ON A NEW VERSION OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

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The new National Security Strategy preserved the pattern and logical shortcomings of the previous one. The new strategy was also published amid a dramatic economic slump and that immediately threw into question a number of its provisions. Lack of foundation in terms of the Strategy of Social and Economic Development of the country and existence of non-transparent procedure for control over implementation of the previous version of the National Security Strategy create substantial risks of a failure of the new version.

On 31 December 2015, a new version of the National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation (hereinafter NSS-2015)[1] was approved by a presidential decree. That version replaced the National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation till 2020 which was in effect from May 2009 (hereinafter NSS-2009)[2] in pursuance of a statutory innovation requiring adjustment of that document every six years[3]. Development of the new version was carried out by the staff of the Security Council of the Russian Federation without any public debates held; in violation of Article 13 (2) of the Federal Law on Strategic Planning the draft document was not placed on the official Web-site of the RF Security Council.

An article by article comparison of the new version with the previous version has shown that the pattern of NSS-2015 remained unchanged at the level of sections and subsections, though the volume of most sections changed substantially. So, with general sizable growth in the text volume of the document, Section I. *General provisions*, Section III. *National Interests and Strategic Priorities* and Section V. *Organization, Regulatory and Information Foundations of Implementation of the Present Strategy* were substantially reduced, while Section IV. *Ensuring of National Security* was considerable expanded. In that section, with reduction of the volume of the Subsection *Defense of the Country* the volumes of other subsections increased; according to the analysis of the content of the document that should not be regarded as evidence of a shift of the strategy's priorities in favor of non-military components of national security.

In the new version, the most odious statements of Article 1 of the previous version that Russia overcame aftermath of the crisis of the late 20th century, stopped downfall of the standard of living of its people, prevented discrediting of the constitutional order and restored its potential to build up its competitiveness, as well as Article 9 that "Russia's resource potential and prag-

1 Decree No. 683 of 31 December 2015 of the President of the Russian Federation on The National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation. URL: http://static.kremlin.ru/media/events/files/ru/l8iXkR8XLAtxeilX7JK3XXy6Y0AsHD5v.pdf (date of reference: 31 December 2015).

2 Decree No.537 of 12 May 2009 of the President of the Russian Federation on The National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation till 2020 . URL: http://www.scrf.gov.ru/news/436.html (date of reference: 24 January 2016).

3 Article 18 (1) of Federal Law No.172-FZ on Strategic Planning in the Russian Federation.

matic policy of utilization thereof expanded the Russian Federation' feasibility to strengthen its influence in the world" disappeared, probably, because they were explicitly in conflict with the reality. A statement – which appeared in Article 7 of the new version – that "[c] at present, a solid foundation was established for further growth in economic, political, military and spiritual potential of the Russian Federation and promotion of the role of the Russian Federation in the emerging polycentric world" can sooner be regarded as a sacral figure of speech than the result of official optimism of the authors of the document.

Amendments introduced to the main notions of the new version (Article 6) generally failed to make them more logical and less controversial. So, adding the word of "independence" to the the *national security* notion where the word of "sovereignty" was already used implies that the architects of the document may be aware of sovereignty without independence. Also, the same is true as regards "territorial integrity" to which the word "state" was added in the new version. As a result of adding "the aggregate of conditions and factors" to the notion of "a threat to national security", the latter has not become more transparent. But the less advantageous was the notion of "strategic national priorities" determined as before as "an important line of national security protection" which situation calls in question the logic of the document as a whole as it disagrees with the generally accepted understanding of a priority as a pre-emptive right and is in conflict with the notion of goal-setting set out in Article 3 of Federal Law on Strategic Planning as identification of "lines, goals and priorities of social and economic development and protection of national security of the Russian Federation".

In the new version, integration of former main strategic national priorities and priorities of sustainable development into the single list of strategic national priorities did not influence the actual order of those priorities: the country's defense remained on the top of the list, while economic growth was only in the fourth place. The wording of national interests in the new version of the document represents more explicitly a hierarchy of strategic goals of the architects of the document: promotion of the competitive advantage of the national economy moved from the top of the list to position 5 following development of "traditional Russian spiritual and moral values", while strengthening of the country's defense which was absent in the list of long-term national interests in the previous version appeared on the top of the list.

