

Section 4

Russia

1 General Situation

Under President Vladimir Putin who reassumed office in May 2012, Russia, having allegedly completed the phase of reconstruction and strengthening, sets an agenda of building a rich and prosperous Russia, and at the same time, attaches importance to becoming an influential power amid a new balance of economic, civilizational, and military forces.¹

“The collapse of the Soviet Union was a major geopolitical disaster of the 20th century.”² President Putin, who made this remark, aims to realize the concept of the Eurasian Union³ encompassing the areas of the former Soviet Union. The President has made clear Russia’s confrontational stance against the West, noting that the West is responsible for the crisis in Ukraine, and that the West exercises influence directly or indirectly on the former Soviet Union countries that Russia considers are under its sphere of influence.⁴

With regard to the situation in Ukraine, marked by an intensification of tension since February 2014, efforts to implement the ceasefire agreement (Minsk Protocol)⁵ in eastern Ukraine have led to a reduction in the intensity of the fighting and to a significant decrease in the number of conflict casualties since September 2015. Nevertheless, no major progress has been made in the political process such as holding local elections in the areas controlled by separatists or expanding the local self-government, as were set out in the Minsk Protocol. The West has alleged that the Russian Armed Forces (RAF) made a clear direct intervention in the situation in Ukraine. While Russia is seen to have attempted to change the status quo by force or coercion by engaging in “hybrid warfare,” Russia has continued to assert the legitimacy of its unilateral

actions. The outcomes of these changes have taken on an aspect of being entrenched, and it is expected that the international community will make further efforts to improve the situation.⁶ These series of acts by Russia have led to increased awareness of the threat posed by Russian “hybrid warfare,” especially in Europe.⁷

In addition, Russia has conducted military intervention in Syria since September 2015. While Russia withdrew its major air forces in March 2016, its swift deployment of military forces to remote areas and execution of operations for a certain period of time can be construed as a manifestation of the achievements of Russia’s series of military reforms. Furthermore, the display and use of various state-of-the-art equipment in Syria were likely not unrelated to Russia’s recent expansion of arms export destinations to not only the existing countries of India and China, but also to Southeast Asia, Africa, and Central America and the Caribbean. Moreover, Russia’s military intervention in Syria is drawing attention as constituting Russia’s move to exit its international isolation that resulted from the Ukrainian crisis and increase its international influence.

See>> Part 1, Chapter 3, Section 1

At the same time, Russia continues to face a severe economic situation due to the effects of the falling prices of crude oil—Russia’s key export—as well as the depreciation of Russia’s currency the ruble, and the economic sanctions by the West and other countries in response to the situation in Ukraine. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukraine is believed to have cooperated on the development of Russia’s ICBM. It is suggested that the suspension of Ukraine’s

¹ Annual Address to the Federal Assembly by President Putin (December 2012).

² Annual Address to the Federal Assembly by President Putin (April 2005).

³ In an article in the *Izvestia* dated October 4, 2011, then Prime Minister Putin proposed the creation of a “Eurasian Union” that would strengthen intraregional economic partnerships based on a customs union and a common economic space.

⁴ Annual Address to the Federal Assembly by President Putin (December 2014).

⁵ The Minsk Protocol of September 2014 consists of the following items: (1) ensure the immediate bilateral cessation of the use of weapons; (2) ensure monitoring and verification by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) of the regime of non-use of weapons; (3) enact the Law of Ukraine “With respect to the temporary status of local self-government in certain areas of the Donetsk and the Lugansk regions” (Law on Special Status); (4) ensure monitoring on the Ukrainian-Russian state border and verification by the OSCE, together with the creation of a security area in the border regions of Ukraine and the Russian Federation; (5) immediately release all hostages and unlawfully detained persons; (6) prohibit the prosecution and punishment of persons in connection with the events that took place in certain areas of Donetsk and Lugansk regions; (7) conduct an inclusive national dialogue; (8) adopt measures aimed at improving the humanitarian situation in Donbas; (9) ensure the holding of early local elections in Donetsk and Lugansk regions; (10) remove unlawful military formations, military hardware, as well as militants and mercenaries from the territory of Ukraine; (11) adopt a program for the economic revival of Donbas and the recovery of economic activity in the region; and (12) provide personal security guarantees for the participants of the consultations.

⁶ During a press conference on December 17, 2015, President Putin stated, “We’ve never said there are no people there [in Ukraine] who deal with certain matters, including in the military area, but this does not mean that regular Russian troops are present there.”

Russia has taken actions which, some suggest, were aimed at maintaining the status quo, such as the announcement of the de facto “completion of the annexation” through the dissolution of the Ministry of Crimean Affairs in July 2015, a ministry that was established for the economic integration of the Crimean Peninsula, along with the repeated visits to Crimea by President Putin and Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev.

⁷ Due to the complex nature of hybrid warfare that combines economic, intelligence operation, and diplomatic aspects, some suggest that the rising threat of hybrid warfare will drive closer cooperation between NATO, which is a military alliance, and the EU, which has functions other than military.

technical support following the deterioration of the bilateral relation could impair the operations of Russian equipment that rely highly on Ukraine.

Under these circumstances, attention is being paid on how President Putin, while maintaining his power base,

will deal with Russia's diplomatic isolation and economic hardships, as well as promote economic structural reforms and measures aimed at the modernization of Russia's military forces and its effort to expand international influence.⁸

2 Security and Defense Policies

1 Basic Posture

Against the backdrop of foreign policy factors, including the Ukrainian crisis and the military intervention in Syria, Russia set out its objectives and strategic priorities of domestic and foreign policies in the "National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation" revised in December 2015.

The National Security Strategy construes that Russia has an increasingly greater role in a multipolarizing world. The Strategy perceives increased activity of NATO and expansion of its member states as threats to national security, and expresses its vigilance against the U.S. deployment of missile defense (MD) systems to Europe and the Asia-Pacific region for undermining global and regional stability.

In the defense domain, the Strategy commits to giving continued priority to the role fulfilled by Russia's military force, and to ensuring strategic deterrence and preventing military conflict by maintaining a sufficient level of nuclear deterrent capability and the RAF.

The Russian Federation Military Doctrine, revised in December 2014 as a document substantiating the principles of the National Security Strategy in the military sphere, states the existing view that while the probability of an outbreak of a large-scale war is decreasing, military risks to Russia are increasing, such as the movement of NATO's military infrastructure closer to Russia's borders including the expansion of NATO, and the establishment and deployment of strategic MD systems. In addition, the doctrine expresses growing alarm, defining the following as new military risks: NATO's military buildup; the realization of the U.S. Global Strike concept; rise of global extremism (terrorism); inauguration of governments in neighboring countries that carry out policies Russia's interests; and the incitement of ethnic, social, and religious confrontations in Russia.

The doctrine continues to regard nuclear weapons as an essential component for preventing the outbreak of nuclear wars and wars that use conventional weapons. It states that Russia will maintain a sufficient level of nuclear deterrent capability and reserve the right to use nuclear weapons in response to an event where nuclear or other WMDs are used against it or its allies, or under circumstances wherein conventional weapons are used against it and where the survival of the country itself is imperiled.

Furthermore, defending Russian interests in the Arctic was newly added as one of the military's tasks in peacetime.

As for Russia's defense budget, the FY2016 budget registered a year-on-year decrease (-1.0%) for the first time, after the FY2011-FY2015 budgets continued to record year-on-year double-digit growths. So far, Russia has given priority to securing its defense budget amid a severe financial situation. The decreased growth rate shows Russia's increasingly severe economic situation, which is anticipated to have implications including delays in equipment procurement.

See>> Fig. I-2-4-1 (Changes in Russia's Defense Budget)⁹

2 Military Reform

Russia has implemented full-scale military reform since 1997 by presenting the three pillars of reform: downsizing; modernization; and professionalization.

Moreover, based on the policy statement, "Future Outlook of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation," that was approved by then President Dmitry Medvedev in September 2008, Russia is advancing measures including troop reductions, structural reform (from the division-based command structure to a brigade-based one¹⁰),

⁸ In his campaign platform papers published after January 2012, then Prime Minister Putin listed his policies: to expand the public's participation in politics; to prevent corruption; to exit the resource-dependent economy and strengthen domestic industries to modernize the economy; and to develop a middle class that plays a leading role in the society.

⁹ Russia compiles three-year budgets to plan budgets based on a medium-term outlook. For the FY2016 budget, however, Russia shifted to a single-year budget planning due to the difficulties of forecasting the economic situation. President Putin signed the FY2016 draft budget in December 2015. According to the Russian Federal Treasury, the FY2016 defense budget increased 1.0% from the previous fiscal year to 3.1493 trillion rubles.

