO cooperation, first of all due to internal Russian political and psychological reasons.

In this context, proposals to prepare the treaty on Russia-NATO cooperation are even more counterproductive, if NATO does not undertake to postpone the decision to enlarge eastwards at least for several years, in order to get the cooperation, let alone the partnership treaty, working.

As to the «Partnership for Peace» program, it can play a positive role only in case it substitutes NATO enlargement. But if the course of events leads to

a quick NATO enlargement (before 4 or 5 years), the program is destined to become void, or even counterproductive.

2.1.5. It also seems unrealistic to bark on the possibility of a quick transformation of NATO, which could have made the enlargement more acceptable for Russia in psychological, as well as military and political terms.

Firstly, NATO itself does not seem ready to undergo a radical transformation on the way from collective defense to collective security.

Secondly, the Russian public opinion is not likely to be ready to accept the enlargement of even a transformed alliance as something that is not hostile to the interests of Russia. Regrettably, hasty statements about the intention to enlarge the Alliance have reversed the trend of NATO's image changing to the better in the eyes of the Russian public.

We can also be caught in our own trap if we are told (let even with best intentions) of the decision to transform NATO, while the real transformation will be delayed, or will never take place.

2.1.6. Speaking of possible countermeasures, we should not bluff and claim to undertake such unrealistic and costly steps as massive buildup or re-deployment of conventional forces. High-priced military countermeasures can only finally undermine our economy.

2.1.7. Any statements that misrepresent Russia's intentions and interests as regards the countries of CEE should be avoided, in particular the claims «to retain them under control». Russia is interested not in control, but in good-neighborly relations with these states.

2.1.8. Russian policy towards the West should not be exclusively focused on the issue of NATO enlargement. This is just a part, although a key part, of a broader context. Preoccupation with this only problem can narrow our possibility for maneuver.

## 2.2. RESOURCES AT OUR DISPOSAL

2.2.1. There is no consensus in the ruling circles of the West as regards the expediency of NATO enlargement. One can even assume that *the advocates of*

*enlargement* are in minority. In the meanwhile, they occupy key posts in decision-making mechanisms, and they are still the most active group. Their argument is morally rewarding: NATO should respond to the pleas of Central and East European countries which have suffered the most from the «Yalta politics» and the Cold war. Finally, they managed to capitalize on the passivity of Russia's policy towards Central and Eastern Europe.

One should keep in mind that NATO is a collective organization operating on a consensus principle. Such nature of the alliance gives vast opportunities to influence its evolution.

As enlargement becomes a closer perspective, and its economic, military, political and cohesion-related costs become more obvious, the numbers of *opponents of enlargement* might grow, with their opposition getting stronger. This development can be largely prompted by debates in political and academic circles in NATO countries, first of all in the United States. Such debates can prevent a premature «political decision» on enlargement.

A stronger voice of opponents of enlargement largely depends on the position of Russia, on a sensible combination of firmness and flexibility in her diplomacy. Those skeptical of the enlargement already prevail in defense ministries of most NATO countries, and in political circles of a centrist and moderately conservative kind.

2.2.2. Positions of potential opponents of enlargement are particularly strong, if not prevailing, in such countries as Portugal, Spain, possibly Italy, Great Britain, France, and definitely in Greece. In these countries, they fear either the drain of resources, or the decline of NATO's strategic attention to problems, which are most imminent for them, such as the threat of spill of instability from ex-Yugoslavia, instability and migration from the countries of North Africa, etc.

2.2.3. In the emerging situation, Russia has an option of interacting not with an opposition (or even a marginal opposition, as was often the case with the Soviet Union), but with main groups of the ruling classes in Western countries, that consider the decision to enlarge too risky and/or too costly. In pursuing a sensible strategy of resisting the enlargement, Russia can be going not against the entire West, but in a open or concealed alliance with a large part of its ruling circles. We should not act against the West; instead, we should help it to avoid making a mistake dangerous for everyone, first of all for the West itself.

