



Russia's New Foreign Policy: Confronting US 'Enemy' in a New World Order

Description

Moscow's recently released Concept of Foreign Policy reveals a significant shift towards confronting the US, prioritizing alliances with non-western countries, and positioning Russia as a pillar of the emerging multipolar world.

The US is described as the "main inspirer, organizer, and executor" of aggressive anti-Russian policy in the world, and the main source of risk to the security of both the Russian Federation and international peace, according to Russia's major new foreign policy statement.

On 31 March, President Vladimir Putin signed the Decree on the Concept of Foreign Policy of Russia, outlining the country's official worldview, interests, and goals. The 2023 concept, in contrast to previous versions published in 1993, 2000, 2008, 2013 and 2016, is more hostile toward the West and contains references that harken back to the Cold War era.

At the turn of the 21st century, Russian politicians and academics began using the term "Russian world" or "Russkiy Mir" to refer to the cultural, historical, and linguistic ties to the Russian-speaking world and to promote and preserve Russian culture and values.

However, in a global geopolitical context, this idea provoked some controversy. While some see it as an attempt to protect the Russian language and culture, others view it as a tool for exerting political influence and control over neighboring countries with significant Russian-speaking populations, such as Ukraine, Belarus, and the Baltic states – a soft power tool in Russia's foreign policy, so to speak.

Nevertheless, Russia's 2023 Concept of Foreign Policy is the country's first official document to incorporate the term "Russian world." Since the onset of the war in Ukraine, Russian officials, and particularly President Putin, have increasingly focused on invoking common civilizational, cultural, and ideological values, framing the battle as one between liberalism and other civilizations.

Russian elites are convinced that their country's survival as a unique and independent civilization necessitates a geopolitical shift away from the unipolar world represented by US supremacy.

The new Concept emphasizes cultural and ideological factors, indicating that the confrontation between Russia and the West will become more ideological, particularly as the rejection of neoliberalism has become a foundation of Russian foreign policy.

This confrontation is expected to have global ramifications, including in regions such as West Asia, where it may fuel nationalism – which has surged proudly in regional states like Saudi Arabia – which in turn can exacerbate further conflict.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russian foreign policy concepts have emphasized “cooperation” with the West, particularly the US, with regard to issues of concern to Moscow – such as NATO expansion – as outlined in the 2014 Russian military doctrine.

However, the new foreign policy concept marks a departure from this approach, harkening back to Cold War-era phrases such as “peaceful coexistence,” “strategic parity,” and most notably, the pursuit of a “balance of interests” with the US based on “shared special responsibility for strategic stability and international security.”

The Concept also reintroduces a division of the world into two camps: the neo-colonial states and their allies seeking to build a world order “based on their own rules,” and “countries rebelling against the current world order.”

Russia seeks to position itself as a leader among those countries opposing American hegemony, and is working to “eliminate the colonial system in the twentieth century and confront the new western colonialism.”

Similar to the non-aligned movement of states that emerged during the Cold War, which refused to align with either party at the expense of another, there is a growing trend of swing states, especially in West Asia, that are reevaluating their relationships with major powers and leveraging competition between them to pursue their own goals.

Russia has designated the US as the main driver of aggressive policies against it. In previous foreign policy concepts, Moscow adopted a cautious diplomatic discourse in its approach to relations with Washington, focusing on deepening cooperation, and using terms such as “unfriendly American policies” or “expressions of concern.”

However, more than a year after the Russian-western war began in Ukraine, Moscow has now declared the US as its first enemy and the greatest threat to its interests, at home and abroad. It has therefore become a priority to “eliminate the remnants of the hegemony of the United States and other unfriendly countries in global affairs.”

In the context of confronting what it perceives as a Western offensive, Russia has announced its intention to build a non-western alliance with the countries in the Global South to confront neo-colonial ambitions. This may include the use of all available means, including military ones, and support for countries seeking to secure their sovereignty away from US hegemony.

Of particular concern to Washington, is Moscow’s declaration of its willingness to support:

“Latin American countries interested in securing sovereignty and independence away from the United

States and its allies, including strengthening and expanding security, military and technical-military cooperation.”

This could be seen as a declaration of intent to escalate activities in the US “backyard,” if the appropriate grounds are available.

In West Asia and North Africa, Moscow has expressed its intention to work on building a “comprehensive and sustainable regional security system based on combining the Isl of the countries of the region.” This comes in response to US efforts to network regional security in the wider region by strengthening military and technical ties with its regional allies.

Last year at the GCC+3 Summit in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, US President Joe Biden reaffirmed this vision by stating:

“United States’ commitment to advancing a more integrated and regionally-networked air and missile defense architecture and countering the proliferation of unmanned aerial systems and missiles to non-state actors that threaten the peace and security of the region.”