¹⁰ The command structure is reorganized from the four-tiered structure of military district—army—division—regiment, to a three-tiered structure of military district—operational command—brigade. Although this was said to be completed in December 2009, in May 2013 the Guards Tamanskaya Motorized Rifle Division and the Guards Kantemirovskaya Tank Division, which had been reorganized into brigades under then Minister of Defence Anatoly Serdyukov, were reactivated and participated in a victory parade. Furthermore, in the January 25, 2016 edition of Krasnaya Zvezda (Red Star), a newspaper of the military, Gen. Oleg Salyukov, Ground Forces Commander, stated that four divisions were scheduled to be established in 2016 based on the existing brigades.

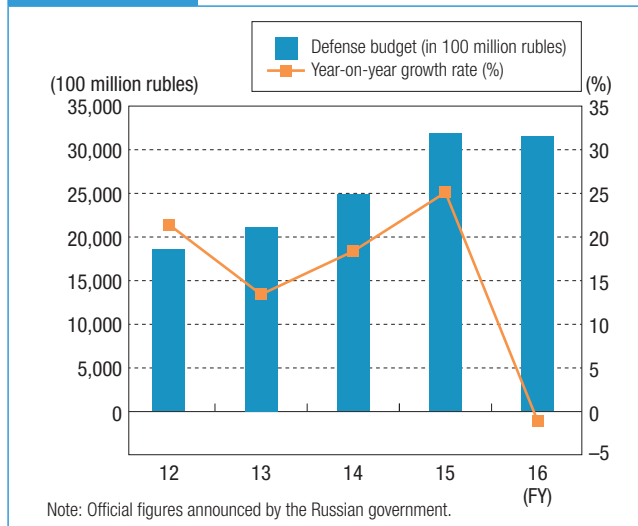
strengthening of combat readiness, and modernization of the RAF such as the development and introduction of new equipment.

Regarding the downsizing of the military forces, it was decided that RAF would have a strength of one million personnel as of 2016.¹¹ Since December 2010, Russia reorganized its six military districts into four military districts (Western, Southern, Central and Eastern Districts). On this basis, Russia established a joint strategic command in each military district and is carrying out integrated operations of its entire military forces, such as the ground force, naval force, and air force under the control of the Military District Commander. In December 2014, the Northern Joint Strategic Command in charge of the Arctic became operational.¹²

Regarding the modernization of the military forces, based on the State Armaments Program (GPV: Gosudarstvennaya Programma Vooruzheniya) 2011-2020 that appeared to have been approved by the President by the end of 2010, Russia intends to further modernize its equipment and invest approximately 20 trillion rubles (approximately 42 trillion yen) to increase its percentage of new equipment up to 70%¹³ by 2020.

Regarding the professionalization of the military forces, in order to make the combat readiness of the permanent readiness units effective, Russia promotes the introduction of a contract service system which selects

Fig. I-2-4-1 Changes in Russia's Defense Budget



personnel who would serve under contracts from the conscripted military personnel. In 2015, the number of contract servicemen exceeded the number of conscripted personnel for the first time.¹⁴

In the context of the gradual increase in difficulties in securing the defense budget due to the recent severe economic situation, attention will be paid to the trends related to Russian efforts to improve the capacity of conventional forces and maintain the strategic deterrence capability provided by nuclear weapons.

3 Military Posture and Trends

Russia's military force is comprised of forces such as the RAF, the Border Guard Service of the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation (FSB), and the Federal National Guard Service of the Russian Federation.¹⁵ The RAF consists of three services and two independent forces: Land Force; Navy; Aerospace Force;¹⁶ Strategic Missile Forces; and Airborne Forces.¹⁷

See>> Fig. I-2-4-2 (Location and Strength of Russian Military)

⚡ Nuclear Forces

Russia emphasizes its nuclear forces to secure its global position, to strike a balance with the nuclear forces of the United States and to supplement its inferiority in conventional forces. It is thus believed that Russia is making efforts to maintain readiness of its nuclear forces unit.

Russia still possesses ICBMs, SLBMs, and long

- ¹¹ It was decided that the total military force would be one million personnel as of 2016 by an executive order of December 2008 (the strength was approximately 1.13 million as of 2008). Russia is thought to have achieved troop reduction to one million personnel already as of 2011. However, since then, the number of personnel has continued to fall below one million due to the reduced military service period to one year, combined with the stagnant growth in the number of contract servicemen.
- ¹² The Northern Joint Strategic Command is a unified force led by the Northern Fleet and consists of fleets, ground forces, and air forces. Its area of operation covers the seas and remote islands extending from the Barents Sea to the East Siberian Sea, and the Arctic coast.
- ¹³ In his campaign platform paper on national defense policy published in February 2012, then Prime Minister Putin indicated that he would strengthen military power, including nuclear force, aerospace defense, and naval power by spending approximately 23 trillion rubles (approximately 48 trillion yen) in ten years. In December 2015, Deputy Minister of Defence Yuri Borisov told TASS that Russia started working on the GPV 2018-2025 whose preparation had been postponed.
- ¹⁴ Reasons behind the promotion of the contract service system may include a decrease in the population suitable for military service and the shortening of the conscription period (since January 2008, the conscription period has been shortened to 12 months). At the Expanded Meeting of the Defence Ministry Board in December 2015, Minister of Defence Sergei Shoigu stated that personnel strength adequacy was around 92.5% and contracted soldiers totaled approximately 352,000. The Regulation on the Military Service was amended in January 2015, enabling those who have no citizenship of any country as well as foreign citizens to serve as contracted soldiers.
- ¹⁵ In April 2016, President Putin signed an executive order that directed the establishment of the Federal National Guard Service of the Russian Federation to ensure national and public security and to protect human rights and freedoms, setting forth that the Federal National Guard Service would be formed on the basis of the internal troops of the Interior Ministry.
- ¹⁶ Formed on August 1, 2015 by merging the previous Air Force and Aerospace Defense Forces. Minister of Defence Shoigu explained that the realignment was implemented because of "the increasing importance of the aerospace theater," and perceives that "this organizational realignment is the best method for streamlining Russia's aerospace defense system."
- ¹⁷ Three Air Assault Brigades which belonged to the land force were incorporated into the airborne forces in November 2013.

range bombers (Tu-95 Bears and Tu-160 Blackjacks) following only the United States in scale.

Russia is obligated to reduce strategic nuclear arms pursuant to the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty concluded with the United States.¹⁸ Russia is working on accelerating the development and introducing new weapons under the policy to prioritize the modernization of nuclear forces based on its GPV.

In March 2011, Russia started the deployment of RS-24, which is considered a multi-warhead version of the “Topol-M” ICBM.¹⁹ SSBN building and deployment are in progress. For example, in January 2013, Yuri Dolgoruky, the first of the Borey-class SSBN, which is believed to carry the new-type SLBM “Bulava,” was delivered to the Northern Fleet. Additionally, Alexander Nevsky, the second of the SSBNs, and Vladimir Monomakh, the third of the SSBNs, were incorporated to the Pacific Fleet in December 2013 and December 2014, respectively.²⁰

In October 2015, a training of the command of units was conducted involving the launch of an ICBM, SLBMs, and cruise missiles from long-range bombers, surface vessels, and from the ground.²¹

As for non-strategic nuclear forces, Russia scrapped ground-launched short- and intermediate-range missiles with a range of between 500 and 5,500 km by 1991 in accordance with the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty with the United States, and removed tactical

nuclear weapons from naval vessels and stored them in onshore missile silos in the following year. Russia, however, still possesses a broad array of other nuclear forces. Under such circumstances, in July 2014, the U.S. Government concluded that Russia possesses ground-launched cruise missiles (GLCM) in violation of the INF Treaty and notified the Russian government. The Russian side denies this.

2 Conventional Forces and Other Issues

Russia is considered to be developing and procuring conventional forces in accordance with its GPV. Close attention will need to be paid to Russia’s development, procurement, and deployment of new equipment, such as the “fifth generation fighter”²² and the T-14 Armata tank,²³ in addition to the introduction of the Su-35 fighter and the surface-to-surface missile system “Iskander.”

Along with carrying out a range of exercises,²⁴ since February 2013, the RAF have been conducting surprise inspections designed to validate the combat readiness of the military districts, etc. for the first time since the collapse of the Soviet Union.²⁵ These inspections are contributing to the improvement of long-distance mobilization capability of the RAF.²⁶ Outside of Russia, the RAF has continued to participate in the counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden since 2008, and

18 In April 2010, Russia and the United States signed the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty to replace the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty I (START I), and the treaty came into force in February 2011. Each side is obligated to reduce deployed strategic warheads to 1,550 and their deployed delivery platforms to 700 within seven years after the entry into force of the treaty. In April 2016, the United States announced that Russia’s deployed strategic warheads was 1,735 and their deployed delivery platforms was 521 as of March 1, 2016.

