

The Makeup of the Russian Federation's Armed Forces in Regard to Their Purposes and the Country's Status

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SUMMARY. This article examined problems facing the reform in the Russian Federation's Armed Forces over the period ending in 2020. It also shows the relationship between the size of the Armed Forces and their actual combat capability, and resources allocated for maintaining the Armed Forces and their weapons and hardware; and highlights the role of mobilization needs and the importance of strategic reserves.

KEYWORDS: makeup of the Armed Forces; combat potential of the Armed Forces; military threats and hazards; combat capabilities; mobilization needs; weapons and heavy equipment; reform; mobilization deployment rate.

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He began his army career as motorized infantry platoon leader and motorized infantry company commander in the Carpathian Military district, chief-of-staff of a motorized infantry regiment, officer and then senior officer of the theater department of the headquarters of the Far Eastern Military district, senior officer and then group chief of the 9th detached Area of the General Staff's Main Theater department, and chief of the theater division and deputy chief of the theater department of the headquarters of the Southern Group of Forces.

Following his retirement from the Armed Forces, he worked as senior researcher at the Research Laboratory of the General Staff Military Academy. From 1997 to 2003, he was chief specialist and then counselor of the Civil Defense Forces department of the Russian Ministry of Emergencies.

From May 2003, he was lecturer and then senior lecturer at the Civil defense department of the Military Engineering Academy. Since 2006, he has been senior lecturer at the Chair of Troop Command & Control and Staff Service of the General Military Academy of the Russian Federation's Armed Forces.

The makeup that the Russian Armed Forces projected in 2008 as a result of reforms going on in the country over the last two decades was clearly far from what was wanted. The army was built around a core of units short on personnel and professionals and obviously lacking enough combat power. Besides, the Armed Forces “have run out of the stock of weapons and military hardware they inherited from the U.S.S.R.”¹ This landed the country in a situation in which it was not, over and over again, ready to face a war.

Even if it was a success, the five-day war fought in August 2008 to check Georgia's aggression exposed shortcomings in the Russian Federation's Armed Forces that gave the country's leaders persuasive proof that the country needed a more **efficient army** in peacetime and that no time was to be lost making it that. The war spurred the authorities to take urgent organizational measures and allocate more funds, the crisis notwithstanding, to give the Russian Federation's Armed Forces a totally different make-up.

Russia's strategic forces, its chief deterrent, have weapons stocks to last for about another ten years, which is a pretty long time to undertake radical reforms in real earnest on the scale of the Armed Forces in general.

The Russian Federation's President Dmitry Medvedev took the initiative in his hands ordering “all units and warships of the Russian Federation's Armed Forces to be in **a high state of alert.**” In his own words, “security has been, and still is, one of the key factors of the country's development,”² so there is no doubt about the authorities' determination to bring the military reform to conclusion.

The Defense Ministry's Military Board meeting on October 14, 2008, announced a package of measures designed to modify the structure, status, size of, and weaponry replacement in the Russian Federation's Armed Forces.

Official statements on the military reform give the impression that it is following plan and that the military-industrial complex is gathering speed in development.

By 2012, all large and small units are to be put in a high state of alert, and the army and navy are to have one million effectives, including 150,000 commissioned officers (or 15% of the total strength).

With the number of army units reduced significantly, it would be reasonable to adopt a three-tiered control system, in particular, a military district, operational command, and brigade.

All services and arms of the Armed Forces are in need of replacements for their weaponry and military equipment. The costs of R&D and weaponry procurements are to take up a large share of allocations for national defense. These

measures have been put on paper already. On November 19, 2008, Army General Nikolai Makarov, Chief of the Armed Forces' General Staff, told journalists that a third of weapons and heavy equipment would be replaced in the Russian Army within the following three to five years.

On March 17, 2009, the Russian Federation's President Medvedev speaking at an enlarged meeting of the Defense Ministry's Board, gave official assurances to the military that replacements would be 80% complete by 2020. This means that a decision has been made in the Russian Federation, for the first time since the disintegration of the U.S.S.R., to launch a full-scale military reform that has to radically alter the make-up of the Russian Armed Forces and bring their structure and status, and the combat capabilities of its units on high alert to the level of armies in the world's advanced countries.