2.2.4. Enlargement is a long process that is divided at least in three stages:

- before the decision on enlargement is taken,
- after the decision is taken, during the talks on the conditions of joining NATO, during the preparation of treaties, and their subsequent ratification,
- after the ratification.

In each of these stages, there will be opportunities to «join» in the emerging problems, partaking in discussions, provoking debates, assisting in policy changes, increasing potential political costs of enlargement.

2.2.5. Russia has enough experienced diplomats and experts that can work out and pursue a flexible enough strategy. We are no longer confined by ideological dogmas, unless we invent new ones. One needs only to make proper use of the existent potential.

In Russia's ruling circles, there's an almost complete consensus as regards the rejection of NATO enlargement. Such strong cohesion is a potential advantage.

There are several dozens of people in the Russian society – politicians, experts, businessmen – that enjoy popularity and trust among ruling circles in the West. One should also take into account a broad network of contacts between public, political and business organizations.

A democratically elected parliament, too, can play a constructive role, especially if its leaders are able to agree on coordination of activities with the executive.

2.2.6. It is quite possible that despite a good opportunity to play an effective political game, Russia will not be able to use it due to disorganized mechanisms of foreign policy.

The main problem is the total lack of coordination in Russian foreign policy, both at the level of the entire executive, and within certain agencies.

Neither the staff of the President, nor that of the Security Council, have the requisite personnel and authority for an effective coordination of foreign policy.

Finally, one of the flaws in the premises of Russian foreign policy is the drastic decline in information capacity.

### 2.3. WHAT SHOULD BE DONE

2.3.1. The first and foremost condition of successfully implementing any strategic or tactical plan pertains to organization: *the fastest possible reform of foreign policy mechanisms*. Without this, we are certain to fail.

One should go back to the idea found in the President's yearly Message to the Federal Assembly, that is to set up a special body directly at the presidential staff, that would work out and coordinate policy. Within such body, it is necessary to establish a special division for policy towards European security and NATO.

2.3.2. *Strategic (long-term) goals* of the Russian policy should be the following:

- to break the link between NATO enlargement and the development of our partnership with the West in general, and with NATO in particular;
- to create a window of opportunity for establishing close military and political cooperation with NATO, other Western organizations, and individual countries of the West;
- to prevent the enlargement of NATO while finding compromises that would as much as possible meet the interests of the countries of CEE, as well as those countries and circles in the West that favor enlargement;
- if the enlargement nevertheless takes place, Russia should aim to involve it in a wider context of building a new system of collective security.

The *mid-term* is to complicate and defer the implementation of decision on enlargement, if it is nonetheless taken.

The *short-term goal* is to achieve the maximum postponement of the decision to enlarge, to win time for stabilizing the economic, social and political development of Russia, for overcoming xenophobic and isolationist stereotypes. This will largely enhance the dialogue of Russia and the West on a broad range of issues, and will diminish the potential negative political and psychological consequences of NATO enlargement.

2.3.3. The strategy should not be aimed against the West, let alone the countries of CEE. Instead, its key element should be cooperation with those in the West who do not want to create new divisions, new sources of conflicts, or

to turn Russia into a revisionist power; with those who fear the weakening, not the strengthening of NATO as a result of enlargement, etc.

2.3.4. Russia should emphasize her vital interest in belonging to the European (Euro-Atlantic) security system, and her determination to proceed towards creating a system of collective security in Europe that could respond to real challenges to stability, first of all those originating in South-Eastern Asia and in some regions of the former Soviet Union, and not in the region of CEE characterized by a high degree of stability.

Russia should start a concrete dialogue with the West, first of all through foreign policy and defense departments, on the criteria of transformation of NATO, having in mind its ultimate change into a political structure, the basis for a new European system of collective security.