19 In March 2011, the first regiment of RS-24 missiles was operationally deployed in the division in Teykovo, Ivanovo oblast in northeast Moscow. At the Expanded Meeting of the Defence Ministry Board in December 2015, Minister of Defence Shoigu stated that six rocket regiments equipped with RS-24 were put on combat duty in 2015. In addition, it is believed that Russia is developing a new heavy ICBM “Sarmat” that can destroy robust ICBM launch sites and be equipped with many warheads, a light-weight mobile solid-fuel ICBM RS-26 “Rubezh”, as well as new warheads aimed at enhancing the capability to penetrate MD. “Rubezh” was scheduled to be deployed to Irkutsk in 2015.

20 Eight Borey-class SSBNs are planned to be built by 2020. As of December 2015, three have been commissioned and three are under construction. Construction of the seventh Borey-class SSBN, Imperator Aleksandr III, was launched in December. The fourth Borey-class SSBN, Knyaz Vladimir, is scheduled to be commissioned in 2017. The test launches of the Bulava started in September 2005. By November 2015, 23 test launches have been conducted, 15 of which have been successful. While the test launch of the Bulava from Alexander Nevsky in September 2013 is deemed to have failed due to problems with the missile’s nozzle, the same test launch was conducted successfully in September 2014.

21 In an exercise to inspect the command system, under instructions from the National Defense Control Center of the Russian Federation, the ICBM “Topol” was launched from Plesetsk Cosmodrome, and SLBMs were launched from the nuclear-powered submarines Bryansk and Podolsk in the Barents Sea and the Sea of Okhotsk. Additionally, cruise missiles were launched from the small missile vessel Veliky Ustyug, Tu-160, and “Iskander.”

22 According to media reports, in January 2015, President Yuri Slusar of Russia’s United Aircraft Corporation stated that Russia’s PAK FA (Future Air Complex for Tactical Air Forces) “fifth generation fighters” have begun to be delivered to the Air Force for test flights. In September 2015, Commander-in-Chief of the Aerospace Force Viktor Bondarev stated that PAK FA would be supplied to units in 2017. In July 2015, Deputy Minister of Defence Borisov stated that Russia would reduce the number of aircraft to be procured and that only one squadron (12 aircraft) would be purchased over the next several years.

23 A new tank fitted with an unmanned turret that was unveiled for the first time during the Victory Day Parade on May 9, 2015. In addition to this tank, Russia is currently developing a family of crawler and wheeled infantry fighting vehicles, armored personnel carriers, and self-propelled howitzers. The GPV 2011-2020 plans to renovate 2,300 tanks, 3,000 self-propelled artillery, and 30,000 other armored fighting vehicles by 2020.

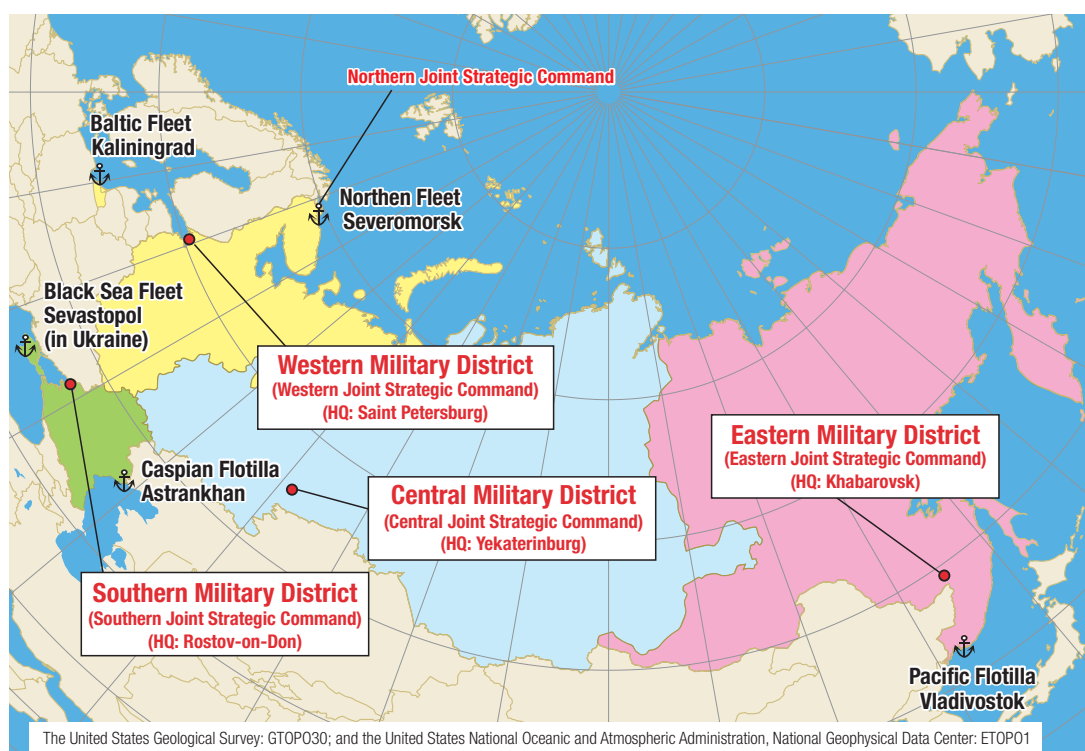
24 As it proceeds with its military reform, Russia has conducted large-scale exercises for verification and other purposes in recent years. In the military districts, field training exercises are held every year on a rotational basis. Caucasus 2012 was carried out in the Southern Military District in September 2012. In addition, Zapado 2013 was carried out in the Western Military District and in the territories of Belarus in September 2013 and Vostok 2014 in the Eastern Military District in September 2014. In September 2015, Tsentr 2015 was conducted in the Central Military District, which was participated by around 95,000 personnel, over 7,000 equipment and military machinery, around 170 aircraft, and 20 vessels. In December 2015, Minister of Defence Shoigu stated that, as a result of combat training, compared to 2014, the flight time of pilots increased by 10%, the number of navigation days of surface vessel and submarine crew increased by 7%, and the traveling distance of the operators of combat vehicles increased by 22%. Meanwhile, there have been crashes involving the Tu-95 long-range bomber, the Mig-29 fighter, and other aircraft since 2015. Some have attributed the reasons to extra burden placed on aging airframes and surpassing their maintenance capability limit because of large-scale exercises and surprise inspections, along with actual combat and surveillance activities.

25 Surprise inspections were conducted at the Central and Southern Military Districts in February 2013, Southern Military District in March 2013, Western Military District in May 2013, Eastern and Central Military Districts in July 2013, strategic nuclear units in October 2013, and Western and Central Military Districts from February to March 2014. In September 2014, a surprise inspection of the Eastern Military District was conducted, which transitioned to the Vostok 2014 large-scale exercise.

26 At the Expanded Meeting of the Defence Ministry Board in December 2015, Minister of Defence Shoigu stated that the surprise inspections held five times a year on average would enable the commanders of every military district and military service as well as staff to mobilize long distances and execute tasks in unknown regions.

Fig. I-2-4-2

Location and Strength of Russian Military



		Russia
Total military forces		Approx. 800,000 troops
Ground forces	Ground troops	Approx. 270,000 troops
	Tanks	T-90, T-80, T-72, etc. Approx. 2,700 (Not including mothballed tanks. Approx. 20,200 including mothballed tanks)
Maritime forces	Warships	Approx. 1,010 vessels Approx. 2,049,000 tons
	Aircraft carriers	1 vessel
	Cruisers	4 vessels
	Destroyers	14 vessels
	Frigates	32 vessels
	Submarines	69 vessels
	Marines	Approx. 35,000 troops
Air forces	Combat aircraft	Approx. 1,340 aircraft
	Modern fighter aircraft	158 MiG-29 aircraft 32 Su-30 aircraft 112 MiG-31 aircraft 18 Su-33 aircraft 200 Su-25 aircraft 57 Su-34 aircraft 199 Su-27 aircraft 36 Su-35 aircraft (4th generation fighter aircraft: Total 812)
	Bombers	16 Tu-160 aircraft 60 Tu-95 aircraft 63 Tu-22M aircraft
Reference	Population	Approx. 142.40 million
	Term of service	1 year (In addition to conscription, there is a contract service system)

Source: "The Military Balance 2016," etc. Ground troops include 240,000 ground force personnel and 34,000 airborne unit personnel.

maintained deployment of vessels in the Mediterranean Sea.²⁷ In September 2013, a Kirov-class missile cruiser was deployed to the eastern Arctic for the first time, where it conducted military exercises. In September 2014, the flotilla of the Northern Fleet transported equipment and supplies to the New Siberian Islands in the eastern Arctic to build a facility.²⁸ The RAF has been intensifying its activities in the Arctic, which include not only such deployment and exercises of naval vessels and resumption of military facility operation, but also strategic nuclear deterrence patrols by strategic nuclear submarines and patrol flights by long-range bombers.