The measures taken by the Russian Federation's leaders indicate their intention to abandon the strategy of deploying a **large army**, a strategy on which the country's defense has been based for a full century. It is expensive, indeed, for any country to keep many millions under arms in peacetime, **so it was completely justified in the early 20th century to expect a large army within a short space of time.**

- *First*, states had limited opportunities at the time to make secret preparations for war and launch a surprise attack against the enemy. Still, the aggressor preparing for a surprise attack managed, to an extent, to deploy its mobilization reserves secretly and well in advance.
- *Second*, a total mobilization allowed a country to build up its combat potential many times over within a short time because an army of that period lacked complicated weapons and military hardware. Besides, the need for high-quality resources was smaller than it is today.
- *Third*, the period armies were equipped with relatively simple weapons, and it was not, therefore, required for units just mobilized or raised to take a long time to coordinate their actions.

In the latter half of the 20th century, however (after the conduct and results of World War II were analyzed), many of the world's most advanced countries abandoned this strategy.

Attacking countries alone could deploy large armies, while the defenders were always late in calling mobilization.

No example exists to this point in history of a large army being deployed to repel aggression well before a country is attacked, even if it has a "period of threat" to do that. This period today is typical of local wars only when the aggressor makes a show of its infinite superiority in military power. In a war against a strong opponent, the aggressor will always seek to make preparations in secret. NATO countries (the U.S., in the first place), and a few others, have actually long been capable of launching a **surprise** attack.

Surprise, past experience tells us, helps the attacker to build up immense superiority over his opponent in terms of actual combat power (readiness potential) of his groups of units (forces).

The U.S. and NATO in general have enormous capacity to make a surprise attack today. War, when they start it, can be launched with air strikes before their groups of units (forces) begin (or complete) their operational deployment. Under these circumstances, the defender is practically unable to mobilize and deploy his forces before the onset of war. What is more, the understrength units possessing a real combat potential in peacetime would have to wait for reinforcements to come through mobilization instead of joining others in fighting off aggression, and then coordinate the efforts of long-serving and new personnel brought up to their wartime strength. To put it differently, the real combat potential of forces deployed through mobilization cannot be committed for approximately a month, and considering the poor quality of mobilization resources, they would add insignificantly to the combat potential.

To give an example from World War II, the Red Army [as the U.S.S.R.'s armed forces were then called – *Ed.*] appeared to many to have an obvious superiority over Germany's Wehrmacht, or about 50% in the number of divisions (303 against 210 divisions). The Red Army had a similar superiority in aircraft, artillery, and armor. It also had enough manpower – 5.4 million effectives on June 22, 1941 when Germany attacked the U.S.S.R. The opposing German forces 7.3 million strong only had 210 divisions that were fully manned, combat-ready, and experienced in conducting military operations.³

These figures show beyond a doubt that almost all Soviet divisions were half, or less than half, understrength and required reinforcements and combat training, with no time available for it. Hasty mobilization brought the Red Army's strength to 11 million who were sent to engage an enemy significantly superior to them in combat capability. Even though the Red Army was soon superior in weaponry and manpower, it rolled back from the border to Moscow itself. In the first six months of the war, it lost 4.5 million combatants, most of whom were civilians, only shortly before working in manufacturing and farming, and now coming to grips with a formidable enemy who had captured half of Europe already.

No doubt, the situation on the Soviet-German front could be radically different had the same manpower (5.4 million effectives) the Red Army had at the onset of the war manned 150 divisions in a high state of alert instead of the 303 half-strength divisions. Those 150 divisions would have been fully trained, requiring no reinforcements, and ready to engage the enemy on an equal footing on the first day of the war.

The country's adherence to a large army raised through mobilization is becoming far more dangerous today. It is unreasonable to give technically complicated types of modern weaponry and heavy equipment to draft-age civilians called up in a mobilization campaign. Because of fresh draftees' poor training,

weapons can be put out of order or would be used with low effect. Giving the simplest weapons and equipment available to draftees would increase the Armed Forces' combat potential only insignificantly either.

