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# Medvedev Seeking New 'USSR - A Union Of Sovereign Super-loyal States'

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Taking advantage of a 'marked' decline in US activity in the former Soviet space, President Dmitry Medvedev is moving to 'minimize' what some in Moscow see as the negative 'consequences of the most serious geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century' by setting 'a certain Union of Sovereign Super-loyal Republics.'

In this way, the editors of 'Nezavisimaya gazeta' argue today, the USSR is reappearing albeit in a somewhat different form, and its future development, they suggest, will depend in the first instance 'on the political will and professionalism of those carrying out' this policy direction ([www.ng.ru/editorial/2010-08-24/2\\_red.html](http://www.ng.ru/editorial/2010-08-24/2_red.html)).

Entitling their lead article in English 'Back in the USSR,' the paper's editors say that recent diplomatic moves by Medvedev, although most of them have attracted little attention except for the extension of the Russian base in Armenia, reflect 'a significant link' in a chain of events to reverse what Vladimir Putin called 'a geopolitical tragedy.'

At their meeting in Sochi, the paper notes, 'Medvedev received assurances of loyalty from Tajikistan President Emomali Rakhmonov, once the Russian president announced that Tajik citizens could remain on the territory 'from now on' for three months before they have to register with the government.

And at the meeting of the Organization of the Collective Security Treaty (known under its Russian acronym as ODKB), Medvedev secured not only the extension of Russian basing rights in Armenia but also improved 'the tonality' of relations with Belarusian leader Alyaksandr Lukashenka and won approval for the ODKB as the venue for discussions of Kyrgyzstan's future security.

Moreover, Medvedev was able to win support for his plans to present a new and broader charter for ODKB at that organization's summit meeting in December. (For concurring analysis, see Andrey Lavrov's article at [novopol.ru/-odkb-hochet-pribavit-v-vese-text88919.html](http://novopol.ru/-odkb-hochet-pribavit-v-vese-text88919.html). For a more skeptical view, see Aleksandr Golts' essay at [www.ej.ru/?a=3Dnote&id=3D10345](http://www.ej.ru/?a=3Dnote&id=3D10345).)

At the Yerevan meeting, the editors of 'Nezavisimaya' point out, all the ODKB signatories were represented - except Uzbekistan, which can be expected to go along with measures that will increase the effectiveness of that grouping. Among the Central Asian states, only Turkmenistan remains on the sidelines.

But it is not only Medvedev's moves which lead the paper to its conclusions. The Moscow paper's editors point to the failings of GUAM, the Georgian-Ukrainian-Azerbaijani-Moldovan grouping, over the same period as indicative of Moscow's regaining of dominance in the post-Soviet space.

The visit of Moldova's acting President Mihai Ghimpu to Georgia and his joint declarations with President Mikhail Saakashvili suggest that this

anti-Russian grouping of states is living out its last days, given that neither Ukraine nor Azerbaijan will want to follow the Ghimpu-Saakashvili line and that Belarus' Lukashenka won't join that body either.

(In support of `Nezavisimaya's' argument about the fate of GUAM in general, see Bogdan Tsyrdya's essay posted online today at [www.fondsk.ru/article.php?id=3D3229](http://www.fondsk.ru/article.php?id=3D3229).

And for a critique of the notion that GUAM could ever become GUBAM and a dismissal of Russian worries on that point, see Yaroslav Butakov's piece at [www.win.ru/school/5270.phtml](http://www.win.ru/school/5270.phtml).)

But it is the decline of American attention to and support for the non-Russian countries around the Russian Federation that the Moscow paper's editors view as the main reason for their conclusions about what Medvedev -- and it should be added Putin --are currently seeking to do and with some success.

`Taking into account the marked reduction in the activity of Washington [in this region] and the corresponding weakening of its opposition to Moscow, there has appeared,' the editors say, `if you will the optimal chance if not for the liquidation of `the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century,' then for the minimization of its consequences.'

And that, they somewhat provocatively suggest involves `the creation around [the Russian Federation] of a certain Union of Sovereign Super-loyal Republics.' And while this would represent `a kind of USSR,' it would hardly be like the one that existed before the events of 1991.

What the editors of `Nezavisimaya' do not say but what they may intend or at least what many of their readers may conclude is that the reappearance of that acronym even as an expression of intent is likely to provoke anti-Russian feelings in many of the former Soviet republics and thus become a major obstacle to loyalty Moscow so clearly want.

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