In April 2015, Russian aircraft including the Tu-95 long-range bomber conducted patrol flights over the Barents Sea, the Norwegian Sea, and the Atlantic

Ocean.²⁹ Furthermore, in July and November 2015, the Tu-95 long-range bomber approached the airspaces of U.S. mainland and Guam.³⁰ Also, in connection with the military intervention into Syria, the missile cruiser Varyag belonging to the Pacific Fleet was deployed to the Mediterranean Sea off the coast of Syria in January 2016.³¹

The RAF has thus intensified activities not only in the Asia-Pacific, but also in the Arctic, Europe, and areas near the U.S. mainland. In particular, Russia's vessels and aircraft tend to expand their area of activity.³²

As for the future of RAF, there are uncertain elements which may be influenced by Russia's future economic and social development and trends in Russia's diplomatic relations with European and other countries; therefore, it is necessary to keep our attention on future developments.

²⁷ Russia's naval fleet in the Mediterranean which is said to have completed its formation on June 1, 2013, is considered a permanent operational force.

²⁸ The Russian Ministry of Defence plans to rebuild 10 radar sites and 13 airports to improve its military facilities in the Arctic. For example, the Temp Airport on the New Siberian Islands (Novosibirsk) located in the Eastern Arctic, has been closed since 1993, but in October 2013, its operation was restored with the support of the Northern Fleet.

²⁹ The Russian Ministry of Defence announced that on April 4, 2015, two Tu-95 long-range bombers that departed Engels base conducted patrol flights over the Barents Sea, the Norwegian Sea, and the Atlantic Ocean, escorted by Mig-31 fighters, and that on this occasion, the bombers were followed by Typhoon fighters of the U.K. Royal Air Force and the F-16 fighters of the Royal Danish Air Force.

³⁰ Tu-95 long-range bombers flew near Alaska and over northern California on Independence Day in the United States on July 4, 2015. Two of these bombers flew within 50 miles of the coast of California. On November 25, 2015, two Tu-95 long-range bombers flew in international airspace near Guam.

³¹ The missile cruiser Moskva belonging to the Black Sea Fleet was deployed to the coast of Syria in order to strengthen the aerial defense capabilities of the RAF deployed to Syria. However, the Varyag belonging to the Pacific Fleet was dispatched to replace the Moskva.

³² It is deemed that the RAF intends to maintain and enhance their combat readiness, as well as use diversionary approach towards the West and other countries in connection with the situation in Ukraine, and expand Russia's influence.

4 Russian Forces in the Vicinity of Japan

1 General Situation

Russia newly established the Eastern Military District and the Eastern Joint Strategic Command in 2010.³³ Land Forces, the Pacific Fleet, and the Air Force and Air Defense Units have been placed under the Military District Commander, who conducts unified operation of these services.

The current presence of the RAF in the Far East region is significantly smaller than it was at its peak. However, a considerable scale of military forces, including nuclear forces, still remains in the region. Russian armed forces in the vicinity of Japan are generally increasing its activity.

Given that the RAF set their basis of operation on maintaining the combat readiness of their strategic nuclear units and dealing with conflicts through the inter-theater mobility of its round-the-clock readiness units, it is necessary to keep our attention on the positioning and trends of the RAF in the Far East region while also keeping in mind the trends of units in other regions.

(1) Nuclear Forces

As for strategic nuclear forces in the Far East region, ICBMs, such as SS-25s and approximately 30 Tu-95 long-range bombers are deployed mainly along the Trans-Siberian Railway. Additionally, the Delta III-class SSBNs carrying SLBMs are deployed in and around the Sea of Okhotsk. By and large strategic nuclear units are believed to be maintaining readiness posture. In a surprise inspection conducted in October 2013 and a field training exercise conducted in May 2014 for the strategic nuclear unit, the Delta III-class SSBNs launched SLBMs in the Sea of Okhotsk. The second of the Borey-class SSBNs Alexander Nevsky was incorporated to the Pacific Fleet in December 2013 and the third of the SSBNs Vladimir Monomakh in December 2014. Subsequently, Alexander Nevsky was brought to the Pacific in September 2015, and Vladimir Monomakh is also scheduled to be brought to the Pacific in 2016.³⁴

(2) Ground Forces

As part of its military reforms, Russia is thought to be reorganizing the command structure from a division-based to a brigade-based one, while also shifting all of its combat forces into permanent readiness units. The Eastern Military District now consists of eleven brigades and one division with approximately 80,000 personnel in total. In addition, it has a naval infantry brigade equipped with amphibious operations capability, and therefore, has amphibious operations capability. The Eastern Military District has introduced new equipment, such as the “Iskander” surface-to-surface missile system and the “S-400” surface-to-air missile system.

(3) Naval Forces

The Pacific Fleet is stationed or deployed at its main bases in Vladivostok and Petropavlovsk. The fleet is comprised of approximately 260 ships with a total displacement in the region of approximately 600,000 tons, including approximately 20 major surface ships and approximately 20 submarines (approximately 15 of which are nuclear powered submarines) with a total displacement of approximately 300,000 tons.

(4) Air Forces

In the Eastern Military District, Russia deploys approximately 350 combat aircraft from its Air Force and Navy combined. Existing models are being refurbished and new models, such as the Su-35 fighters, are being introduced³⁵ to improve their capabilities.

2 Russian Forces in Japan's Northern Territories

Since 1978 during the former Soviet Union era, Russia has redeployed ground troops on Kunashiri, Etorofu, and Shikotan Islands of the Northern Territories, which are inherent territories of Japan. While the Russian troop strength is thought to be far less than that at peak times,

³³ The Eastern Military District's headquarters is in Khabarovsk.

³⁴ At the Expanded Meeting of the Defence Ministry Board in December 2015, Minister of Defence Shoigu stated that the second of the Borey-class SSBNs Alexander Nevsky and the third SSBN Vladimir Monomakh joined the formation of the permanent readiness units in 2015.

³⁵ In February 2014, 12 Su-35 fighters entered service with the 23rd Fighter Regiment based in Khabarovsk.

one division with mainly defensive duties is still stationed in Kunashiri and Etorofu Islands. Furthermore, tanks, armored vehicles, various types of artillery, and anti-air missiles are deployed.³⁶

After then President Medvedev visited Kunashiri Island for the first time as head of state in November 2010,³⁷ Russian ministers and others have made repeated visits to the Northern Territories. Between July and September 2015, Prime Minister Medvedev and six minister-level dignitaries also visited Etorofu Island, among other areas. Russia is proceeding with the replacement of equipment and construction of facilities for its units located in the Northern Territories.³⁸ In April 2015, an exercise was conducted with the participation of over 5,000 troops from the Eastern Military District on Sakhalin, the Northern Territories, and the Chishima Islands. In this regard, Russia continues to increase its activities.

As described above, Russia continues to station RAF in the Northern Territories, which are inherent territories of Japan, and has recently been increasing the RAF's activities in the territories under de facto occupation. Some point out that such developments reflect the Russian people's heightened awareness of territorial integrity due to the Ukrainian crisis, as well as the rising military importance of the Northern Territories adjacent to the Sea of Okhotsk, an operating area of strategic nuclear submarines.

It is necessary to keep our attention on Russia's activities on the Four Northern Islands, with the hope that an early solution can be found to the Northern Territories issue.

3 Operations in the Vicinity of Japan

In the vicinity of Japan, the RAF has been generally increasing its activities, including exercises and drills which are believed to be conducted for objectives such as verifying the results of the military reform.

In September 2014, the large-scale exercise Vostok 2014, considered the largest and the most important of the RAF exercises and drills conducted that year, was carried out in the Eastern Military District. Over 155,000 personnel, over 4,000 combat vehicles, approximately 80 vessels, and approximately 630 aircraft participated in the exercise.³⁹ It is regarded that its purpose was to verify the combat readiness and mobilization postures of the units in the Far East strategic front, including the Arctic. The exercise included units from not only the Eastern Military District, but also the Western and Central Military Districts. The various units conducted long-distance maneuvers covering a distance of 12,000 km at most. Furthermore, the exercise trained coordination among the Ministry of Defence and other ministries, agencies, and local governments.

The number of exercises carried out by the Russian Land Forces in the areas adjacent to Japan has decreased from the peak. However, its activities are generally increasing.

