By 2010 relations between Russia, the United States and European countries were of controversial character: members of transatlantic community and the Russian Federation continued to demonstrate certain incompatibility of their policies in economic and security spheres. Relations did not grow into open confrontation, but periods of quiet competition were followed by periods of disagreements and ultimatums.

Security problems were very acute: Russia did not like NATO enlargement, growth of American presence in post-Soviet states on its borders, reluctance to continue cooperation on arms control and initiatives to build global defense system including space; use of military or close to military methods for changing political regimes in certain countries (democratization). Transatlantic members criticized Russia for autocracy, lack of working judicial system and growth of corruption, poor civil society and restrictions of human rights, continued active policy in the CIS countries, “revanchist” energy policy. We can see that mutual claims were of different character: Western accusations and criticism mostly referred to domestic political situation and regional policy; Russian dissatisfaction was mostly with the American concept of new world order, methods of global and regional governance. Russia did not agree with interpretation of the end of the cold war given by the United States and Europe, opposed efforts to diminish its role in world order regulation or push it out from big politics. For Russia, being historically a great power player in world politics, such attitude and actions of
transatlantic members were unacceptable. Russia poses itself as one of leading world players, and its temporal and relative weakness in some characteristics of a great power, does not change its intention to be present if global decision making.

Despite disagreements and mutual criticism, Russia, the United States, NATO and EU continue interaction and negotiations trying to solve problem of Russia’s presence in American-European structures, coordination of their efforts in security sphere to achieve mutual content. It is very doubtful that Russia can be a NATO member, but it is interested in establishment of a new European organization to reflect changes in the world and Europe. The fact that the majority of OSCE members are NATO members, or are on the track to become ones, makes this organization marginal, and European security system ambivalent. President A. Medvedev’s initiative to start negotiations on new European security agreement was a step to resume dialogue on security issues. We cannot deny evident positive impulse in this plan; however, there is something to think about when we try to discuss details of its realization.

We do not touch upon such specific questions as compatibility of NATO membership obligations and obligations of this new treaty members; and also, presence (or absence) of the U.S. and Canada in the new agreement as they are not European countries. However, we need to clarify the following:

- What is contemporary world order, who are its main players?
- What can we say about contemporary international relations: are they free from cold war mentality, strategies and tactics?

As for the 1st question, the majority of countries acknowledged that we live in a multipolar world, that nation state is still a very influential (even decisive) actor, and it is necessary to coordinate efforts of various countries on global issues. It took almost twenty years to come to such a consensus, and it can be considered a positive fact.

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1 In our understanding, “great power” is a special category that includes many parameters. Contemporary great power is a country that possesses traditional characteristics of a great power – territory, natural resources, population, intellectual resources, economic, military, technological potential, high cultural and educational potential. A great power today is a country that is to a great extent (or absolutely) independent in conducting its domestic and foreign policy aimed at safeguarding national interests, exerts visible influence on macro-regional and world politics, policies of other countries (world regulation policy); has the will for realization of great power strategy. Besides, a great power must have historic tradition of thinking and acting globally, tradition and culture of exerting influence on world politics, acting as a dominant or very active and influential player.

The second question, however, remains either unanswered or answered differently by various countries. However without clear answer to this question we cannot establish any new security system.

**Cold War: past or still present?**

During past 20 years a lot of books have been written on the end and aftermath of the cold war. In Russia and the United States analysts and public are divided: some think that Russia as part of the USSR and its successor state lost the cold war, others state that there was no loser and victor in this war. Debates will continue, but to my mind, it is more important to clarify whether the cold war is really over, or we are still living in the order that is defined as “a new cold war” or “conditions close to emergence of a new cold war”. We must answer weather the cold war was just certain period in the 20th century history, or it is a permanent characteristic of international relations. Another question is: should we blame anybody if it is not over, and whom?

The cold war was the definition for the period in international relations characterized by ideological and political competition between two ideologies, two approaches to political and social organization of the society: Socialist – Soviet, and Capitalist - Western (American) . We mention only ideological and political competition because economic and military competition cannot be considered as inherent part only of the cold war, though competition in these spheres developed under the strong influence of ideology and political systems.