Russia aims to prevent Washington from unilaterally establishing a security system in the region that goes against Moscow’s interests and those of its allies.

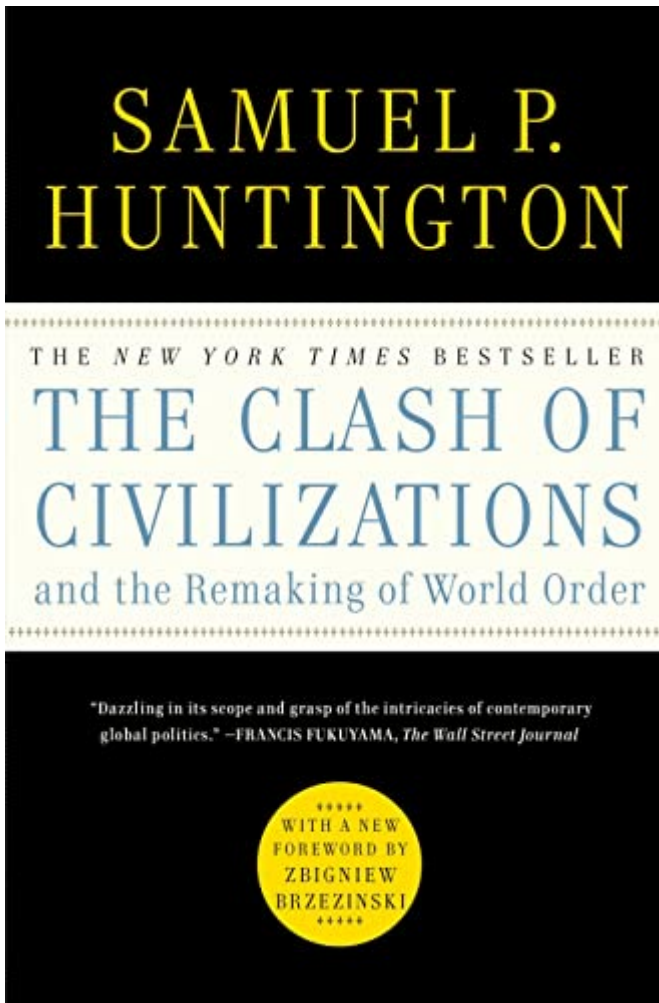
In a notable departure from previous versions, the 2023 Concept also includes a reference to the “protection of Christians in the Middle East [West Asia].” This is attributed to the prevalence of conservative discourse in Russia and concerns about the western attack on everything related to Russians, including the Eastern Orthodox Church. This positioning presents Russia as a defender of all those who shares its ideas, visions, and beliefs.

Furthermore, the Concept replaces the archaic term “Middle East” with the “Islamic world” for the first time, reflecting Moscow’s emphasis on cultural pluralism as a cornerstone of the multipolar system.

The Concept prioritizes developing full cooperation and trust with Iran, followed by providing comprehensive support to Syria and deepening mutually beneficial partnerships with Turkiye, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and other member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Notably, the UAE is not mentioned separately in the Concept.

Moscow has also prioritized supporting its allies and partners in ensuring defense and security – including in African countries – by announcing Russia’s readiness to support them in terms of security, military, and technology.

This marks a notable shift from Russia’s 2016 Concept document, where Africa was mentioned in only one paragraph. Instead, the 2023 Concept focuses on Africa as a “distinguished and influential center of global development” that is threatened by the West and its “neo-colonial policy.”



The new Concept also makes clear references to hard power, indicating that Russian foreign policy will heavily rely on the factor of power, which is seen as inevitable in the context of fierce global competition.

In his book “The Clash of Civilizations,” the late American political scientist Samuel Huntington argued that cultural and religious differences would be the main source of conflict in the post-Cold War world. Notably, the famous Russian philosopher Ivan Ilyin believed that Russia’s mission is to protect civilization and the “good” by producing a great leader who will save Russia and defeat the evil one. It appears that Putin sees himself as a leader who is destined to protect Russian civilization.

The 2023 Concept of Foreign Policy of Russia is the first official document setting out the general direction of the state issued after the war in Ukraine. It contains a clear declaration that the US is the enemy and that Russia aims to be one of the pillars of the developing multipolar world order. Today, there is no longer any mincing of words: Moscow is willing to use all available means to confront the enemy and work towards achieving its goals.

By Jonas E. Alexis

Category

1. Main
2. NWO-Deep State-Dictatorship-Tyranny

3. Politics-Geopolitics-Gov.-Events

Date Created

04/19/2023