

## **Peacekeeping and the modernized Russian armed forces**

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## Sammendrag

Siden Sovjetunionens sammenbrudd har militærreform stått sentralt på den politiske agendaen i Kreml. Militærreformens uttalte siktemål har vært å omskape mobiliseringsforsvaret til et moderne forsvar med de strukturelementer som er nødvendige for å møte samtidens trusler og utfordringer. De elementene som er nødvendige for moderne krigføring er i mange instanser også de som trengs for å gjennomføre fredsbevarende operasjoner. Moderniseringen av det russiske forsvaret vil kunne gjøre det bedre rustet til å gjennomføre slike operasjoner i fremtiden. Dette åpner interessante perspektiver for russisk-vestlig samarbeid innen fredsbevaring.

Likevel har en dyptgående reform av det russiske forsvaret ikke blitt gjennomført. Forsøk på en slik reform er blitt stanset, enten av mangel på midler eller manglende politisk vilje, eller av motstand fra militære ledere. Den moderniseringen av det russiske forsvaret som foregår i dag består av små skritt, heller enn den altomfattende reformen som anses som nødvendig for å rekonstruere Russlands væpnede styrker til å bli et moderne forsvar. Men også de små skritt som tas vil gjøre en forskjell, og etter hvert som forsvarsbudsjettene øker i Russland begynner moderne russiske kapasiteter å ta form. De strukturelementene det i dag satses på i Russland blir utviklet i relativt raskt tempo, og disse kan deployeres internasjonalt.

Russiske væpnede styrker har allerede bred erfaring fra fredsbevaring, i SUS-området så vel som i NATO- og FN-operasjoner. Det er særlig operasjonene i SUS-området som har hatt innvirkning på den russiske forståelsen av konseptet fredsbevaring. Til tross for at noen av disse erfaringene skiller seg substansielt fra tradisjonelle FN-operasjoner, har russiske fredsoperasjoner og FN-operasjoner blitt stadig mer like etter som årene har gått og fredsbevaring tidvis kan begynne å minne om høy-intensitets operasjoner. Den russiske tradisjonen for "fredsbevaring med muskler" er i denne forbindelse av en viss relevans.

I tillegg til den allerede eksisterende 15. motoriserte infanteribrigade satt av til fredsbevarende oppdrag, utvikler Russland nå større kapasiteter innrettet mot moderne krigføring. Disse kapasitetene består i hovedsak av 92 avdelinger som skal være på permanent stridsberedskap. Dette er en meget verdifull kapasitet som også kan settes inn i fredsbevarende operasjoner, om nødvendig på kort varsel. For at en slik deployering skal finne sted, må det politiske og militære lederskapet i Russland se en egeninteresse i å delta i slike operasjoner. Videre må det gjennomføres til dels radikale reformer av personellsystemet i det russiske forsvaret, for det er dette som i dag synes å utgjøre det største hinderet for utviklingen av et moderne forsvar. Bare da vil det russiske forsvaret bli virkelig moderne, og i stand til å møte samtidens trusler og utfordringer.

## English summary

Reform of the Russian armed forces has been on the agenda of the Russian political leadership ever since the break-up of the Soviet Union. The aim of the modernization of the Russian armed forces is to develop, train and prepare them for modern threats and challenges. These include asymmetrical and guerilla warfare, and tasks connected with peacekeeping, especially in a world where international peacekeepers receive broader and more complex mandates than in the 1990s. This bodes for new perspectives when it comes to Russian-Western joint peacekeeping operations.

Until this date, no deep-cutting military reform, in the western sense of the word, has been carried out in Russia. Efforts directed toward such a reform have been thwarted at an early stage, either by lack of finances or political will, or by opposition from within the ranks. The modernization efforts that are currently being carried out within the Russian armed forces consist of small steps toward modern capabilities, rather than radical measures to reconstruct the whole of the armed forces as a modern entity. However, these steps are slowly but steadily creating results, in the form of tangible capabilities that are being developed within Russian units. This process has been accelerated by the surge in defense spending in recent years. The modernized units constitute the most deployable part of the Russian armed forces today.

Russian forces already have broad experience with peacekeeping, in the CIS area as well as in NATO and UN operations. Particularly the operations in the CIS area have shaped the Russian understanding of peacekeeping activities. Although some of these operations were substantially different from traditional UN peacekeeping operations in the 1990s, the two types of operations have gradually become more similar, as peacekeeping practices have toughened. Thus, the Russian tradition for 'muscular peacekeeping' seems to have become more applicable in the modern world.

In addition to the 15<sup>th</sup> motorized rifle brigade designated peacekeeping tasks, Russia is developing a large capacity for modern war-fighting. The core of this capacity consists of 92 units that are to be on permanent combat readiness. This is a highly valuable capacity that could be drawn on for peacekeeping purposes, also on short notice. In order for that to happen, however, the political leadership would have to identify clear Russian national interest in the deployment of Russian peacekeeping forces outside the CIS area. Political will would also have to be mobilized in favor of reforming the personnel policy of the armed forces, which currently appears to be the largest obstacle to creating a professional force. Only then would the Russian armed forces become truly modern and ready for international peacekeeping operations.