With regard to naval vessels, their activities are generally increasing in recent years. For example, joint exercises and counter-piracy operations have been carried out by Pacific Fleet vessels involving long distance voyages, and nuclear-powered submarines are carrying out patrols.⁴⁰ In September 2011, 24 naval vessels including a Slava-class guided missile cruiser passed through the Soya Strait in succession. This was

³⁶ The 18th Machine Gun and Artillery Division, which is comprised of two regiments, is one of the few division units making up the RAF since most divisions were transformed into brigades due to military reform, and is stationed on Etorofu and Kunashiri Islands. The Division aims to prevent landings, and participated in surprise inspections conducted in the Eastern Military District and elsewhere in July 2013. The number of Russian military personnel stationed in this region in 1991 was approximately 9,500. At the Japan-Russia Defense Ministerial Meeting held in 1997, then Russian Defence Minister Igor Rodionov revealed that the troops stationed in the Northern Territories had been reduced to 3,500 personnel by 1995. In July 2005, when then Russian Defence Minister Sergei Ivanov visited the Northern Territories, he declared that Russia would neither increase nor decrease the troops stationed on the four islands, clarifying Russia's intention to maintain the status quo. In February 2011, a senior official of the General Staff was said to have stated that troops on the Northern Territories would be maintained at around 3,500 personnel in the process of reorganizing divisions into brigades. In May 2014, Commander Sergey Surovkin of the Eastern Military District announced the buildup of military facilities on the Northern Territories. In August 2014, Russia opened a new airport in Etorofu Island. Through such measures, Russia has stepped up its activities in the Northern Territories under de facto occupation.

³⁷ After the visit, Kunashiri Island and Etorofu Island were visited by First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov in December 2010, by then Regional Development Minister Viktor Basargin in January to February 2011, followed by then Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Ivanov in May 2011. Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev visited Kunashiri Island and Suisho Island of the Habomai Islands in September 2011. In addition, in January 2011, Deputy Minister of Defence Dmitry Bulgakov, and in February 2011, then Minister of Defence Anatoliy Serdyukov visited Kunashiri Island and Etorofu Island and inspected the units stationed there. Furthermore, Prime Minister Medvedev and three ministers visited Kunashiri Island in July 2012. In July 2015, Minister of Healthcare Veronika Skvortsova visited Kunashiri Island and Shikotan Island, and in August 2015, Prime Minister Medvedev, Deputy Prime Minister and Presidential Plenipotentiary Envoy to the Far Eastern Federal District Yuriy Trutnev, Minister for the Development of Russian Far East Galushka, and Minister of Education and Science Dmitry Livanov visited Etorofu Island. In September 2015, Minister of Agriculture Alexander Tkachev visited Etorofu Island, and Minister of Transport Maksim Sokolov visited Kunashiri Island and Etorofu Island.

³⁸ At a meeting held at the Ministry of Defence of Russia in December 2015, Minister of Defence Shoigu stated that a total of 392 buildings and facilities are planned to be built with regard to the construction in military areas on the Four Northern Islands and the Chishima Islands. Subsequently, at a meeting held at the Ministry of Defence in January 2016, the Minister noted that completing infrastructure construction in the areas was one of the priorities for 2016. At a meeting of the Defence Ministry Board in March 2016, the Minister stated that the surface-to-ship missiles "Bal" and "Bastion," among other assets, would be deployed to the areas in 2016, and that the Pacific Fleet would conduct a three-month survey mission to study the feasibility of future deployment of Pacific Fleet forces.

³⁹ The large-scale exercise Vostok 2014 was conducted over a vast area extending from the Arctic to the coastal area. In the Kamchatka Peninsula, ALCM launches were carried out from long-range bombers, as well as launches of SLCMs from Oscar II-class nuclear-powered guided missile submarines (SSGN). In Wrangel Island in the Arctic, night-time parachute landings and survival drills were conducted. In the Sakhalin, the Naval Infantry conducted landing drills as well as drills to prevent the landings of opposing forces. In the coastal and inland areas, drills including the launches of short-range ballistic missiles and GLCMs using the "Iskander" surface-to-surface missile system, as well as drills that made use of private infrastructure, such as takeoff and landing drills of the Su-25 attack aircraft using roads for motor vehicles were conducted.

⁴⁰ The number of cases of the Russian naval fleet passing through the three international straits (Soya, Tsugaru, and Tsushima) of Japan that have been identified and released in FY2015 is as follows: 22 cases in the Soya Strait (11 in FY2013, 10 in FY2014); 0 case in the Tsugaru Strait (1 in FY2013, 1 in FY2014); and 4 cases in the Tsushima Strait (4 in FY2013, 8 in FY2014).

the first time since the end of the Cold War that such a major transit of this strait by Russian naval vessels was confirmed.⁴¹ In recent years, ten or more Russian naval vessels have passed through the Soya Strait two or three times a year. In May 2016, under the command of the Deputy Commander of the Pacific Fleet, an expedition unit comprised of approximately 200 personnel began survey activities on Matsuwa Island located roughly in the middle of the Chishima Islands. The objective is to study the feasibility of deploying the Pacific Fleet's forces there in the future. Continued attention needs to be paid to the relevant developments.⁴²

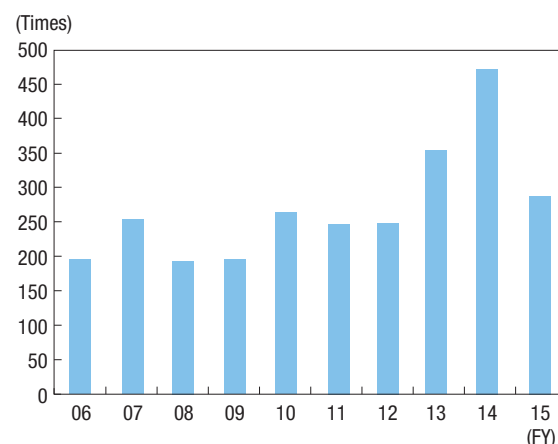
Regarding aircraft, since the resumption of the patrol activities by its strategic aviation units in 2007, Russia has been increasing flights by long-range bombers and carrying out flights of Tu-95 long-range bombers and Tu-160 long-range bombers which are refueled in mid-flight and supported by A-50 early warning aircraft and Su-27 fighters.⁴³

Activities such as flights close to Japan's airspace as well as exercises and drills are generally increasing, as exemplified by the unusual flights of Russian aircraft detected on seven consecutive days and the flights by six individual Tu-95 long-range bombers on a single day between March and April 2014.^{44, 45}

While Russian aircraft activities in FY2015 decreased compared to that in the previous fiscal year,

Fig. I-2-4-3

Changes in the Number of Scrambles against Russian Aircraft



a Russian aircraft (presumably) incurred into Japanese airspace in September 2015 for the first time in almost two years. Tu-95 long-range bombers conducted long distance flights along the perimeter of Japan in December 2015 and January 2016. In this regard, Russian aircraft have generally maintained the same level of activities as that of recent years, excluding the sharp increase that occurred immediately after the Ukrainian crisis, and has been generally increasing its activity.

See>> Fig. I-2-4-3 (Changes in the Number of Scrambles against Russian Aircraft)

5 Relations with Other Countries

1 General Situation

Russia considers the realization of its national interests as a guiding principle of its foreign policy, recognizing that Russia's international position as one of the poles of influence is rising amid the trend towards multi-polarity.⁴⁶ Moreover, based on its National Security Strategy, Russia engages in open, rational, and pragmatic diplomacy to protect its national interests. It aims to pursue multi-

directional diplomacy by ruling out futile confrontation and acquiring as many partners as possible around the world.⁴⁷

For this reason, Russia has been working on deepening its economic partnerships with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).⁴⁸ Furthermore, Russia aspires to deepen its relations with the Asia-Pacific countries, seen as drivers of the global economy,⁴⁹ and in recent years, has attached importance to China and India as

⁴¹ Some of the 24 naval vessels participated in the exercise conducted in the eastern part of the Kamchatka Peninsula and other places.

⁴² In May 2016, the Russian Ministry of Defence announced that under the command of Vice Admiral Andrei Ryabukhin, Deputy Commander of the Pacific Fleet that arrived in Matsuwa Island, an expedition comprised of approximately 200 personnel including representatives from the Russian Ministry of Defence, the Russian Geographical Society, the Eastern Military District, and the Pacific Fleet began conducting survey activities. Colonel-general Sergei Surovkin, Commander of the Eastern Military District, stated at a military meeting of the district that six Pacific Fleet vessels and over 200 personnel participated in an expedition by the Russian Ministry of Defence and the Russian Geographical Society to Chishima, Etorofu, and Kunashiri Islands, and that its primary objective was to study the feasibility of establishing a Pacific Fleet base in the future.

⁴³ The Russian Ministry of Defence announced in January 2014 that surveillance flights of two Tu-95 long-range bombers took place with the assistance of Su-27 fighters and A-50 airborne early warning and control aircraft.

