

Risks and Challenges: EU Enlargement and Russia

Selected articles from Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty

KALININGRAD

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DEFENSE MINISTER SAYS CFE TREATY IS OUTMODED...

Sergei Ivanov told the 40th annual security conference in Munich that the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) "in its actual form cannot uphold stability and the balance of interests of the signatory states considering the actual military and political developments in Europe," RFE/RL's Munich correspondent reported on 9 February. Ivanov complained that the Baltic states, which are likely to become NATO members as early as April, have not signed the treaty, while NATO is poised to start operating "in a zone of vitally important interests of our country," AP reported. Meanwhile, Ivanov said, Russia has been fulfilling its "unilateral commitments on restraint in stationing military equipment and armaments" in Kaliningrad Oblast, AFP reported on 8 February. Ivanov argued that the updated version of the CFE Treaty, which was agreed to in 1999 but not signed, is a political commitment that has nothing to do with the CFE Treaty itself, RFE/RL reported. JB

...AND CALLS FOR ON-SITE RUSSIAN MONITORING OF NATO BASES

Defense Minister Ivanov said on 7 February, the opening day of the Munich security conference, that Russia should have monitoring facilities at NATO bases "to verify the fact that the uses of those facilities, as we are told, pose no threat to Russia," AP reported. Ivanov said the construction of NATO bases in Romania and Bulgaria is justified for antiterrorism operations in the Middle East, but asked what terrorist threat necessitates NATO bases in Poland and the Baltic states. Latvian Defense Minister Girts Kristovskis told AP that Ivanov's idea of Russian monitoring facilities at NATO bases is "very strange." Meanwhile, U.S. Senator John McCain (Republican, Arizona) strongly criticized Russia in his 7 February address to the Munich conference. President Vladimir Putin's rule, he said, "has lately been characterized by the dismantling of Russia's independent media, a fierce crackdown on the political opposition, the prosecution of a bloody war against Chechnya's civilian population, and a new assertiveness that challenges the democratic and territorial integrity of Russia's sovereign neighbors." JB

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**RFE/RL Newsline
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MOSCOW MAKES GESTURE TO AVOID EU CLASH...

Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Chizhov, who is in charge of relations with the European Union, offered on 22 February to extend temporarily the conditions of Russia's existing Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with the EU to the 10 states that are expected to become EU members on 1 May, the "Financial Times" reported on 23 February. Chizhov told the newspaper that Russia does not want to block EU enlargement, but it does want to change the PCA to compensate for the \$375 million that Moscow estimates enlargement will cost Russia, particularly due to worsened conditions for Russian exports of aluminum, chemicals, grain, and nuclear fuel to the acceding states. Among the prospective EU states are Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. Chizhov's comments followed a

EU foreign ministers' statement warning that Russia's failure to sign a new PCA covering the EU accession states by 1 May "without precondition or distinction" would have a "serious impact" on EU-Russian relations. An unnamed diplomat said the foreign ministers' statement was "a threat of sanctions," AFP reported on 23 February. JB

...AS DUMA DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYS RUSSIA SHOULD NOT BACK DOWN

Deputy State Duma Speaker Dmitrii Rogozin (Motherland) said on 23 February that Russia should not accept the EU's demands that it sign a new PCA to cover the 10 countries that are expected to join the EU on 1 May, Interfax reported. "Russia does not plan to act on the orders of Brussels. It must above all be concerned about its national interests," Rogozin said. He added that Russia must insist that it will sign individual agreements with each of the new EU members. Federation Council International Relations Committee Chairman Mikhail Margelov called the EU's demands for a new PCA "the language of sanctions," which, he said, "is not the style now needed in relations between Russia and the European Union," Interfax reported on 23 February. Margelov said Russia plans to develop "a strategic partnership" with the EU, but wants the EU to increase quotas for Russian imports, to lower import duties on goods shipped from Kaliningrad Oblast through Lithuania, and to eliminate restrictions on Russian aircraft flying in European airspace. JB

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RUSSIAN NAVY ACCUSES NATO OF SNOOPING

Baltic Fleet press service chief Anatolii Lobskii told ITAR-TASS on 24 February that a NATO E-3 AWACS surveillance aircraft began carrying out reconnaissance missions near Kaliningrad Oblast on 23 February. On 24 February, it crossed Lithuanian airspace and "continued its activities in the immediate vicinity" of Kaliningrad's border, he claimed. Lobskii said that despite assurances from officials in the Baltic states that they will not facilitate NATO monitoring of Russian facilities, "the Baltic Fleet command has no doubt that the flights over the Baltic states are not just a demonstration, and that reconnaissance tasks are being performed." Latvia's armed forces command, he added, have "openly declared" that the country's airfields and infrastructure will be used "in the interests of NATO." Aleksei Arbatov, who heads the Institute of World Economy and International Relations' Center for International Security Studies, said such flights will negatively affect Russian-NATO relations. While Russia is "dismantling its intelligence installations abroad," including the Lourdes listening post on Cuba, NATO is expanding its intelligence-gathering efforts, including those aimed at Russia, Arbatov said. JB