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## 1 Introduction

The present Russian leadership has often expressed a wish to take part in international peacekeeping operations in order to manifest Russia's role as a great power in world politics. This report seeks to assess to what extent the Russian armed forces are capable of taking part in international peacekeeping operations, with a mandate from, in cooperation with, or under the auspices of, international organizations.

In doing so, the report firstly analyses the modernisation of the Russian armed forces. This is necessary in order to ascertain what capabilities the Russian armed forces must have available for such operations. The modernisation and reformation of the Russian armed forces is a necessary step to make them (a) able to conduct the kind of operations that international peacekeeping demands, and (b) interoperable with foreign troops, for example under the auspices of the United Nations (UN) or the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).

Secondly, the report will analyse the peacekeeping experience already existent within the Russian armed forces. Russian armed forces have participated in a number of peacekeeping operations since 1991, in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) area and beyond. However, most of the operations conducted by the Russian armed forces, particularly in the CIS, have not been in accordance with international practices in terms of UN principles of neutrality. The question remains whether a potentially modernised version of the Russian armed forces will be better suited and prepared to take part in international peacekeeping operations in the future. This is largely a question of whether the political and military leadership has the will to implement necessary reform of Russian military structures. Another important factor in this equation is the political willingness to engage in peacekeeping operations outside the CIS area. This subject is complex and multi-faceted, and could be the subject of a separate report. It will therefore be only briefly touched upon in this paper.

This report seeks to investigate the different factors that influence the extent to which the Russian armed forces will be capable of taking part in international peacekeeping operations. These are primarily the capabilities currently available for such operations, closely tied to the modernisation efforts that are underway in the Russian armed forces today. The capabilities for international operations are also closely tied to the interoperability training the Russian army has done and is conducting at present. In addition, experience from peacekeeping operations in the CIS and on the Balkans has shaped the Russian understanding of the principles of peacekeeping. To a great extent these perceptions still influence the way in which Russian politicians and military leaders think about peacekeeping. Figure 1 schematically explains the relationship between the variables upon which the Russian ability to take part in international peacekeeping operations depend.

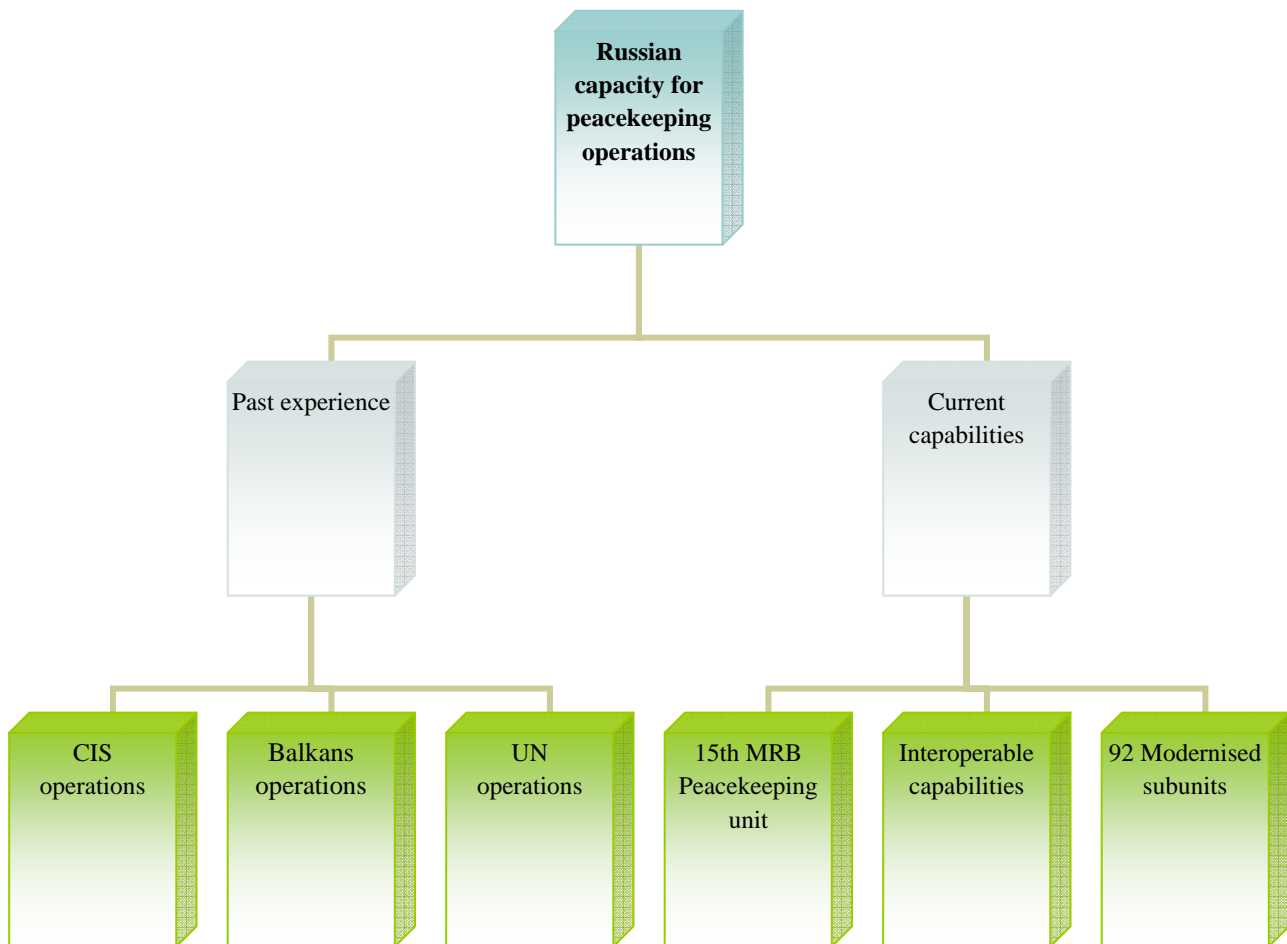


Figure 1 Independent and dependent variables of the Russian ability to take part in international peacekeeping operations.