One of the workable variants for such system is the further development of the OSCE with a view to transforming it into a UN regional arrangement, and the possible establishment of a directorate of this organization comprised of permanent members of the UN Security Council (Russia, the United States, France, Great Britain), with the addition of Germany<sup>(2)</sup> and the representatives of main European organizations (the EU, WEU, NATO, and the CIS).

Russia should also propose other ways for creating a system of collective security in Europe, e.g. in the framework of a special treaty, or on the basis of transforming NATO into a common European system of collective security with an indispensable and immediate inclusion of Russia.

2.3.5. Russia should be prepared to a contingency in which NATO nevertheless opts for a quick enlargement and thus minimizes the possibility for Russia cooperating with it: in this case, Russia should counterbalance it by enhancing cooperation with other organizations, as well as bilateral cooperation with European powers.

2.3.5.1. In particular, Russia could already start to broaden political, as well as military and political interaction with the EU and WEU.

It is high time to begin improving interaction in the military and political field, up to preparing a number of bilateral military and political treaties with such countries as the United States, Great Britain, Germany, France, Italy, as

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<sup>(2)</sup> This can be regarded as Germany's first step towards permanent membership in the Security Council.

well as Greece, Bulgaria and Rumania. Such agreements could become the building blocks of the future new treaty on the system of collective European security, and a substantive compensation in case of enlargement.

2.3.5.2. It is necessary to finally start a sensible and friendly dialogue on military and political matters with the countries of CEE in order to alleviate their fears as much as possible, to jointly fill in the security vacuum that has emerged in this region, and to lay the ground for true good-neighborly relations in the future. As the intensity of problems in CEE will be decreasing, so will the need to enlarge NATO.

2.3.5.3. It is worthwhile to make proposals to a number of countries, in particular to Germany, France, Italy, Greece and Bulgaria, on improving joint action in the out-of-Europe regions, first of all in Asia.

2.3.5.4. Initiating and promoting rapprochement with the Baltic states is of extraordinary importance. As a far more powerful country, Russia can afford to neglect some fairly predictable, although often annoying and seemingly provocative symptoms of «growing pains» in these states. This obviously does not mean to ignore the violation of minority and other human rights.

As stated earlier, the enlargement of NATO can turn the Baltic states into a potential hotbed of a bitter crisis. At this point, preventive diplomacy is needed. Beside this, cooperation with the Baltic states is indispensable in itself.

2.3.5.5. A permanent dialogue is needed with key members of the CIS (Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan) to discuss the approach to NATO enlargement, and, in the best case, to jointly elaborate a common policy towards the Alliance, including joint counteraction to its enlargement.

2.3.6. It is necessary to put forward a mutually acceptable constructive alternative to a quick enlargement of NATO, which would take due account of the apprehensions of the countries of CEE, and of their desire to join the European structures.

For instance, this could involve the following moves:

- Bilateral security guarantees by Russia and NATO.
- Unilateral guarantees by NATO.

- Unilateral security guarantees by the United States, Germany, and other states, possibly codified as treaties.
- Simultaneous, although postponed, enlargement of the EU, WEU, and NATO.
- Enlargement of WEU in the first turn.
- Finally, as a last resort, enlargement of political, not of military organization of NATO to the countries of CEE.

2.3.7. It is urgent to find ways for a unilateral or contractual solution of the problem of flank quotas with NATO countries, or at least for a temporary revision of the CFE Treaty and its conditions (until the 1996 Conference). The formal violation of the Treaty by Russia can be heavily exploited by her opponents, as well as by advocates of NATO enlargement.

2.3.8. It is needed to give a chance for the cooperation between Russia and NATO, Russia and the West, to keep open a window of opportunity.

A policy statement of the President of the Russian Federation on policy towards NATO is highly advisable. In particular, it could be stated that Russia seeks a strategic alliance with NATO, including a contractual one. In the meanwhile, commencing and testing such rapprochement requires 4 to 5 years, during which period NATO should undertake not to make a decision on enlargement. Instead, it should interact with its Eastern neighbors in the framework of the «Partnership for Peace» program, or by other means (see above).