Today, over sixty years after that war, the Russian army and navy have incomparably more high-tech and effective weapons. Mobilization, therefore, is unable to boost the Armed Forces' real combat potential significantly within a short time period. This task is even more difficult to accomplish with the mobilization resources (stocks of weapons and heavy equipment, supplies, and low qualifications of would-be draftees) having fallen into neglect.

This underscores the importance of, and absolute need for, the recent turnaround in the government's approaches to the Armed Forces' development.

In our view, the ways and plans for a radical transformation of the Russian Armed Forces' makeup are well-conceived and scientifically grounded. It is a rule of thumb, though, that any major reform is unavoidably beset by errors and never comes through without criticisms, constructive and unconstructive.

What is beyond criticism, though, is the **size of the Russian Federation's Armed Forces** – one million regulars, including 150,000 officers (15% of the total) only, the size, the smallest our country has had in the last 100 years, that Russia can afford to have today. This figure, therefore, needs scientific backing.

“The rational size of the Armed Forces has to be viewed as a compromise between what is necessary and what is possible.”⁴ While this author fully agrees with, and subscribes to, this conclusion, the impartiality of what follows in the reference authors' arguments, including citation of world practice, can be put in doubt.

Indeed, different countries allocate between 2% and 5% of their gross domestic product for national defense in peacetime, while the size of their armed forces rarely exceeds one percentage point of the country's total population.

It is not enough for Russia to refer to an analysis of world practice in resolving this vital problem. In its case, the degree of “military and economic strain” needed to maintain its defense potential also may differ significantly from world practice “standards.”

A more reasonable approach is offered by Col. Gen. A.S. Rukshin, former chief of the General Staff's Main Operations Department in 2001 to 2008, in his article referred to below.

I fully embrace every phrase of his argument that the size of Russia's Armed Forces is to depend on the “objective conditions of the country's existence, and its place and role in the world community and the system of international relations.”⁵

It is a common fact that Russia “cannot be judged by common standards.” As the largest country in the world, it has much what is worth fighting for. No other country in the world spans ten time zones or has natural resources on so grand a scale. It extends over 9,000 kilometers from west to east, and between

2,500 and 4,000 kilometers from north to south. Its shores look out on 12 seas of three oceans. Russia has the world's six largest population (over 140 million).

For these reasons, Russia cannot benchmark other countries, particularly NATO countries (with the exception of the U.S.) that can, by virtue of being members of the world's largest military alliance, afford to maintain relatively small armed forces (between 200,000 and 300,000).

Significantly, though, many of these armies (armed forces of the United Kingdom, Germany, and France, in the first place) have a great potential in terms of weapons and a combat capability of their forces on a par with those of the U.S.

In this author's view, the country's requirements for armed forces are to be guided by Russia's geostrategic position, its place and role in the world community, the existing system of international relations, and the alignment of military and political forces in the world at large. Most important certainly is, however, that the need to have Armed Forces of one size rather than another arises with a view to the realities and prospects of changes occurring, through reform, in their quality and combat capabilities.

The real combat potential, rather than size, of the Armed Forces must be sufficient for them to stand up against aggression launched against Russia and its allies, no matter how hard the conditions in which war is started and pursued are.

It is hard to say that the system of international relations that has shaped up in recent years and the alignment of military and political forces in the world are favorable to Russia to an extent that **military threats and hazards** are ruled out.

Over the past two decades, the breakup of the Warsaw Treaty Organization, disintegration of the U.S.S.R., and NATO's significant enlargement to the east, the alignment of military and political forces in the world, and balance of forces along the West-East line have changed greatly to this country's disadvantage. The West (particularly the U.S.) has not practically soften its attitude toward Russia. Western politicians have succeeded in luring East European countries, including the Baltic republics of the former U.S.S.R., to join NATO, and driving a wedge into Russia's relations with Georgia and Ukraine.

The Russian Federation's one-million-strong Armed Forces approved by its President Medvedev is **nowhere near enough**. This is the lowest point to which their manpower has fallen in the country's recent history. Considering its real economic power, though, Russia cannot bring its army up to high "world standards." It has to radically change the structure of its Armed Forces, make all its units combat-ready, and replace their weaponry almost completely.