## 2 Russian military reform

Peacekeeping operations are in the 21<sup>st</sup> century becoming increasingly violent and more similar to modern conventional warfare. To an increasing degree, the borderline between the tasks conducted in modern warfare and peacekeeping has become blurred. When modern armed forces prepare to fight modern wars, they strive to become capable of operating in an asymmetrical conflict environment. Whether national leaders or multilateral organisations control the chain of command is irrelevant to the capabilities needed for such operations. This is particularly the case in NATO countries, where many develop capabilities needed for national force structures as well as for NATO force structures. Capabilities needed when conducting such operations are joint commands, flexible force structures, highly mobile forces and troops prepared for diverse types of operations. Operations like the UN-mandated NATO operation in Afghanistan and the UNIFIL operation in Lebanon are good examples of peacekeeping operations containing elements of conventional war-fighting. On the other hand, the Iraq war is an example of a conventional war that contains several elements of peacekeeping.



The Russian armed forces, like most Western armies, were not designed to solve missions of asymmetrical warfare. The Soviet mass mobilisation army was designed to counter a territorial and/or existential threat to the Soviet homeland. At an early stage in the 1990s, the shortcomings of the remnants of the Red Army were demonstrated to the Russian leadership through the wars in Chechnya. Only in recent years have Russian defence planners shifted their focus away from invasion scenarios. The aim of current planning is to be able to sustain a counterinsurgency war (such as Chechnya) and a concurrent single substantial overseas mission outside Russia's borders, while still maintaining a nuclear deterrent and mobilisation capacity to counter a single, major military challenge (from e.g. China).[1]

Thus, the Russian armed forces seek to be able to sustain a substantial overseas mission, i.e. a peacekeeping or a (less likely) offensive operation. Russia has already broad experience with peacekeeping operations, especially in the CIS area. In terms of (NATO and) UN operations, however, Russia has been less active as a contributor. A typical Russian deployment to a UN operation is that of a small and specialised unit, sometimes only limited number of military observers. Provided that the modernisation of the Russian armed forces makes them more able to meet current challenges, the capability for peacekeeping operations might also be enhanced. If the modernisation of the Russian armed forces makes them better prepared for peacekeeping operations, the million-strong Russian armed forces might become an attractive pool on which to draw resources for future deployments. The modernisation of the Russian armed forces will be explored in more detail in order to determine what capabilities are being developed at present.

## **2.1 Russian military reform: a history**

The state of the Russian military has since the early 1990s been the focus of a broad debate, both in Russia and in the West. The need for reform was evident from the dissolution of the Red Army in 1991. The operations in Chechnya illustrated the inability of the Soviet mass mobilisation army for to deal with asymmetrical and guerrilla threats. Events as recent as the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 have clearly demonstrated to the Russian military leadership the extent to which the Russian army lags behind in its ability to conduct modern warfare. Under no condition would the Russian Army be able to conduct an operation like the initial stages of the second Iraq war in 2003. This became clear when it emerged that three Soviet period generals had visited Baghdad prior to the American attack and purportedly given the Iraqis advice on how to resist an American attack.[2] The generals had predicted that the attack would resemble the Russian assaults on Groznyy, the Chechen capital, which lasted more than a month and cost hundreds of Russian casualties. In pure operational terms, at least, the two operations turned out to be profoundly different.

Planning based on more modern threat scenarios, like those starting to be adopted by American defence planners, has not yet made a great impact on the Russian military leadership.[3] Despite of calls to reform Russian military doctrine and structure in order to address current threats, only partial changes have been made to the Russian armed forces. No deep-cutting reform has been completed. Yuri Fedorov and Bertil Nygren of the Swedish Defence Research Institute argue that the current modernisation efforts might also fall into the tragic pattern of many former military

reforms in Russia. These typically include three stages, where the first stage of doctrinal planning is successfully completed, but then the reform tends to “withier away” during the second stage, when a modern, battle-ready and mobile professional force is supposed to be created. The third stage, which envisages a well functioning military armed with modern weapons, has never been reached. After the customary “withiering away” at the second stage, the defence minister who initiated the reform is dismissed and the process of reform is started anew with a new defence minister.[4]

The failure to carry through radical reforms of the Russian armed forces can be explained by a number of factors. The most important of these are, firstly, the fact that the top Russian military brass is clinging on to old threat assessments and the need to uphold the mass mobilisation army.[5] The second factor is that the tradition of state militarism in the Russian society makes altering any military structures a cumbersome process.