⁴⁴ In April 2014, Deputy Minister of Defence Anatoly Antonov stated that "Russian Air Force aircraft operated in strict compliance with the international law." The Deputy Minister also asked the Japanese Ministry of Defense to "alter its attitude towards cooperation with the Russian Ministry of Defence."

⁴⁵ When Tu-95 long-range bombers took a route that circled the area encompassing Japan in September 2011, they were refueled in mid-flight by an IL-78 air tanker in the temporary danger zone set by Russia. In addition, when Tu-95 long-range bombers flew in the vicinity of Japan in February 2012 and February 2014, other aircraft such as A-50 Early Warning Aircraft flew with them. Two Su-27 fighters and two Tu-95 long-range bombers invaded Japanese airspace in February 2013 and August 2013 respectively.

⁴⁶ The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (February 2013).

⁴⁷ The National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation (December 2015) states that, "With a view to protecting its national interests Russia is pursuing an open, rational, and pragmatic foreign policy ruling out futile confrontation (including a new arms race). (Abridged) The Russian Federation's objective is to acquire as many equal partners as possible in various parts of the world."

⁴⁸ In October 2011, eight CIS countries (Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Moldova, and Armenia) signed the CIS Free Trade Zone Agreement.

⁴⁹ Press conference by Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov following the Russia-China-India foreign ministers' meeting (April 2016).

countries with which to strengthen bilateral relations.

Meanwhile, Russian efforts to strengthen its cooperative relations with the West are still facing challenges after the Ukrainian crisis. However, with regard to the Syrian situation, cooperation between Russia and other countries is gaining momentum towards stabilizing Syria and countering international terrorist organizations, including ISIL.

Attention will be paid to how Russia would balance its posture and develop its relations with other countries in terms of economic-centered and benefit-focused foreign policy, and Russia's politics and diplomacy which include the security domain.

2 Relations with Asian Countries

Russia recognizes that the significance of the Asia-Pacific region is increasing within its multi-pronged foreign policy, and the relationship with Asian countries is also important from the viewpoint of economic development in Siberia and the Far East,⁵⁰ counter-terrorism, and security.⁵¹ In the executive order concerning foreign policy issued in May 2012, President Putin upheld his policy to participate in the integration process of the Asia-Pacific region in order to accelerate socioeconomic development in the East Siberia and Far East regions, and stated that Russia would make efforts to develop relationships with Japan, the ROK, and other countries, along with China,⁵² India, and Vietnam. To achieve strategic stability and equal strategic partnerships, Russia places particular emphasis on developing a comprehensive partnership relationship and strategic cooperative relationship with China as a key factor in maintaining global and regional stability, and in assigning an important role for the privileged strategic partnership with India.⁵³

Under this policy, Russia has participated in various frameworks in the Asia-Pacific region.⁵⁴ The APEC Summit was held in Vladivostok in September 2012.

Among these different countries, Russia and

India maintain a close relationship under a strategic partnership, with the leaders of both countries paying mutual visits. In October 2013, President Putin held talks with then Prime Minister Singh when he visited Russia, during which they reached an agreement on enhanced military cooperation including arms exports. In December 2014, President Putin, during his visit to India, held talks with Prime Minister Modi, and the two sides agreed to build a new Russian-made nuclear power plant, among other matters. In January 2015, Minister of Defence Shoigu, during his visit to India, held talks with Minister of Defence Parrikar, and the two sides discussed military and military technology cooperation between the two countries. Both countries are strengthening their military technology cooperation, including the joint development of the fifth generation PAK FA fighter and the "BrahMos" supersonic cruise missile.⁵⁵ Additionally, since 2003 Russia and India have been conducting INDRA antiterrorism exercises involving the Armies and Navies of both countries. Regarding the relationship with Japan, Russia states that it will develop mutually beneficial cooperation and is intensifying its approach in many fields including politics, economy and security.

3 Situation in Ukraine

In Ukraine, armed conflicts between Ukrainian troops and separatist armed forces continued even after the ceasefire agreement of February 2015 (package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements).⁵⁶ Since September 2015, however, the implementation of the ceasefire agreement led to a reduction in the intensity of the conflict and to a significant decrease in the number of war casualties. In October 2015, a summit meeting was held among Germany, France, Russia, and Ukraine, and agreement was reached on the commencement of the withdrawal of light weapons and expanding the authority of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission. Nonetheless,

⁵⁰ Russia is currently developing resources in Siberia and Sakhalin.

⁵¹ The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (released in February 2013). In his campaign platform paper on foreign policy published in February 2012, then Prime Minister Putin expressed his recognition that the importance of the entire Asia-Pacific region was rising.

⁵² See Part I, Chapter 2, Section 3-3 for the relationship with China.

In November 2013, President Putin made official visits to Vietnam and the ROK.

⁵³ The National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation (December 2015) states that, "The Russian Federation will develop its comprehensive partnership relationship and strategic cooperative relationship with the People's Republic of China as a key factor for maintaining global and regional stability. The Russian Federation will assign an important role to the privileged strategic partnership with the Republic of India."

⁵⁴ Russia has participated in regional frameworks, such as the APEC, the ARF, the SCO, and the East Asia Summit (EAS; since 2011).

⁵⁵ Aside from this cooperation, it has been reported that in March 2015, India requested Russia to lease another Akula-class nuclear-powered attack submarine in addition to the one already on lease.

⁵⁶ The package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements consists of the following items: (1) implementation of ceasefire starting from February 15, 2015 00.00 AM (local time); (2) withdrawal of heavy weapons to create a security zone with widths ranging from 50 to 140 km; (3) monitoring of the ceasefire by the OSCE; (4) launch a dialogue on local self-government of areas controlled by separatists; (5) ensure pardon and amnesty; (6) ensure release of all hostages; (7) ensure humanitarian assistance; (8) resumption of socio-economic systems in the East, including social transfers such as pension; (9) reinstatement of full control of the state border by the government of Ukraine throughout the conflict area; (10) withdrawal of foreign armed formations, military equipment, and mercenaries from Ukraine; (11) carrying out constitutional reform, providing for decentralization as a key element, and adopting legislation on the special status of certain areas of Donetsk and Lugansk regions (local self-government) by the end of 2015; (12) discuss local elections with representatives of certain areas of Donetsk and Lugansk regions; and (13) intensify the work of the Trilateral Contact Group including through the establishment of working groups (consisting of Ukraine, Russia, and the OSCE).

the separation provided for in the Minsk agreements has not resulted in major advances in the political process, including the holding of elections in areas controlled by separatists. As can be seen from the above, the outcomes of the changes to the status quo in the Crimean Peninsula and eastern Ukraine via Russia's "hybrid warfare" have taken on an aspect of being entrenched. Under these circumstances, it will take some time to find a solution to the Ukrainian crisis. Continued attention needs to be paid to the situation in Ukraine, also due to the risk of military confrontation recurring between Ukrainian troops and separatist armed forces.

4 Situation in Syria

In September 2015, Russia began airstrikes in Syria, explaining that President Assad of Syria requested assistance. The West condemned Russia for attacking not only terrorist organizations including ISIL, but also Syrian dissidents that are opposed to the Assad regime.⁵⁷ ISIL declared it would retaliate against Russia.

In October 2015, a Russian passenger aircraft crashed after departing from Egypt, killing 224 passengers and crew. Russia concluded that this incident was a terrorist attack conducted by ISIL, declared retaliation against ISIL, and strengthened its airstrikes by mobilizing strategic bombers and other assets.

See>> Part I, Chapter 3, Section 1

Alongside these developments, in November 2015, a Turkish military aircraft shot down a RAF aircraft flying near the Syrian-Turkish border, reason being that the Russian aircraft intruded into Turkish airspace. President

Putin denied intrusion into Turkish airspace by a RAF aircraft; he strongly condemned Turkey's response, requested an apology, and decided on economic sanctions against Turkey. This incident has deteriorated Turkey-Russia relations.

Since the beginning of its airstrikes, Russia increased the level of its military intervention, which included long-range attacks using cruise missiles launched from submarines and destroyers and the mobilization of strategic bombers and Su-35 fighters. Then, in March 2016, Russia withdrew its major units, stating that the expected purpose had been achieved. Nonetheless, Russia still stations its forces at military bases in Syria and continues to utilize them, suggesting that the Russian military operation is ongoing.