Economic and military competition is inherent part of international development. In the 21st century we are watching intensification of competition between old and new great powers, growing contest for natural resources, markets, territories of transit and economic benefits. This is a norm for capitalist economic system, and it can continue without any competition of ideologies and military might.

So, when we refer to the cold war, we need to answer the question: what happened to ideological and political struggle between two ideological concepts and between two political systems. Socialist political system that existed in the USSR stopped to exist (though socialist political systems still continue to function in some countries). Socialism had certain impact on the development of some capitalist countries who acquired some elements of social state and introduced them into their economic systems (so called “Swedish socialism”, and in general, Northern European socialism; social guarantees (protection) of the population in the United
States and other developed countries). The trouble for Russia is that with the dissolution of the Soviet Union the system of social guarantees was destroyed, population was left absolutely socially unprotected, and now Russia tries to bring it back but does not have enough resources to do anything similar to what we see in Finland, Norway, and the United States.

_Soviet ideology also stopped to exist. But socialist ideology_ as a theory does not belong only to our time; it is the product of the 19th and even earlier centuries (socialist utopia). So, it exists as a theory, and as we mentioned, some of its ideas were realized in some industrially developed countries (social guarantees, lack of sharp diversity between rich and poor, etc.).

The cold war is associated also with the opposition between the USSR and the United States who were two superpowers and two poles with their spheres of influence involved in this completion/confrontation. So, _the cold war was also period of bipolar global regulation_. However, _bipolar structure is not a special characteristic only of the cold war; it can exist without ideological and/or political opposition_. Many scholars in the United States and Russia already predict emergence of the bipolar world order with China and the U.S. as its poles. However, they do not stress necessity of ideological and political struggle.

There is a dilemma for us to decide whether cold war type of international relations is a general, eternal category, an inherent part of our existence: when we are not in the state of hot war, we are either in the state of cold war between most developed countries for global and regional influence, or any kind of influence; or in the state of cold war with any force opposing liberal democratic model of development.

With this kind of answer we need to announce who are participants of the cold war in the 21st century: are they nation states, organizations, non-state actors, etc. What ideologies and political systems confront each other now? Some American scholars declare that the opposing political systems are: West and liberal democracy vs. Non-West and lack of democracy (dictatorship and authoritarianism); incompatible ideologies are: Western vs. non-Western, terrorism vs. freedom. With such interpretation of the cold we can find ourselves in constant war with anything: war on terror, war on poverty, war on dictatorship, war for freedom, etc. War is a strong category, and its use in everyday life and our political lexicon frames our thinking, viewing of the world, and of other countries. Our mentality and concepts are not very peaceful, sometimes very militant.
In such “cold war forever” thinking Russia is often defined as a threat and an obstacle to Western democratic strategy, and is blamed for return of the cold war. In 2006-2008 according to writings of some American and Russian journalists and analysts, we were close to a new cold war, and this possibility is still acknowledged by many politicians and scholars. Many Central and Eastern European countries are afraid of Russia and consider it a threat, the country that should be deterred and watched (oppose revanchist, expansionist Russia).

This is either lack of historical knowledge, or imposed or sincere view of the present state of world affairs. Already the Soviet Union gave up the cold war type of interaction with the West. At the end of 1980s the Soviet Union declared its strategy of non-confrontational type: demilitarization of international relations, deideologization of relations between countries, readiness to become part of the West. It was M. Gorbachev who in 1989 addressed nuclear powers, and first of all, the United States, to stop nuclear tests and to abolish nuclear weapons by 2000. Nobody supported him. Now, that almost 20 years later President Obama suggested the same program, Russia is the first to support him. But this initiative has no chances to be implemented if other nuclear states do not join this program. In the American and Russian documents of 2010 – Russian Military Doctrine and Nuclear Posture Review Report - it is said that nuclear weapons remain in the arsenals of both countries though they will try to diminish its role. So far there is not visible support from other nuclear states.

After 1991 Russia opened to the West and was eager to establish partnership relations. We know that this idea was not realized. What makes me think better of present debates about cold war and role of Russia is that European countries and the United States pay too much attention to ideological incompatibility, opposition, immanence of category of war in international relations. Talking too much about wars we forget that the most precious category for everybody is peace. As Ch. Layne mentioned in his book, American liberal ideology leads us not to peace, but to war, to crusade. The same idea was expressed by Russian scholars.