The top military brass has been resisting reform ever since 1991. The most contentious issue has been the professionalization of the armed forces. The idea of conscript service as the fundament of a strong Russian army seems so embedded among the officer’s core, that very few can be found who embrace the idea of professionalization. Some claim that the Russian military leadership clings to Cold War threat assessments simply due to the need of a global enemy.[6] This global enemy, epitomized in NATO, is seen as the legitimising factor to sustain the Russian mass mobilisation army model. This resistance against deep reform among the military elite lies at the core of the problems of reforming the Russian armed forces.

The second factor, state militarism, is closely related to the above mentioned resistance among the officer’s corps to military reform. The Russian military has had a level of administrative and operational autonomy unparalleled in the West with regard to issues that concern them directly, such as the structure of forces, allocation of budget resources, and education and training. Many of these choices are in Western societies made by civil authorities or by joint civil-military organs.[7] This has meant that the military has had the power to sabotage most attempts at reform. Some argue that it is impossible to carry through deep reform of the Russian armed forces without restructuring the whole of Russian society, in order to overcome this legacy of state militarism. Although some power has been redressed from the General Staff to the Ministry of Defence under the previous Defence Minister Ivanov, the military brass still tries to keep the cards as close to the chest as possible.

To a western observer, it may seem odd that political leaders have not been better able to press reform through, despite this reluctance among the ranks. The armed forces are, after all, subordinated political control. Other factors like limited finances and lack of political will might offer additional explanation for the stranding of the efforts to reform the armed forces. The lack of a political leadership that is accountable to either the electorate or the legislative branch has made the process much easier to put aside once it encounters resistance. In no country has military reform been driven through by the military itself, or even by the executive branch alone. A reform of the magnitude that would have to be carried out if the Russian armed forces were to

become truly modern should be done under the auspices of a strong parliament with a long-term plan spanning beyond a 4 year presidential tenure. Such a structure, independent of the state bureaucracy, is non-existent in today's Russia. When the bureaucracy is left to implement decisions without oversight, few far-reaching and perhaps painful reform efforts will be pushed through.

Despite all this, Russian military reform was declared complete by Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov in 2003. Rather than indicating that major changes had taken place within the armed forces, this declaration entailed a recognition on part of the Russian military leadership that no process of start and end state would accommodate the profound changes needed in order to modernize the Russian armed forces. After this date, the Russian military leadership consciously started talking about the "modernization" of the Armed Forces, rather than about "reform". Thus, in the Russian context, the term "military reform" gives the wrong connotations as to how profound the modernisation has been.[8] The modernisation of the Russian armed forces focuses on making the changes and adjustments necessary to meet modern challenges, without changing the basic structure of the forces - the mass mobilisation army. This inhibits the possibilities of creating a modern army with the force structure necessary to conduct modern peacekeeping operations on a larger scale.

## **2.2 Current modernization plans: Preparing for peacekeeping tasks?**

Reform thus continued also after 2003, under the new label of 'modernisation'. The restructuring plans currently being implemented are outlined in the October 2003 document, "Urgent tasks for the Development of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation", also referred to as "the Ivanov doctrine".[9] The "Ivanov doctrine" identifies a number of areas that need to be addressed, but its implementation has been characterised by a number of small steps. Among the documents' key components are the modernisation of personnel politics, organisation, armaments and doctrinal documents.

Seemingly all-encompassing, this doctrine illustrates the magnitude of changes that still need to be made in order to turn the Russian military into a modern force. The current modernisation plan tells us something about the future capabilities of the Russian armed forces, also for the purposes of peacekeeping operations. The ability to take part in peacekeeping operations largely depend on these modernisation efforts. The new defence minister, Anatoly Serdyukov, is expected to continue the process of reform, albeit with a renewed focus on defence spending and procurement.

In general, it can be said that the capabilities "The Ivanov doctrine" seek to create are concentrated in the so-called army core, an elite force of 200 000 highly trained and equipped professional troops.[10] These include, first of all, the combined units of the Airborne Troops, the Naval Infantry, and motorized tank and rifle constant readiness combined units of the ground troops. Each military district is to retain two to four constant readiness combined units, and they are to consist mainly of contract soldiers and some experienced conscripts.[11] The remaining 800 000 troops will most likely continue to be undertrained and undernourished, at least in the

foreseeable future. In fact, this is one of the core problems of modernising the Russian armed forces: the discrepancy between the envisaged capabilities and budgetary allocations.[12] Budgetary allocations would now allow for the training and equipping of the army core, but would leave little for the remaining 800 000 to live off. Experts argue that if one attempted to train and equip Russian soldiers to a relative standard, an army of 500 000-600 000 could be created. But when 1.13 million troops[13] need to be sustained, sufficient funds to train and equip them cannot be found.

Tough choices have to be made in order to modernise any army, including that of Russia. Due to rapidly increasing defence budgets in recent years, the units that are well equipped and well trained do receive more funds and they are to some degree able to produce troops ready for modern war-fighting. In terms of peacekeeping capabilities, it is strictly speaking not necessary to completely rearm and retrain the entirety of the 1.13 million-strong Russian army. A closer look at the different capabilities that are being reformed will display the prospects for future Russian peacekeeping capabilities.

