

Dr. Alexander Bobrov

New Security Architecture in the Mirror of Russia's Foreign Policy Concept 2023

This is the edited transcript of the presentation of Dr. Alexander Bobrov to Panel 1, "The Growing Danger of World War III Underlines the Necessity for a New Security Architecture," of the Schiller Institute's April 15-16 Conference, "Without the Development of All Nations, There Can Be No Lasting Peace for the Planet." Dr. Bobrov is the Acting Dean of the School of Government and International Affairs, MGIMO University (Moscow State Institute of International Relations) in Russia. Watch the entire conference [here](#).

A subhead has been added.

Thank you so much for having me. I would like to present my topic and at the same time avoid reiterating the ideas that were expressed by the brilliant previous speakers concerning not only the actual state of relations between the West and Russia, but also everything that has to do with the emergence of the multipolar world that we are witnessing at the moment, which is not just someone's idea, but an objective tendency that a group of countries—especially the West, the United States of America, the European Union—are trying to ignore.

I decided to choose this topic for the very sole reason that about two weeks ago, we had the inauguration of the [new](#) Russian Foreign Policy Concept, which is a strategic document that expresses the main ideas of the Russian leadership of the role that our country plays in international relations. And also, you might use this document as a certain mirror of the Kremlin's playbook in general. This is not the first time that Russia's leadership publishes this type of document. We have had previous reiterations back in 2016, in 2008, and in the very beginning of the 21st century. But this is the very first strategic document that gives an answer to a whole set of questions.



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The first one would be: What is Russia's idea of the modern world? Because we do know that our President, Vladimir Putin, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergey Lavrov, have been promoting the idea of a multipolar world since the early 2000s. But this is the very first time when this idea has taken shape not only as a basic idea, but now in the specificities of this document. We are trying to show that this multipolar world must consist not only of single countries or civilizations—countries such as the United States

of America, Russia, China, or India—but also in regions that could be represented by a set of multilateral agreements and organizations. Obviously, Latin America is not represented by one country, but by a group of countries. The same applies to Africa. There is no widespread understanding of the leader of this region, but at the same time, as a group, African countries have every right to voice their opinion as well.

The Role Today of Russian Diplomacy

This strategic document is also a very good expression of Russian diplomacy. For myself, as a person who lectures on diplomacy, I do see that we are now witnessing a crisis of diplomacy and of diplomatic principles in general. We have different examples of unilateral actions made by the United States of America or their European allies, especially when circumventing the decisions of the United Nations Security Council, as we saw that in Yugoslavia, in Iraq, in Libya, with the operation, leading from behind, the toppling of the Qaddafi regime. I do believe that the security [aspect] of this foreign policy concept is also very important in understanding the logic of Moscow concerning the future of different bilateral and multi-lateral relations.

For instance, we do see in the chapter that has to do with the regional priorities of the Russian foreign policy, that at the moment Russia prioritizes relations with

CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] countries, with China and India, with African and Middle Eastern countries, over our bilateral ties with Europe and the United States of America. This is happening for the first time in our post-Soviet history. For decades, even for centuries, Russian foreign policy had been quite Eurocentric.

We used to form our mindset in, I would say depending on tendencies and on events unfolding in the

Euro-Atlantic region. And now, we are trying to redirect our attention to new centers of gravity in Asia, in the Middle East, in Africa, in Latin America, and the Global South in general. This is also very important in the emergence of this new multipolar world in general.

I look forward to our questions and answers format that will come right afterwards. So, without any further ado, I would like to give the floor to the next speaker. Thank you so much for having me today.

Lt. Colonel Ralph Bosshard (ret.)

The Ukraine War Is an Indicator and Accelerator of the West's Decline

This is the edited transcript of the presentation of Lt. Colonel Ralph Bosshard to Panel 1, "The Growing Danger of World War III Underlines the Necessity for a New Security Architecture," of the Schiller Institute's April 15-16 Conference, "Without the Development of All Nations, There Can Be No Lasting Peace for the Planet." Lt. Colonel Bosshard is a retired officer of the Swiss Armed Forces and a consultant in military-strategic affairs. Watch the entire conference [here](#).

Subheads have been added.

Many thanks for having me in your conference today.

The ongoing war in Ukraine is probably an indicator, and at the same time an accelerator, of the decline of the West. The political importance of Western Europe is shrinking. We can see this in the fact that the Global South is rebelling and can afford not to vote according to the wishes of the West, for instance, in the UN General Assembly. We can see the declining economic importance of the West from the fact that in nine years of steadily tightening sanctions, the West has not succeeded in forcing Russia to change its behavior, particularly with regards to Ukraine.

Today, the sanctions are only part of an effort to harm Russia. They no longer serve a positive objective. The West is also showing itself to be disunited, and



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the Biden Administration is hardly succeeding in uniting its allies and friends by stoking fear of Russia.

The disunity is not only evident in Europe, but also in the Far East, in the form of the disagreements between France and the AUKUS countries. Macron's visit to China also revealed fundamental differences within the Western bloc. Macron's thesis on the strategic independence of Europe possibly received so much attention because it was one of the few areas where there was unity between Macron

and Xi Jinping. The Chinese leader's words about a multipolar world were probably a soothing balm on Macron's wounds.

Various European countries are pursuing their own geopolitical ambitions. Poland, for instance, wants to implement its Intermarium conception of the 1920s, and perhaps even recreate the medieval Grand Duchy of Lithuania. France wants to continue playing the role of the Grande Nation in the world, while Italy dreams of its enlarged Mediterranean [empire] which, by the way, is stretching from the Gulf of Guinea to the Sea of Azov and the Indian Ocean; and other European countries pursue nationalist policies. And they all want to make use of the resources of the whole of Europe for their own purposes.

This is also true for Ukraine, where nationalists are trying to use the resources of NATO to give free rein