However, the wording of strategic goals of the country's defense as "creation of conditions for peaceful and dynamic social and economic development of the Russian Federation and protection of its military security" which were absent not only in the previous version, but also, surprisingly, in the Federal Law on Defense[1] and the Military Doctrine[2] clearly and unambiguously defines its role and returns us, though inexplicitly, to the principle of defense sufficiency (clearly underlined in Article 41 of NSS-2015) and permits us to be more lenient to the above specifics of formulation of national strategic interests and priorities.

In the new version of the subsection: *Upgrading of Living Standards of Russian Nationals* of Section IV: *The Specifics of National Security*, the list

1 Federal Law No. 61-FZ of 15 May 1996 On Defense (as amended on 31 December 2015).

2 The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation. URL: http://news.kremlin.ru/ref_notes/461 (date of reference: 24 January 2016).

of threats was largely revised; it included "unfavorable dynamics of economic development, technological inferiority, restrictive economic measures against the Russian Federation, inappropriate spending of budget funds, higher income differentiation of households, deterioration of quality of consumer goods and services to households", while of all the above threats only technological inferiority was specified in the previous version. Restrictive economic measures introduced by the Russian Federation against other countries are not regarded by the architects of the document as a threat to the living standards of the Russian people. In the new version, the list of measures aimed at ensuring food security – which list is included in the same subsection, too – was largely expanded.

In the new version of the *Economic Growth* subsection of Section IV, the strategic goal of Russia's getting into the top 5 countries as regards GDP volume was replaced by the goal of Russia's getting into the number of leading countries as regards GDP volume: the architects of the Strategy probably meant the top 10 taking into account the present-day economic realities.

As the main strategic threats to the economy – in addition to low competitiveness, mineral export-oriented model of development, high dependence on a foreign market situation, depletion of the mineral base, reduction of production and reserves of strategic mineral, growing labor insufficiency, higher extent of the shadow economy, conditions contributing to corrupt practices and criminalization of economic and financial relations, illegal migration and uneven development of regions listed one way or another as strategic risks or threats in the previous version – the new version includes with the following: "lagging behind in development and implementation of advanced technologies, vulnerability of the national financial system to operations by non-residents and foreign "hot" capital, vulnerability of the country's information infrastructure, national budget system imbalances, registration of property titles in respect of a large number of entities registered in foreign jurisdictions", as well as "decrease in stability of the national system of resettlement of population".

The main security measures and lines of concentration of major efforts are quite comprehensive and include, among other things, along with upgrading investment attractiveness and business climate the measures aimed at liquidation of economic imbalances and creation of economic growth points. At the same time, inclusion in the *Economic Growth* subsection of a largely expanded (as compared to the previous version) list of objectives of the state social and economic policy makes one remember that the existing Concept of Long-Term Social and Economic Development of the Russian Federation till 2020[1] is hopelessly outdated, while NSS-2015 cannot replace it, in principle, in Russian strategic planning despite the efforts of its architects. In fact, in accordance with Article 18 (5) of the Federal Law on Strategic Planning conceptual provisions in the field of ensuring national security of the Russian Federation "are based on fundamental correlation and interdependency between the National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation and the Strategy of Social and Economic Development of the Russian Federation".

1 Order No.1662-r of 17 November 2008 of the Government of the Russian Federation on The Concept of the Long-Term Social and Economic Development of the Russian Federation in the Period till 2020.

Generally, the new version of the National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation has remained a declaratory document which poorly correlates with the reality and includes statements to anybody's liking starting from traditional Russian spiritual and moral values to promises to exclude the arms race. It seems there is still no agreement as regards national strategic priorities which situation is the result of the existing non-transparent procedure for delivering of the annual report by the Secretary of the RF Security Council on the state of the national security and measures aimed at strengthening thereof to the President of the Russian Federation.