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RFE/RL Newsline
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Monday, 5 April 2004

DEFENSE MINISTER SOFTENS TONE ON NATO RELATIONS

Sergei Ivanov on 5 April arrived in Washington for meetings with senior U.S. officials, Russian and Western media reported. Speaking to reporters in Oslo on 4 April, Ivanov said that Moscow hopes to reach a new cooperation agreement with NATO this year under which the forces of the alliance would be allowed onto Russian territory and those of Russia would be allowed to enter the territory of NATO members, Russian media reported. Since 2001, Russia has allowed NATO aircraft to use its airspace and railways to support military operations in Afghanistan. Moscow has also encouraged Central Asian countries to cooperate with the operation in Afghanistan. However, Russia has not yet reached an agreement on military transit to the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad Oblast, Ivanov said. Ivanov added that Russia and NATO might conduct joint naval patrols in the Mediterranean Sea, but only "with strict adherence to international law," ITAR-TASS reported on 4 April. In an article in the journal "Russia In Global Affairs" in March, Ivanov argued that NATO has demonstrated an anti-Russian attitude and

developed "an offensive military doctrine." RC

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RFE/RL Feature Articles
Thursday, 22 April 2004

EU/RUSSIA: PRE-ENLARGEMENT DEAL ANNOUNCED ON KALININGRAD

By Ahto Lobjakas

Brussels, 22 April 2004 (RFE/RL) -- The European Commission today said the EU and Russia have agreed on a good transit regime between the Russian mainland and its Kaliningrad exclave after enlargement.

The deal came during an ongoing high-level commission visit to Moscow.

In Brussels, commission spokesman Diego de Ojeda broke the news, saying an overall deal with Russia on EU enlargement is now "very close."

"One of the outstanding issues for the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) extension, or to agree on extending the PCA to the 25 member states, has been now dealt with, it is solved. Particularly [this refers] to [the] transit of goods to and from Kaliningrad. This is good news," de Ojeda said.

"We would like to see the integration of the Russian minorities accelerated. There are procedures in place, both countries have procedures that their citizens can adhere to and therefore achieve full citizenship."

The agreement, which RFE/RL has seen, says the EU has agreed not to levy any customs and transit duties on Russian goods going to or coming from Kaliningrad.

De Ojeda said the details of the deal will be made public next week when EU and Russian foreign ministers meet in Luxembourg. The EU hopes to sign a joint declaration with Russia which will address all Russian concerns over enlargement the bloc considers legitimate. Russia has said it will not expand its existing partnership agreement with the EU to its new member states if its concerns are not met.

Issues already resolved include Russian concerns over trade. A draft text of the joint declaration -- seen by RFE/RL -- says that the EU has agreed to extend Russia's steel quotas, ease its aluminum imports to the bloc, and relieve the application of the EU anti-dumping legislation on Russian exports. The EU has also agreed that Russia's existing contracts for the supply of nuclear materials to some of the new member states will remain valid.

De Ojeda today said the only outstanding issue is Russia's wish to jointly address the situation of the Russian-speaking minorities in Estonia and Latvia. De Ojeda said agreement on this issue is also "very close" and remains a "matter of language."

De Ojeda said the European Union remains committed to the view taken during the accession negotiations of Estonia and Latvia that both fulfill political entry criteria on democracy and human rights. He added that citizenship is primarily an issue for the member states in the EU.

However, de Ojeda said the European Union would like to speed up the integration of the Russian-speaking noncitizens into Estonian and Latvian societies.

"We would like to see the integration of the Russian minorities accelerated. There are procedures in place, both countries have procedures that their citizens can adhere to and therefore achieve full citizenship. Our other point view is that the accession to the European Union will -- if [anything] -- improve the situation of the Russian minorities," de Ojeda said.

An EU source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the EU-Russia joint declaration is likely to say that EU enlargement will benefit minorities within its borders, facilitate their integration, and that the bloc rules out discrimination against any minority group.

Latvia and Estonia have so far held out, rejecting all references to minorities in the joint declaration. Both have sizable Russian minorities, many of whom are noncitizens.

However, sources close to the talks have told RFE/RL both are eventually likely to accept a mention provided it does not name either country directly, to avoid blocking the overall EU-Russia deal.

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RUSSIA AND EU DISCUSS EU ENLARGEMENT ISSUES

European Commission President Romano Prodi said after a 22 April meeting with President Vladimir Putin in Moscow that most of the problems concerning Kaliningrad and EU enlargement have been solved, ITAR-TASS reported. Putin said an agreement was reached "on the extension of the movement of our goods to Kaliningrad and the common EU customs procedures," ORT and RTR reported. The Russian president added, however, that "some details still have to be clarified." Putin said that in general Russia would like to develop cooperation with Europe in the economic, energy, security, and humanitarian sectors and that these topics will be discussed at the EU-Russia summit in Moscow on 21 May. Prodi also said the European Commission will recommend that EU members make bilateral agreements with Russia to facilitate the issuance of visas for Russian citizens traveling to the EU. VY

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