These changes are at the limit of Russia's economic power to build and maintain its Armed Forces today. We are to realize, however, how far this size of the country's Armed Forces, given the shape in which they are today, is from what is really needed.

The country's requirement for the size of its Armed Forces is in inverse proportion to their real combat capabilities.

In the absence of a reasonable number of combat-ready units in the Armed Forces in peacetime, their real combat potential cannot be sufficient, and would have to be made up for by total mobilization (many millions drawn from the mobilization reserves).

This author demonstrated a long while ago that ten combat-ready divisions is better than a hundred "paper" ones. The units' combat potential cannot be sufficient unless they are provided with modern highly effective weapons and heavy equipment.

When army units and warships are kept in a high state of alert, the need for the Armed Forces of a large size is held down and, conversely, their real combat potential goes up. Fewer units of this class would be required, and the costs of equipping them with state-of-the-art weapons and hardware would yield greater returns. Fully manned and equipped with whatever they need, given an adequate (balanced) quality of manpower organization structure, they could display an incomparably higher combat capability and use the potential of modern weaponry with maximum effect.

The quality of the Armed Forces' structure, including a balance of their combat elements and control systems, reconnaissance, all kinds of operational (combat), special, and engineering support and logistics, plays a special role in boosting their combat capabilities. We appreciate the importance of the existing balanced structure of the Armed Forces' services and arms in terms of their combat and total manpower strength. Accordingly, cuts will hit the hardest the Land Forces, one of the Armed Forces' principal services to have their manpower reduced most significantly and their structure modified most radically.

As long as the real combat potential of the Russian Federation's Armed Forces one million strong is clearly insufficient, Russia will **have to** maintain many millions in the mobilization reserves ready to be deployed in the event of war. This policy alone can make up for the deficient combat capabilities of a professional army.

The expected significant improvement in the Armed Forces' quality and their equipment with modern weapons and military hardware will be accompanied by a considerable increase in their combat capacities. Growth in the Armed Forces' real combat potential (potential combat capability) will, in turn, create a situation in which the **need for the mobilization reserves** will be reduced.

When the need for the mobilization reserves is reduced to a minimum (in our mind, to between 2 and 3 million), the size of the country's Armed Forces, as it is set now, may be regarded as an optimal figure.

In assessing the wisdom of keeping the size of the Russian Federation's Armed Forces to be created under their reform plans within the one million limits, it is to be appreciated that an army and a navy a million-strong together, their units and warships in a high state of alert, will be able, after adequate training

and replacement of all their weapons and hardware, to increase their combat power five- to tenfold. This growth in combat capabilities cannot be achieved by deploying a ten million army.

So far without an army of adequate capabilities, Russia has to take a cautious approach to cutting the scale of mobilization. Still, the need for mobilization reserves can, however, be trimmed even now, after their condition has been weighed up.

The mobilization reserves are to be reduced gradually (step-by-step) as their quality improves and the Armed Forces' combat capabilities grow, giving due consideration to the condition and balance of the Armed Forces' services and arms. This approach will help improve the quality of mobilization resources and the state of mobilization readiness. Not least, this will create opportunities to call up servicemen in reserve for their direct purposes and related military occupations; for selecting the best suitable and effective weapons and hardware that are currently in storage depots to be delivered to the reservists upon mobilization, and also for improving the quality of material supplies to be used upon mobilization.

It is also important to make a fuller use of combined units in the mobilization reserves that are equipped with "civilian" hardware such as truck pools, combined civil aviation, radioactive, chemical, and biological protection (RCBP), communications units, and so on. In turn, trucks, aircraft, helicopters, bulldozers, cranes, mobile power stations, RCBP equipment, communications equipment, and so on are to be delivered together with the personnel assigned to operate them. This personnel will also be required to staff the control bodies and units in a high state of alert to set up backup crews, shifts on duty, and so on.

Before the real need for the Armed Forces of any size and the respective need for mobilization reserves are established, it is essential to assess promptly the Armed Forces' current combat capabilities and those expected as a result of reform. Next, following assessment of the Armed Forces' status and real combat capabilities, an appraisal is to be made of their sufficiency for attaining the objectives assigned to them on the basis of real military threats and hazards, considering the possibility of their combat employment in the most complex situation of a war launched against Russia and its allies.