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Torkunov A. Slovo i Delo v Otnosheniakh SSHA s Rossiei (Word and Deed in Relations Between the U.S. and Russia) // Izvestia. 31 March, 2009 / http://www.izvestia.ru/comment/article3126869/index.html
We can conclude that the problem is not only Russia’s deficiency or imperfection, distinction from the West, but unwillingness of some countries to live in real and not in illusory peace, to get dividends from fear and uncertainty.

To our regret we have to acknowledge that mentality of the cold war is still with us. We view everything in very dangerous and categorical system of coordinates: Good vs. Evil, West vs. non-West, democracy vs. dictatorship, freedom vs. terrorism. In such approach Good is associated with the West and democracy, and Evil is associated with lack of democracy with all its consequences.

Fight against “fascism”, then “communism”, and now “terrorism” is viewed as the core of international relations of the 20th and 21st centuries. “Fascism” and “terrorism” were and are fought in real, “hot” wars; Soviet communism was fought on “cold war”. It is not correct and even misleading to analyze contemporary international relations making comparisons between war on terror and “cold war”. It is too simplistic to view contemporary development through the prism mainly of fight with terrorism as a universal evil.

In my understanding terrorism is one extreme form of achieving certain goals: political, economic, social, ideological, religious, personal, group, etc. Concentration on ideological, political, economic differences, and living in constant struggle – hot or cold war – reinforces terrorism, divides countries preventing them from collective effective efforts against other global problems: exhaustion of natural resources, climate, poverty and epidemics, growing struggle for resources, global and regional criminal networks (drugs, arms, illegal migration), challenges to common and national security – piracy, militarization of space, growth of nuclear powers, etc. Special attention should be paid to world economy and financial system which is in crisis, to its disproportions and subordination to ideology and politics of certain countries. You cannot declare policies of one country as market competition, and of the other – as political use of its natural resources. Laws of market economy say that the seller and the consumer negotiate and compete in their efforts to get better terms of the bargain. Ideology, politics, mentality of the cold war often overweight economic pragmatism.

In case we acknowledge that the cold war is only a certain period in the 20th century characterized by severe opposition of two political and ideological systems, two countries and two worlds, then we must admit that it is over. If in the future there are again two political
systems and two ideologies that will enter into severe competition, then there will be “cold war – 2”, “cold war – 3”, etc.

**My conclusion is: the cold war as I understand it is over, but it does not mean that further competition in various spheres of international development will not continue. Bipolarity is not the category of the cold war type of international development.***

It is not easy to free themselves from stereotypes, especially when some politicians and experts try hard to bring back “shadows of the past”. It is easier to mobilize people against the Evil, but maybe it is time to mobilize for the Good? To say that the cold war is over, and existing polycentric world where the number of well developed countries is growing, gives us a chance to establish a really democratic order where interests of various countries will be taken into account, and there will be no old stereotypes, preferences to one system and one ideology.

To change the situation in the course of world order formation is not easy, it might take time. The United States and Russia put forward initiatives that can contribute to positive development of international relations. The biggest dilemma with the new security initiative is how to reconcile NATO and new European security agreement aimed at forming common Euro-Atlantic security space. The United States will be the strongest military power in both structures, but Russia will be also of tremendous influence as its military potential is comparable with American⁵. Any new European security structure has any logic only on the condition that the United States and Canada will not be members of the new regional organization. However, this scenario is unacceptable to Europeans because in the new structure Russia will the strongest, domineering. What is also important, the new NATO strategy declares that all European countries can become members in the perspective. In this case it is very doubtful that two practically identical in membership structures will operate at all; how Europeans will manage to divide themselves between America-dominated NATO, and

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One more problem for Russia is to achieve its goal and get high position in the new structure. OSCE was established on the USSR initiative when it was a superpower and could get anything. Russia position is different, and nobody is going to grant it special terms and privileges.

The majority of American experts speak not very enthusiastically about the new security plan, saying that it is too early to speak of serious strategic alliance with Russia. However, it necessary to start serious dialogue on the future of global and regional security architecture. It is also necessary to clarify our views on the past and present of international relations, to make final estimations of the achievements and losses of the period of bipolar global regulation not to repeat mistakes of the past, not to leave in “the peace of illusions”.

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