### 2.2.1 Personnel

The issue of mass mobilisation has been the crux of reform efforts. A professional Russian army is seen as the solution to many of the problems the Russian army encountered in the operations in Chechnya. For modern operations, including peacekeeping operations, soldiers must be well equipped, well trained and well fed in order to be able to solve the tasks they are given. The idea of professionalizing the Russian army, however, has met fierce resistance among the officer's corps and the military leadership. The reason for this might be fear of the major restructuring the complete professionalization of the forces might entail, such as diminished possibilities for corruption and the abuse of conscripts.

The professionalization of the forces was also intended as a solution to the problems of hazing within Russian military units. This was to be done through the creation of a system of non-commissioned officers. The army is supposed to become professional over a process of 15 years, starting in 2004. The initial stage of this transformation was to be completed by 2008, when the army was to have become a "fully professional force", with 70 per cent contracted soldiers, and the conscript service cut to one year.[4]

The results of these efforts have still to materialise. Although the conscript service is being cut to only one year in 2008 (2007 is a transitional year in which conscripts serve a year and a half), the army still has trouble recruiting the required number of conscripts. Being a Russian first year conscript is tough going; each year conscripts return home or escape from the clutches of their superior officers with unbelievable stories of the forced prostitution, beatings and terrorising by officers or fellow soldiers. Some recent examples are the scandals of prostitution in St. Petersburg and the conscript Andrei Sychev, who after being severely beaten and mistreated by his superiors and equals had to amputate both legs and his genitals.[14] Human Rights Watch have to date produced the most comprehensive study of these human rights violations in the Russian army,

and claim that the practice severely undermines the effectiveness of the Russian military organisation.[15]

The intended professionalization of the Russian armed forces is also suffering under the poor terms of the contracts offered. The ability of the Russian army to attract contracted soldiers is abysmal, and the number of contracted soldiers is no where near the set targets. Part of the problem here is again financial: the wages the army is trying to attract young hopefuls with are simply too low. Among the elite airborne units, the flagship of contract-based service, 3000 paratroopers quit their contract before it expired in the period 2004-2006. Another 20 per cent did not renew their contract when it expired.[16] The current situation, with high numbers of deserters even among contracted soldiers, is not creating the envisaged army of high combat readiness.

The contract system will have to be improved if the Russian forces are to meet the targets set by the modernisation plans. Top quality, professional soldiers are a necessity for the Russian army. In terms of peacekeeping, they are essential, as Russian law prohibits conscripts from taking part in operations abroad. Also, well educated and experienced troops are necessary to conduct modern peacekeeping tasks, which often include more humanitarian-style work than combat tasks. The high number of criminals, alcoholics and drug addicts that are currently being drafted and recruited into the Russian army does not bode well for future Russian participation in such operations. Thus, the Russian peacekeeping capacity is dependent on an enhanced ability to attract contract soldiers of high quality. In this area there seems a long way before Russian capabilities are enhanced and troops are prepared for peacekeeping operations.

### 2.2.2 Organization

The kind of operations that the Russian army is and might become engaged in, calls for a less rigid command system than the one currently in place. This is why Russian defense planners announced a major reorganization of the forces' territorial structure in December 2005. According to this plan, the Far Eastern Regional Command would be introduced in the eastern provinces of the Russian Federation, replacing the military districts there. This experiment has been described as a success, and the plan for replacing the military districts with three regional commands (European, Central Asian and Far Eastern) seems to be on track. They would then all be joint structures, leaving only the Strategic Nuclear Forces to the Central Command in Moscow. The intention is for the new command structure to be more effective in dealing with new threats and challenges, such as terrorism and insurgency. Whether the reform will be a success, and to what extent it will paralyze the command structure during the restructuring, remains to be seen. Also this restructuring effort has been met with fierce resistance among the top military brass, especially the generals who are prone to lose their jobs when 11 military districts are merged into three regional commands.[17]

Still, for modern operations the intended new structures seem far more useful than the old and obsolete Russian command system. This restructuring might also make the Russian forces more interoperable with similar structures in NATO and other countries. Flexible force structures are

necessary when contributions are made to varying peacekeeping missions of different nature and durability. The Russian peacekeeping capability must be flexible, in the sense that it must be able to deploy the kind of forces needed for a particular mission. Inflexible force structures thus inhibit Russian participation in peacekeeping operations. Recent years exercises conducted jointly between army units and units from other security structures (the Federal Security Service of the Interior Troops) show that the Russian armed forces is becoming more able to deploy and utilize changing constellations of units. In this sense, modernization efforts can be said to already have some consequence for the Russian capabilities to take part in peacekeeping operations.

### 2.2.3 Rearmament

The increase in the defence budget for the 2007 fiscal year is formidable, up by 24 per cent nominally from 2006. A large part of the budget is allocated to the sorely needed rearmament of the Russian armed forces. The State Weapons Program from 2006 plans for investing 5 billion RUR in armaments, and will completely rearm 40 tank battalions, 97 motor rifle battalions and 50 airborne battalions. In 2007 alone, the defence budget should allow the Ministry of Defence to acquire 17 new ICBMs, 4 military space installations with carriers, and to modernise 6 aviation and 6 helicopter squadrons, as well as 7 tank battalions and 13 motorised infantry battalions.[18]

Still, some argue that the rearmament program is too little, too late. The state of weapons and equipment in the Russian army today is miserable, as the few procurement efforts which have been undertaken since the break-up of the Soviet Union have been feeble. In terms of training and equipment, Russian troops are better equipped for symmetrical battle operations than for counterinsurgency or peacekeeping operations. The rearmament program thus has clear consequences for how Russian forces will be able to take part in peacekeeping in the future. The current plan of rearmaments, which plans to have the whole of the Russian armed forces rearmed by 2025, requires an impossible 5,5 per cent per annum growth in rearmaments.[19] The rearmament program is not about providing new weapons, but rather upgrading weapons from the 1980s and 1990s. Rearming and renewing the Russian armed forces seems an almost insuperable task, even with oil-inflated defence budgets. Given the high degree of corruption in the Russian military, large parts of the inflated defence budgets do not end up as more rounds and shells for Russian soldiers.[20] It remains to be seen to what extent the newly appointed defence minister Serdyukov can do something about this challenge.