During this period, maximum efforts should be made to establish closer relationship between Russia and the EU.

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(1) These theses were prepared by a working group of the CFDP on Russia's policy towards NATO. It comprised a number of CFDP members, well-known experts, members of the Parliament, high-ranking officials from the foreign policy and «power» (defense, interior and security) agencies in their personal capacity. The work of the group was coordinated by S.A. Karaganov. The working group has held a number of meetings and seminars, some with the involvement of foreign experts, and generated a series of reports. The theses are indebted to articles and works of A. G. Arbatov, A.A. Belkin, G.D. Ivanov, A.A. Konovalov, A.V. Kortunov, S.V. Kortunov, S.K. Oznobischev, A.K. Pushkov, D.B. Ryurikov, S.M. Rogov, D.V. Trenin, P.S. Zolotaryov and others. The working group gives special thanks to T.V. Borisova and A.A. Belkin who organized its work and the preparation of theses.

The theses were discussed at the meeting on 25 May 1995, attended by CFDP members, guest experts, politicians and higher officials of foreign policy and «power» agencies. Following

the discussion, the theses were revised and then signed by members of the CFDP, politics and experts that agree with their main contents. According to the CFDP tradition, representatives of the bodies of the executive, including those who agreed with the contents, as a rule, refrained from signing. Those who signed the theses did so in their personal capacity. Not all planks of the theses necessarily reflect the views of those who signed the document. Rather, they reflect a broad consensus on the theses underlying philosophy.

The theses were signed by: CFDP members – **A.V. Dolgolaptev**, Deputy Chairman of the Federation Council of the RF Federal Assembly; **A.V. Fedorov**, Head of the Bureau of Special Information; **S.N. Fedorov**, Director General, «Eye Microsurgery» Center; **V.O. Ispravnikov**, Vice President of the Russian Liberal Economic Society; **S.A. Karaganov**, Deputy Director of the Institute of Europe; Member of the Presidential Advisory Council; Chairman, Board of the CFDP; **I.M. Khakamada**, Member of the State Duma of the RF Federal Assembly; **O.V. Kiselev**, Chairman, MOSEXPO Joint Stock Company; Member of the Presidential Advisory Council; **Ye. M. Kozhokin**, Director, Russian Institute of Strategic Studies; **V.P. Lukin**, Chairman, Committee on International Relations of the State Duma; **I. Ye. Malashenko**, Director General, NTV; **M.V. Massarsky**, President, Association of the Enterprise Managers; **N.V. Mikhailov**, President, VYMPEL Interstate Joint Stock Corporation; **S.A. Mndoyants**, Director General, Foundation for Development of Parliamentarism in Russia; **A.V. Mordovin**, Vice Chairman, Board of the CFDP; **A.K. Pushkov**, Director for Public Relations, Member of the Board, Public Russian Television; Columnist, «Moscow News» Weekly; Member of the Board of Editors, «Foreign Policy»; **A.M. Salmin**, Director, Russian Social and Political Center; **V.T. Tretyakov**, Editor-in-Chief, NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA newspaper; **A.V. Tsalko**, President, Association for Social Protection of Disactivated Military Servicemen «Otechestvo»; **V.V. Vinogradov**, President, INKOMBANK; **A.P. Vladislavlev**, Member of the Board of Directors of the «AMO-ZIL», Vice President, Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs; **A.I. Volsky**, President, Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs; **L.L. Weinberg**, Chairman, Board of Directors of the Association of Joint Ventures Industrialists and Entrepreneurs; **L.L. Weinberg**, Chairman, Board of Directors of the Association of Joint Ventures and International Organizations; President, International Consortium «Solev», Chairman, Board of Directors of the Russian Bank of Reconstruction and Development; **I.Yu. Yurgens**, First Deputy Chairman, General Confederation of the Trade Unions; **S.N. Yushenkov**, Chairman, Committee on Defense of the State Duma; and,

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