See>> Part I, Chapter 3, Section 1

The objectives of Russian military intervention may include: (1) to sustain the Assad administration which is friendly to Russia; (2) to defend Russian interests including its military bases in Syria; (3) to address the threat of international terrorist organizations including ISIL; and (4) to secure influence in the Middle East. Thus far, Russia seems to have contributed to the recovery of the Assad administration's areas of control and protecting Russian interests. Additionally, the use of cruise missiles and strategic bombers in the attacks has, in turn, demonstrated Russia's long-range precision strike capabilities. Considering the significant influence of Russia's military intervention on the course of the Assad administration, coupled with the expanding partnerships between Russia and surrounding countries such as Iran and Iraq, Russia's influence on future stability in Syria and on anti-ISIL military operations cannot be neglected.

⁵⁷ In October 2015, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey issued a joint declaration calling on Russia to cease its attacks on the Syrian opposition and civilians and to focus its efforts on fighting ISIL.

5 Relations with Commonwealth of Independent States

Russia positions the development of bilateral and multilateral cooperation with the CIS as the top foreign policy priority. Russia considers that its vital interests are concentrated in the territories of the CIS,⁵⁸ and has dispatched troops to be stationed in Ukraine (Crimea), Moldova (Transnistria⁵⁹), Armenia, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia (South Ossetia, Abkhazia), which withdrew from the CIS in August 2009.⁶⁰ In November 2014, Russia and Abkhazia concluded an alliance and strategic partnership treaty.⁶¹ In such ways, Russia has been working on ensuring its military influence.⁶²

Due to increasing activities by Islamic armed insurgents in Central Asia and the Caucasus, Russia has been pursuing military cooperation primarily on counter-terrorism measures in the region, and organized the Collective Rapid Deployment Force in May 2001 within the framework of the CIS Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).⁶³ Furthermore, in June 2009, a permanent joint rapid reaction force was established to strengthen the functions of the CIS Collective Rapid Deployment Force.⁶⁴

In addition, out of concern that the worsening security in Afghanistan could lead to the destabilization of Central Asia, Russia and Central Asian countries support Afghanistan while considering measures to strengthen the security of the Afghan border.⁶⁵

6 Relations with the United States

President Putin has striven to deepen cooperative relations with the United States in the economic domain, while opposing the United States on any action Russia considers as “a U.S. attempt to encroach on Russia’s strategic interests.” Meanwhile, in response to the Ukrainian crisis, the Obama administration has strongly condemned Russia’s violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and has imposed severe economic sanctions on Russia.⁶⁶ In this regard, U.S.-Russia relations have deteriorated compared to when the Obama administration was inaugurated.⁶⁷

Russia strongly opposed the deployment plan of the MD system in Europe by the United States, stating that it would have a negative impact on Russia’s nuclear deterrent capabilities. In September 2009, the United States announced that it was reviewing the proposed deployment of the MD system in Europe,⁶⁸ which was cautiously welcomed by Russia.

However, Russia’s understanding is that the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) effective from February 2011 would be invalidated if the United States developed, both quantitatively and qualitatively, its MD capabilities and threatened Russia’s potential strategic nuclear strength.⁶⁹ Russia has striven to keep the United States in check in response to the recent progress of the U.S. MD plan in Europe, indicating that Russia

⁵⁸ In August 2008, following the conflict with Georgia, then President Medvedev indicated that one of the five principles of Russia’s foreign policy was that there are regions in which Russia has privileged interests.

⁵⁹ In Transnistria, located on the eastern side of the Dniester River, ethnic Russian residents declared separation and independence from Moldova in 1990, but it was never recognized as such by the international community. Following the “annexation” of Crimea into Russia, in March 2014 the “Parliament” of Transnistria urged Russia to also incorporate the region. Moreover, during a telephone conference between President Putin and President Barack Obama in March 2014, President Putin pointed out that Transnistria was experiencing a blockade. A Russian unit of approximately 1,500 troops is currently stationed in Transnistria.

⁶⁰ After the conflict with Russia in August 2008, Georgia withdrew from the CIS in August 2009, but Russia unilaterally recognized the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia in the Georgian territory and continues to have troops stationed in the regions. In the parliamentary election in October 2012 “Georgian Dream,” an opposition alliance with a campaign promise of improving Georgia-Russia relations, defeated the ruling “United National Movement” that adopts an anti-Russian policy. In the presidential election of October 2013, Giorgi Margvelashvili, backed by “Georgian Dream,” was elected and became president in November of the same year. In his inauguration speech, President Margvelashvili stated that he was ready to deepen the dialogue with Russia, expressing his intention to continue with pro-Euro, pro-U.S. lines while pursuing improvement of the relationship with Russia.

⁶¹ Russia’s “Military Doctrine” revised in December 2014 states that Russia would promote cooperation with the Republic of Abkhazia and the Republic of South Ossetia aimed at shared defense and security.

⁶² While some CIS countries continue to prioritize their relations with Russia, such as Belarus and Kazakhstan, others attempt to maintain a distance from Russia. Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova have taken mostly pro-Western policies to reduce their security and economic dependence on Russia. In September 2012, Kyrgyzstan and Russia agreed on a 15-year extension of the period of the use of Russian military bases in Kyrgyzstan, which otherwise would end in 2017. In October 2012, Tajikistan and Russia agreed to extend the lease of the base of Russia’s 201st Motor Rifle Division in Tajikistan until 2042. In December 2013, Su-27 fighters of the Russian naval force were deployed in Belarus for the first time.

⁶³ In May 1992, leaders of six countries (Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan) signed the Collective Security Treaty (CST) in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. In 1993, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Belarus joined the treaty, which came into effect in April 1994. However, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Uzbekistan withdrew from the treaty in 1999 without renewing it. In May 2002, CST was reorganized into the CSTO. Uzbekistan returned to CST in August 2006 but gave notice to suspend its participation in CSTO in June 2012, effectively withdrawing from the organization.

⁶⁴ Learning from the fact that CSTO could not sufficiently respond to the request by Kyrgyzstan for the peace-keeping activities at the time of the ethnic conflict in the southern part of Kyrgyzstan in June 2010, CSTO has been discussing improvement in the efficiency of its crisis response system. The CSTO Summit Meeting in December 2011 warned against the foreign forces’ stationing in a member state by requiring the consent of all member states when any member state builds a base of a third country. CSTO joint exercises, Vzaimodeistvie (cooperative operation), were implemented in Kazakhstan in October 2009 and October 2010, in Armenia in September 2012, and in Belarus in September 2013.

⁶⁵ At the Expanded Meeting of the Russian Defence Ministry Board in December 2013, President Putin said that the withdrawal of the ISAF from Afghanistan in 2014 would be a destabilizing element not only to Afghanistan but also to Central Asia and could pose a threat to the national interests and security of Russia.

⁶⁶ The United States has gradually expanded the list of Russian individuals and companies subject to asset freezes and entry bans. The United States has also expanded the targets of its loan suspensions and asset freezes to include key industry sectors, including finance, energy companies, state-owned banks, and state-owned defense technology companies.

⁶⁷ In April 2016, during a telephone conference with Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov, Secretary of State Kerry registered strong objections to unsafe maneuvers executed by RAF Su-24 fighter bombers and Ka-27 helicopters flying close to the U.S. Aegis vessel USS Donald Cook in the high seas of the Baltic Sea. In the same month, a RAF Su-27 fighter allegedly approached and intercepted a RC-135 reconnaissance aircraft of the U.S. Forces over the high seas in the Baltic Sea. Russia has reportedly argued that these flights were legitimate actions.

⁶⁸ See Part I, Chapter 2, Section 1-2 for the U.S. deployment plan of the MD system in Europe.

⁶⁹ Statement by the Russian Federation concerning MD (April 8, 2010)

may withdraw from the New START.⁷⁰

With regard to the military exchanges with the United States, Russia was considered as seeking establishment of a cooperative relationship with the United States to some extent, as exemplified from Russian vessels' participation in RIMPAC in waters around Hawaii for the first time in July 2012. However, following Russia's actions in connection with the situation in Ukraine, the United States announced suspension of the military exchanges with Russia in March 2014.⁷¹ In addition, the United States dispatched a missile destroyer to the Black Sea and provided non-lethal weapons to the Ukrainian government.⁷² In February 2015, as the tense situation in eastern Ukraine continued, the United States stepped up its activities to keep Russia in check, including suggesting to provide lethal weapons to the Ukrainian government.

As regards the situation in Syria, relevant countries including both the United States and Russia as well as Saudi Arabia and Iran agreed to aim for the cessation of hostilities in all areas of Syria from February 2016.⁷³ On February 22, 2016, a joint statement and an annex on the cessation of hostilities in Syria were issued at the initiative of the United States and Russia. As these developments suggest, there has been some signs of cooperation.

See>> Part I, Chapter 3, Section 1

Relations with Europe and NATO

Through the framework of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), Russia has worked with NATO as an equal partner in the areas of mutual interest, such as by participating in certain decision-making processes. However, following the Ukrainian crisis, NATO and European countries suspended their practical cooperation with Russia, including that in the military domain, except for the NRC's ambassador-level meetings.⁷⁴ Additionally, NATO and European countries have maintained a severe diplomatic stance towards Russia while working with the Ukrainian government.