A new makeup for the Armed Forces is planned and their optimal size set with consideration for the availability of funds to finance their maintenance and development; prospects for replacement of their weapons and heavy equipment; balance of the Armed Forces' structure as a whole and their services and arms; improvements in the units' (warships') organizational structure, and, ultimately, on the basis of an estimate and calculation of the expected rise in military units' combat capabilities and increase in the potential of weapons.

The shortfalls in the Armed Forces' combat capabilities caused by their small size and the troops' (forces') combat capabilities are, **by the force of circumstances**, made up for by the mobilization reserves.

In 2008, the Armed Forces had 1.2 million combatants. At the current level of their units' (warships') combat capabilities, the country's need for its Armed Forces' combat power may be satisfied, in the event of war, by deploying a large army through total mobilization.

As the Armed Forces' combat potential is built up in the course of the reform, their mobilization needs can be reduced gradually, stage after stage. This will help to simultaneously enhance the quality and capabilities of the mobilization resources, improve mobilization training and mobilization readiness, and make plans for ways and methods of rational employment of the mobilization reserves in the event of war.

By 2012, reform of the Armed Forces' structure, a significant increase in the combat capabilities of units put on a high alert, and replacement of 30% of the outdated weapons and heavy equipment may more than double the Armed Forces' overall potential combat capability, even if their size is reduced to one million combatants, over what it was in 2008.

As weapons and heavy equipment continue to be replaced and military units' combat capabilities increase, the Armed Forces' combat power may double again in 2020, and their size will approach a sufficiency limit.

The main trouble with the military reform, however, is that **colossal funds** will have to be allocated, and spent rationally, to implement plans to give a new make-up to the Russian Federation's Armed Forces.

Success of the reform fully depends not so much on the promise of the idea, sensibility of decisions, and thoroughness of plans and programs for a wide-scale reform of the Armed Forces, as on the Russian government's firmness in carrying out a balanced policy for funding the Armed Forces' maintenance and development in the years between 2009 and 2020.

More than that, the scientific approach is not to "comply with world practice" in allocating a share of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for national defense (for example, 3.5% to 4%). It is only that the reform could produce Armed Forces fully in compliance with Russia's status as a Great Power, giving reliable military security to the country and its allies, and serving as a solid support for the country to fall back on in protecting its national interests and for the state in pursuing its foreign policy.

What is important is not a share of GDP, but the actual annual allocations, to be estimated and calculated in advance, to finance the Armed Forces' maintenance, replacement of their weaponry, and development until the year 2020, sufficient to complete the reform.

To remind, the Russian Federation's Armed Forces were financed for nearly fifteen years, since the late 1980s, with funds *barely enough to survive*. Between 70% and 90% of the funds allocated under the defense budget went to pay salaries to the Armed Forces' personnel. The forces' combat training was severely curtailed. Inventories ran out. Almost no procurements of weapons and heavy

equipment were made. Weapons and equipment inherited from the U.S.S.R. went beyond their service life and were largely unfit for use.

Supreme importance is now given to a considerate approach in choosing *a defense budget structure*. It is critical, in principle, to strike a balance between the structure of expenditure on the current maintenance of the Armed Forces and their hardware.

Attention is also to be given to expenses required to carry out organizational measures in the Armed Forces; funding of the troops' (forces') living condition, quartering them in new areas, and creating adequate conditions for high-quality combat training; providing servicemen and officers discharged from the army with housing; and making a gradual transition to contracts as a basis for service in the army. Under a resolution passed by the Russian Federation's Security Council on June 28, 2005, "A 50:50 balance is to be struck by 2011, and 30:70 in favor of the army's equipment with hardware by 2015." An analysis of the structure of the federal budget sent to the legislature shows, however, that the ratio of spending on current maintenance to equipment of the Armed Forces was 54.7:45.3 in 2009, with 52.8:47.2 planned in 2010, and 54.7:45.3 in 2011 in favor of current maintenance.⁶ Beginning in 2011, however, once structural changes have been completed and the army's maintenance has reached a dignified level, spending on modern, technologically complex, and expensive weapons will have to be increased sharply from one year to the next.