However, the State Weapons Program might have direct consequences for Russia's ability to participate in peacekeeping operations. The current defence budget does allocate money for the production of quality troops with the right equipment, but primarily in the units of constant combat readiness. There are units in Russia today whose training and equipment resembles that of western armies, like naval infantry units stationed in the Kola Peninsula. Airborne troops must also be reckoned to have received a large boost in funding in recent years. Thus, the rearmament program stimulates important parts of the country's peacekeeping capabilities. As the Russian army is developing some highly deployable units, it could well do to gain experience from being involved in international peacekeeping operations. That, in turn, depends on the Russian leadership's willingness to deploy the units to out-of-area operations.

#### 2.2.4 Doctrine

A weak link in the modernisation of the Russian armed forces is the somewhat outdated National Security Concept and Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation. The task of reformulating the National Security Concept was given to the Council of Foreign and Military Policy (SVOP) by President Putin in 2004, but it has not been completed. The General Staff is currently redrafting the Military Doctrine, but there is no reformulated Security Concept to base it on. According to Pavel Zolotarev of the Institute of USA and Canada Studies, this concept should identify the threats and interests of the Russian Federation, whereas the military concept would treat the military aspects of this security. The military doctrine should describe how this military security should be provided; down to the details of what tasks should be solved by what agency. According to the retired Major General, the Russian concepts and doctrines fail to provide this fundament. Without such a fundament, there is no basis on which to start to develop modern and highly mobile units.[21] This also helps explain the scattered reform efforts that have been seen in Russia for the past 15 years. General Staff officers addressed this issue at a conference on the content of the Russian military doctrine in Moscow in January 2007. Among others did the chief of Military studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences highlight the need for an integrated national security concept, which potentially could include all aspects of Russian security; from economic to military.[22] When the new Military Doctrine will be published remains to be seen.[23] Experts argue that it is difficult to foresee when or whether this new one will ever see the light of day.

In the absence of an updated military doctrine, there exists no particular peacekeeping doctrine in the Russian Federation, another factor that has inhibited the development of a peacekeeping tradition to which governmental structures feel ownership. Formulating such a strategy would of course be a first step on the way to developing a real peacekeeping capability within the Russian armed forces. The consequences of not having an overall peacekeeping strategy will be amplified in the following chapters.

#### 2.2.5 Summary of findings

Modernisation plans are thus being implemented, albeit slowly, as seems generally to be the case with Russian military reform. Deep reform of the armed forces structure is not being implemented, as the above mentioned hurdles still make an impact. As long as civilian control of the military structures is largely being evaded, such deep reform will not materialise. Nevertheless, the various programs that are being undertaken will have direct consequences for the capabilities of the Russian armed forces.

The slow progress of reforming the personnel policy of the Russian armed forces is the biggest obstacle to Russia's developing a professional army capable of conducting modern peacekeeping operations. With a conscript mass of unmotivated troops not resourceful enough to evade service, and only the lower scrambles of Russian society being attracted to the contract the army can offer, prospects for the envisaged fully professional are envisaging seem bleak.

The modernisation efforts that are being undertaken with regard to organisation and rearmament, on the other hand, may have quick and direct consequences for this capability. Both these areas of reform are imperative to the ability to conduct peacekeeping operations. The modernisation of only some units can be sufficient to produce the capability necessary. Thus, the task of producing such a capability of a small scale is more manageable than that of reforming the whole of the Russian armed forces. Former defence minister Ivanov's plan was to establish 92 units in a permanent state of combat readiness, which would form the basis of a future professional army.[24] According to Ivanov, 60 of these units of permanent combat readiness already exist (but he says nothing of their levels of training and equipment), and by the end of 2007 another 20 should be operational. So, however bleak the prospects for a modernised 1.13-million strong Russian armed force might be, the small branches of it that will be modernised and well trained might be available for peacekeeping. It is interesting to note, however, that whether these units will battalion- or regiment level seems difficult to determine.

In order for this to materialise, however, an institutional interest in international peacekeeping operations must be developed in Russia. This might be done through the process of updating the military doctrine. The peacekeeping experience of the Russian armed forces is considerable, but not orderly enough to provide Russian troops with clear enough guidance for the future.