At the NRC summit held in Lisbon in November 2010, Russia and NATO stated that both sides would work towards building a true and modernized strategic partnership. They are now searching for possibilities of dialogue and cooperation in fields such as MD, Afghanistan, cooperation on counter-terrorism, and anti-piracy measures. With regard to MD cooperation, no progress was made on Russia-NATO relations. For example, the talks at the meeting of NRC defense ministers held in June 2011 highlighted the difference in position between NATO advocating MD cooperation in which only information and data would be exchanged under the two independent systems of NATO and Russia, and the position of Russia aiming at "sector MD" in which both sides operate integrally by setting zones for

⁷⁰ Russia has demanded a legal guarantee that the MD plan of the United States is not targeted at Russia, and claimed that the United States is not considering Russia's concerns. Russia issued an executive statement in November 2011, mentioning countermeasures such as deployment of operational early-warning radars and the possibility of its withdrawal from the New START. In November 2013, Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov stated that if the Geneva agreement on Iran's nuclear issues was implemented, the U.S. MD system in Europe would not be needed.

⁷¹ Following the occupation of the Crimean Peninsula by Russia, then U.S. Department of Defense Spokesperson Kirby announced in March 2014 that the United States would cease all military exchange with Russia, including joint exercises with the RAF, consultations, and port calls.

⁷² The United States provided non-lethal weapons such as body armor, helmets, vehicles, night and thermal vision devices, heavy engineering equipment, advanced radios, patrol boats, rations, tents, counter-mortar radars, uniforms, first aid equipment, and other related items to Ukraine.

⁷³ The main points of the agreement are as follows: (1) full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2254 that provides for the political transition process in Syria; (2) cease attacks on the Syrian Armed Forces by the Syrian opposition; (3) cease attacks on the Syrian opposition by the Syrian Armed Forces and the RAF; and (4) refrain from acquiring territory from other parties to the ceasefire. It was decided that the agreement would be implemented from 00:00 on February 27. The agreement does not apply to ISIL, Al-Nusra Front, and other terrorist organizations designated by the U.N. Security Council.

⁷⁴ NATO issued a statement condemning Russia over the situation in Ukraine, and has deployed additional military forces to countries in Eastern Europe and the Baltic. However, there are discrepancies among NATO's member states in their responses to Russia.

each country's responsibility under a unified MD system of NATO and Russia.

Meanwhile, there remains an unsolved issue between Russia and NATO regarding the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) agreement.⁷⁵

Furthermore, the Ukrainian crisis has presented a threat to NATO's eastern border for the first time since the Cold War. Consequently, some of NATO's member states in Eastern Europe and the Baltic harbor national security concerns. For this and other reasons, NATO continues to take steps to ensure the effectiveness of its collective defense.⁷⁶

Meanwhile, Russia has actively conducted air activity that can be deemed provocative in Europe, especially near the Baltic countries.⁷⁷ With France, on the other hand, the agreement on France's export of Mistral-class amphibious assault ships to Russia was annulled smoothly based on a two-way agreement. Additionally, Russia is engaging in a cooperative behavior to some extent in Syria following the terror attacks in Paris. In this regard, Russia takes varying responses depending on the country.

8 Exportation of Arms

Russia seems to actively promote the export of arms not only to maintain the infrastructure of its military industry and to make economic profit, but also to help promote better foreign policy. The country's export value has been increasing in recent years.⁷⁸ In January 2007, the Russian government granted the exclusive right to export arms to the Rosoboron Export State Corporation as part of its ongoing initiatives to improve its export system. In addition, Russia regards its military industry as an integral part of the nation's military organization and is committed to improving and further developing the military industry by such measures as promoting the integration of aircraft companies such as Sukhoi, MiG, and Tupolev.

Russia exports equipment such as fighters and vessels to countries including India, China, Algeria, ASEAN member states, and Venezuela.⁷⁹ Among Russia's arms export deals in 2015, of note was the signing of a contract for the Su-35 fighter⁸⁰ and the "S-400" surface-to-air missile system for China. It has been pointed out that this deal was made possible because the interests of China and Russia coincided: while China promotes indigenous weapons production, it still needs Russian technology for state-of-the-art equipment, whereas Russia aims to avoid diplomatic isolation caused by the Ukrainian crisis and to gain economic profit through arms exports.⁸¹

⁷⁵ At the 1999 Istanbul summit of the OSCE, an agreement was reached on changing the troop ceilings set formerly by blocks to those set by country and territory and on complying with the current CFE Treaty until the adapted CFE Treaty comes into effect. Russia was dissatisfied with the fact that despite its ratification of the adapted CFE Treaty, NATO member states refused to ratify the Treaty on the grounds that the RAF were not withdrawing from Georgia and Moldova. Therefore, in December 2007, Russia suspended the implementation of the CFE Treaty and halted inspections based on this treaty. Presently, only four countries have ratified the adapted CFE Treaty—Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine—and it has not yet come into effect. In addition, Russia has proposed dissolving the existing security framework that has NATO at its center and creating a new European security treaty that would provide new fundamental principles for security in Europe and the Atlantic region.

⁷⁶ At NATO's Wales Summit in September 2014, the Readiness Action Plan (RAP) was adopted as a measure to strengthen NATO's collective defense. The RAP includes the creation of the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) as an initial response force of the NATO Response Force (NRF), a command and control presence on the territories of eastern Allies to facilitate the rapid increase of troops, the development of host facilities, the advance deployment of equipment and supplies, and the enhancement of exercise plans focused on collective defense. Bulgaria, the Baltic countries, Poland, and Romania have expressed their intention to provide facilities.

Subsequently, at the NATO defense ministers' meeting in June 2015, the ministers approved that NRF would consist of up to 40,000 personnel, and that the NATO Force Integration Units (NFIUs) supporting the deployment of the VJTF would be established in Bulgaria, the Baltic countries, Poland, and Romania. At the NATO defense ministers' meeting in October 2015, the ministers approved the establishment of NFIUs in Hungary and Slovakia.

⁷⁷ In October 2014, NATO announced that the Russian Air Force conducted significant military maneuvers over the Baltic Sea, North Sea, Atlantic Ocean, and Black Sea on October 28 and 29. NATO criticized that this air activity represents an unusual level of activity over European airspace.

Following the NATO defense ministers' meeting in October 2015, the NATO Secretary General stated in his remarks as follows: "The ministers agreed that Russia's military escalation in Syria raises serious concerns. I call on Russia to play a constructive role in the fight against ISIL. But Russian actions and the support to the (Assad) regime are not helpful. The recent violations of Turkish airspace are unacceptable. NATO will continue to follow the developments closely. And we stand in strong solidarity with Turkey."

⁷⁸ According to SIPRI, Russian arms exports between 2011 and 2015 increased by 28% compared to that of the period between 2006 and 2010. Russia has the second largest share of arms exports in the world (25%) after the United States.

⁷⁹ Russia concluded sales contracts with Indonesia for Su-27 and Su-30 fighters in 2003 and 2007 and has delivered the fighters. Furthermore, it was reported in 2016 that Russia plans to sell ten Su-35 fighters to Indonesia. Russia concluded sales contracts with Malaysia and Vietnam for Su-30 fighters in 2003, and has delivered the fighters to these countries. There are also reports of a sales contract with Vietnam in 2009 for Su-30 fighters and Kilo-class submarines. In January 2014, the first of the Kilo-class submarines, Hanoi, arrived in Vietnam. With regard to India, aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov, which had been refurbished in Severodvinsk, was delivered to India, renamed as INS Vikramaditya, which arrived in India in January 2014. Moreover, in 2006, Russia concluded sales contracts with Algeria and Venezuela for arms, including Su-30 fighters, and has delivered some of these arms. Russia's exports to China have included Su-27 and Su-30 fighters, Sovremenny-class destroyers, and Kilo-class submarines. Against the backdrop of the advancement of indigenous weapon production in China, some point out that the value of Russian exports to China has been declining in recent years. Nevertheless, Russia has continued to export equipment such as aircraft engines for repair purposes. With regard to Iran, Russia started exporting the "S-300" surface-to-air missile system in April 2016.

⁸⁰ According to news reports, a contract was signed to export 24 Su-35 fighters for approximately US\$2 billion and 32 S-400 launchers for approximately US\$3 billion. The first four Su-35 fighters are scheduled for delivery by the end of 2016.

⁸¹ In September 2015, President Putin responded in an interview with news agencies that, "Russian-Chinese ties have now probably reached a peak in their entire history and continue developing."