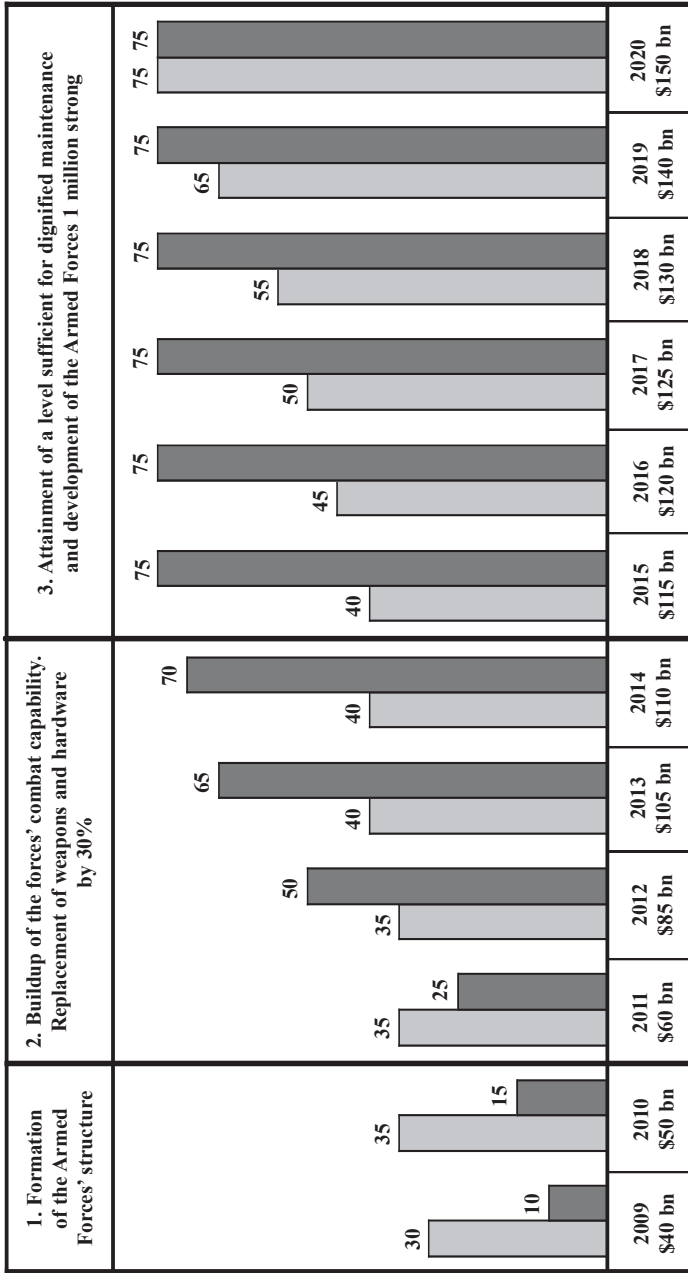
To this end, the Russian government is to be ready to deal with unpredictable challenges, face criticisms, and clear away barriers put up by bureaucrats lest it is forced by whatever circumstances to cut funds for the Armed Forces while the reform goes on.

The Russian head of state, Dmitry Medvedev, pledged that nothing, not even the financial crisis, would force the government to cut spending on the army. "There are key budget items that we cannot, and will not, reduce funding on,"⁷ the President said.

Lyubov' Kudelina who was finance and economics deputy Defense Minister at the time made public the scale of defense budget appropriations for the current and next years. In particular, "they will amount to 1 trillion 439 billion rubles in 2009, and will increase to 1 trillion 509 billion rubles next year."⁸

In this author's estimates, approximate needs for defense budget allocations and spending on the Armed Forces' current maintenance and development in the years between 2009 and 2020 could be defined as follows (Fig. 1):

- As is shown in Fig. 1, the structure of the Armed Forces' new make-up is to be framed in the *first period* (2009-2010). For this purpose, additional funds are needed to complete organizational measures and integrate the brigades within the new organizational structure. Additional funds will also be needed to build and repair military bases, with a view to having larger barracks and housing for newly formed brigades in military bases



— Spending on the Armed Forces' maintenance: maintenance of the personnel, combat training, and pay.
 — Spending on the Armed Forces' development and hardware equipment: procurements of weapons and hardware, R&D, and so on.