### **3 Peacekeeping operations – capabilities, experience and future challenges**

*“Russia will send peacekeepers when and only when there exists a UN mandate. But also where a mandate already is in place, like for example in Afghanistan, it will only happen with regard to our national interest” [25]*

In 2003 Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov confirmed the Russian willingness to send peacekeeping or other troops to the areas where it sees its interest threatened or otherwise affected. With a 1.13-million strong and slowly modernising army, the capabilities to take part in a number of peacekeeping operations should be in place, particularly since such a scenario is already on Russian defence planner's desk. The current ability of the Russian armed forces to take part in peacekeeping operations consists largely of the military capabilities being developed, as described above. But also the peacekeeping experience and capabilities that already exists within the armed forces form part of the Russian capabilities for conducting such operations in the future.

#### **3.1 Capabilities: The 15<sup>th</sup> Motorized Rifle Brigade**

The small wars Russia has been engaged in since the break-up of the Soviet Union have generated particular requirements for military structures - specially trained division-size units for manpower-intensive operations, and battalion-size units for special operations. Traditionally, the Russian airborne troops (VDV) were considered the elite troops most fit to fulfil missions of special or peacekeeping character. For example, the airborne troops were the ones deployed to the



Balkans when Russia wanted to display the standards of her troops there. These were the kind of troops that Russia intended to use for all peacekeeping operations.

However, as Russia took on more and more peacekeeping tasks, particularly in the CIS area, the Russian leadership acknowledged that the airborne troops were not able to handle all these tasks. The use of motorised infantry units became common, the 201<sup>st</sup> Motorized Rifle Division in Tajikistan being the prime example. This Division, along with the airborne troops, are the only whole units that have accumulated experience in “muscular peacekeeping”. [26] A number of other motorized rifle units have also taken part in peacekeeping in the CIS, but due to the rotation basis of these operations the experience has been thinly spread within the forces. This has left only a few whole units well trained for peacekeeping tasks.

Efforts have been made to alter the situation since 2005. The idea of specially designated peacekeeping units was launched as early as 1994, but the demands of the wars in Chechnya halted the process of creating them. However, in 2005 the idea was re-launched as part of a NATO-Russia initiative. Thus the 15<sup>th</sup> Motorized Rifle Brigade (MRB) in Samara, consisting of some 2000 troops, became a specially designated peacekeeping unit. It is currently the only unit in the Russian armed forces which exclusively engages in such tasks.

The troops and officers of the 15<sup>th</sup> MRB undergo special peacekeeping training, and it is envisaged that it will be used in peacekeeping operations, both under NATO and UN auspices. The unit consists solely of contracted soldiers. Upon creation, the process of establishing the Brigade as a peacekeeping unit was to serve as a blueprint for how to train and prepare other Russian units for joint operations in the future. The 15<sup>th</sup> MRB is part of the NATO-Russia Interoperability Framework Program, under which a number of activities are planned for the period up to 2009. The agreed-upon road map for this cooperation culminates with a live exercise with the 15<sup>th</sup> MRB and the NATO Response Force scheduled for 2009.

However, the initiative has been troubled by a number of political problems in recent years, and a number of technical issues have also prevented joint training from taking place. The Russian President now talks about the 15<sup>th</sup> MRB solving *all* peacekeeping tasks, rather than it being a blueprint for interoperability training for other units. Contrary to the expectations of NATO, the unit is being used in peacekeeping operations in the CIS area, and two of its four battalions are currently stationed in South Ossetia. This deployment means that the whole brigade is in reality tied up in CIS operations, as the four battalions deploy on a rotating basis. This engagement has severely delayed the intended interoperability training with NATO structures. In addition, the peacekeeping tasks in the CIS region are of a considerably different nature than the ones envisaged under the auspices of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) (see section 3.3.). The brigade would have to be alleviated of its CIS deployments to become deployable for multinational missions, and to have an increased focus on the interoperability training with NATO to reach the necessary standards for peacekeeping operations alongside Western troops. However, at present it represents the unit in Russia best trained and prepared for peacekeeping missions of an international character, that is, outside the CIS.

### 3.2 Experience from the CIS area

Current capabilities for peacekeeping operations are closely tied to the Russian historical experience with such operations. This experience, both from the CIS area and from participation in NATO and UN operations, has carefully shaped the development of Russian peacekeeping and other capabilities.

The first Russian experience with peacekeeping operations stems from the inception of the Russian armed forces in the immediate aftermath of the dissolution of the Soviet Union. As the Soviet republics broke off from central authority, a number of regional and secessionist conflicts broke out in the post-soviet space, most notably in Tajikistan, Georgia, Moldova, and Azerbaijan, as well as in Russia proper. The Red Army was in a dire state, having been divided among the successor states by order of geographic location rather than by considerations of force structure. The Russian remnants of the Red Army were by far the largest component, and, although missing some vital army components, the ones best suited to take on military missions in any area of the former Soviet republics. In addition, the Russian leadership was at this point worried that any unrest in the neighbouring republics might spill over into Russian territory (as a result of a “domino effect”). Therefore, military solutions were seen as a quick remedy to the instabilities that emerged in the post-soviet space after 1991.



Map 3.2.1. Moldova, Source: CIA

The remedy came in the form of “CIS peacekeeping operations”, as they were quickly termed, none of which were sanctioned by UN Security Council resolutions. The operation that commenced in the *Transdnestr* region of Moldova was based on a tripartite agreement between Russia, Moldova and the Transdnestr government. The “peacekeeping” force was made up of Russian, Moldovan and Transdnestrian troops. The impartiality of the troops was undermined by the presence of the Russian 14<sup>th</sup> Army, which had previously provided military assistance to Russian nationalists in the Transdnestr region.[27;28] Moldovan authorities have repeatedly sought to internationalize these peacekeeping troops, and there has been much talk of a peacekeeping operation under the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). After a period of much turmoil in this region, the parties might now be ready to accept such a multinational peacekeeping force to take over the responsibility for peacekeeping in the Transdnestr region.

