
Russia revises military doctrine to reflect global changes.

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MOSCOW, March 5 (RIA Novosti) - Russia is preparing a new draft of its military doctrine to reflect the growing importance of the use of force in foreign policies conducted by leading global powers, the Security Council said Monday.

"The analysis of the situation on the global arena points to the increasing demand for forcible actions in the policies conducted by the leading countries," the council said in a statement.

"The new revision of the military doctrine should provide answers to the most urgent issues of Russia's national security," the statement said.

The current military doctrine was adopted in 2000. It outlines the role of the country's authorities in ensuring defense and, if necessary, preparing for and waging war, although it stresses that the Russian military doctrine is strictly defensive.

The doctrine lists factors that the Russian Federation perceives as potential threats, both internal and external and states support for a multi-polar world, in preference to a uni-polar world dominated by a single superpower that is quick to resort to military force.

The document also emphasizes Russia's commitment to military reform, with continued use of conscription, but a gradual shift towards a professional army.

But since 2000, drastic changes have occurred in the geopolitical and military situation in the world and in the nature of threats against national security, which makes it necessary to revise the specific tasks facing the Russian Armed Forces and related security agencies, the Security Council said.

Russian national security experts believe that military doctrines adopted by leading global powers emphasize modernization of their military potential and the use of advanced technologies in the development of modern weaponry.

"[They] actively introduce new means of modern warfare, revise "technologies" in the use of armed forces, change "the configuration" of military presence, and strengthen military alliances, especially NATO," the Security Council said.

"Armed forces are still being used as an important instrument in maintaining political and economic interests of states, and Russia cannot ignore these factors in developing its military doctrine," the council said.

Russia has strongly criticized the proposed deployment of the U.S. missile shield in Central Europe and in Central Asia, and further eastward expansion of NATO.

In harsh comments during his address to the Munich conference February 10, the Russian president accused the U.S. of ignoring international law and imposing its own rules on other countries.

Moscow also strongly opposes Georgia and Ukraine's drive to join the Western military alliance, in addition to the setting up of NATO bases on the territory of Russia's former Soviet allies in the Baltic Region and Central Asia.

The chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces, Yury Baluyevsky, said in an interview with Rossiiskaya Gazeta daily last month that unilateral U.S. action could damage the balance of power in Europe and undermine the Russian nuclear deterrence potential.

The Russian leadership has already reaffirmed its commitment to building and maintaining a strong nuclear deterrent.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said last year that developing Russia's strategic forces is the main priority on the national defense agenda.

"Maintaining a strategic balance will mean that our strategic deterrent forces should be able to guarantee the neutralization of any potential aggressor, no matter what modern weapons systems he possesses," the president told a meeting with top military officials.

Russia is planning to completely overhaul its "nuclear triad" by 2016, equipping strategic nuclear forces with new Topol-M ballistic missile complexes, modernized strategic bombers and new nuclear submarines.

However, HowHO, Russia has stated on numerous occasions that it will not allow itself to be drawn into an arms race, but will develop an effective response to new challenges and threats to ensure its national security.

Although Russia's military budget is considered to be 25 times less than that of the United States, the country's military expenditure has been steadily growing in the past few years.

The Russian Defense Ministry said in January it would spend over 860 billion rubles (\$32.42 billion) of federal budget funds in 2007, 23% more than in 2006. Military spending will account for 16% of overall federal budget expenditure.