Fig. 1. Approximate defense budget needs for, and spending on, the Armed Forces' current maintenance and development in the period between 2009 and 2020

formerly adapted to accommodate smaller units and fewer officers, and to solve the servicemen's housing problems. Besides, it is important to provide more funds to expand training facilities and create conditions for combat training to be given at a high quality level.

Fund appropriations being generally insufficient, with priority given to structural changes in the Land Forces, Air Force, and the Navy, the largest share of funds available over these two years is to be spent on the Armed Forces' maintenance, particularly because supplying them with new weapon types amid the structural changes in the army would not achieve the desired effect. It is reasonable during this period to increase funding on R&D, leaving weapons procurement at the previous level. For example, the ratio of spending on the forces' maintenance and their development could be accepted as 75% to 25% in 2009.

The structure of the defense budget passed for 2009 shows that the "ratio of spending on the current maintenance and equipment of the Armed Forces (54.7:45.3)"⁹ does not, in our view, fully accord with the tasks of framing a new makeup for the Armed Forces. To give a good example, a child does not need a bicycle before it learns how to walk on its own.

- The *second period* (2011-2014) following completion of structural changes will best be used to build up the combat capabilities of units (warships) by providing them with supplies and equipment (clothing, foodstuffs, fuel, and ammunition) and improving their combat training. By government decision, huge funds are to be spent on replacing the units' weaponry and on R&D.

The weapons potential is expected to be enhanced by replacing about 30% of the existing weapons and hardware. Besides, more funds will be required to make gradual transition to service in the Armed Forces on the basis of contracts.

- The *third period* (2014-2020) is a time when all weapons and hardware inherited from the U.S.S.R. are phased out, the Russian Federation's Armed Forces switch to service under contracts, and most of the combat potential of units (warships), in particular, the potential of their weapons, combat capability, and readiness for use for their direct purpose, is on a par with that of the world's advanced countries.

The combat-ready Armed Forces that the country can have by 2020 are to become the chief deterrent against armed conflicts and wars breaking up. It would be rash for a while, though, to abandon the idea of building up combat power by mobilization. The army and navy would rely significantly on the mobilization reserves until the Russian Federation's Armed Forces have reached a reasonable size and real combat capabilities (combat potential) to deter and repel any possible aggression and handle other tasks set before them.

Judging by its real economic capacity and foreign policy, Russia cannot reconcile itself to the U.S. remaining an unquestionable world leader in defense spending. In its efforts to attain world superiority, the U.S. intends to have Armed Forces of a size among the biggest in the world and, still more important, of a combat power many times that of the armed forces of any other country. The American defense budget for 2009 exceeds \$600 billion, or an equivalent of the defense spending of all other developed countries in the world.

Without a doubt, the makeup of the Russian Federation's Armed Forces as one of the key elements of the state structure, is to accord to the country's status. For this purpose, the Armed Forces' combat potential is to be raised to a level of reasonable sufficiency, that is, a level at which they can reliably defend and protect the national interests of their own country and its allies.

We certainly realize the formidable challenge of the bold decision made by President Medvedev, the Russian Armed Forces' Commander-in-Chief, to put all Armed Forces units in a high state of alert. The refurbished one-million-strong army, however, will boost its combat power many times over by improving significantly the combat capabilities of its units and modernization of their weapons and heavy equipment.

This process will be particularly hard and painful for hundreds of thousands of servicemen, officers in the first place, both discharged against their will from the Armed Forces and those surviving the cuts. The greatest problem, though, will be obtaining enough funds to finance the Armed Forces' development without interruption. Unless the government gives reliable guarantees and takes practical steps to finance national defense strictly in accordance with the anticipated needs to reform, maintain, and develop (modernize) the country's Armed Forces, it would be impossible for them to project a modern make-up and gain the required combat power with its 1 million combatants, the smallest size that they have ever had in Russia and plainly insufficient for its needs.

These problems notwithstanding, the country's leaders have given the nation an assurance that they are not going to throw out the idea of reforming the army.

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