In the Georgian enclave of *South Ossetia*, a peace agreement was signed between the leaders of Russia, Georgia, South and North Ossetia. The four parties agreed to provide a battalion each to monitor the ceasefire, supervise the withdrawal of armed units, dissolve self-defence forces and ensure security in the region. The joint forces included one Russian airborne regiment of 950 men and three Georgian-Ossetian battalions totalling about 1100 men.[29] This is another area where the Russian forces have been accused of supporting one side in the conflict, among other things through combat assistance and arms sales.



Map 3.2.2. Georgia. Source: CIA

force has added to the presence of the Russian military in Georgia. In this case too, the Russian side has frequently been accused of supporting to the Abkhazian separatists against central Georgian authorities. In current negotiations at the UN to extend the mandate for UN monitoring mission, Abkhaz authorities are themselves arguing to extend the mission of the Russian peacekeepers, whereas Tbilisi seeks the introduction of a multilateral peacekeeping force.

The operation in *Tajikistan*, commencing in 1992 after a request for military assistance by the Tajik government, was a fully Russian engagement, despite Russian efforts to assemble a joint CIS peacekeeping force.[31] The 201<sup>st</sup> Motor Rifle Division (MRD) (6000 troops) was to be brought to full strength, and would be reinforced by Kazakh and Kyrgyz contributions. Those contributions were never assembled and the division consisted of Russian troops. Interestingly, after the introduction of a Russian law prohibiting conscripts to take part in operations abroad, this division has been one of the few success stories with regard to use of contract soldiers, as they were able to attract the necessary number of troops for service in the 201<sup>st</sup> MRD.

In the separatist region of *Abkhazia*, a Georgian-Abkhazian-Russian supervisory group was set up to monitor compliance with the cease-fire regime from 1993. In 1994 a brigade-sized CIS peacekeeping force was deployed. The force, however, consisted exclusively of Russian troops. This engagement was endorsed, but not sanctioned, by the UN. This means that the CIS operation was not given a UN mandate, but the peace agreement was ratified by the UN Security Council and a UN military observer force of 136 was sent to monitor the CIS operation.[30] Russian military presence has since been a source of dispute between Tbilisi and Moscow, as the peacekeeping

<b>Current Russian deployments to the CIS area[32]</b>	
Georgia – South Ossetia	500 troops, from the North Caucasus military district
Georgia – Abkhazia	2000 troops, from North Caucasus and Privolzhsko-Uralskiy Military Districts
Moldova – Transdnierster	500 troops, Russian Operational group in Transdnierstr

*Table 3.1. Current Russian deployments to the CIS area*

As these examples show, the Russian peacekeeping experience from the CIS area differs from what can be termed “neutral” UN peacekeeping missions. Any such mission would be formulated by strict guidelines and conducted under the auspices and neutrality of the UN. In order for an initiative for a UN peacekeeping operation to be taken, the following requirements would have to be met:[33]

- The consent of all parties to the dispute
- Non-use of force by the peacekeepers
- Voluntary contributions by non-aligned or neutral countries
- Impartiality
- Control by the UN Secretary General

None of the operations undertaken by the Russians seems to have upheld the third and fourth prerequisites of this standardized understanding of the role of peacekeeping forces in conflict areas. Few of the peacekeeping forces that were deployed were considered neutral mediators in the conflicts. The troops had in some instances been stationed in the region before being deployed as peacekeepers had cultural and in cases familiar ties with the local populace, and were in some places forced to fight down the warring parties before they could start to enforce a peace agreement. The Russian troops were often accused of supporting one side of the conflicting parties. Normally, neutral UN operations would not allow for a neighbouring state to contribute troops. Neither the second prerequisite, the non-use of force by the peacekeepers, seems to be part of the Russian peacekeeping tradition. In accordance with Russian military tradition, respect for life, military and civilian, has been lower than e.g. the NATO standards.[34] Also the actions in Chechnya served to damage the Russian reputation in “peacekeeping” operations. Worries were of Russian peacekeeping operations being ill-conceived, badly prepared and badly executed, and almost indistinguishable from regular war.[35] The conflicts in the CIS region have been appropriately termed as “frozen”: the Russian peacekeeping efforts were not so much geared toward solving the conflicts as to freeze the fighting (through taking on the conflicting parties) and restore a normal way of life in the republics, under the auspices of the Russian units.

The Russian CIS experience has consequences for the country’s perception of how to conduct peacekeeping operations. The Russian leadership has not succeeded in, or even attempted to, develop a Russian standardised peacekeeping concept. Many of the CIS operations were

conducted on the whim of a local commander rather than on an overall strategy for *peace-keeping* formulated in Moscow. Fears are that the Russian military tradition with difficulty will accommodate the flexibility and neutrality needed to conduct international peacekeeping operations. Modern operations demand well trained and highly interoperable units with neutral standards and practices. Abilities needed among the deployed troops are flexibility to adapt, and the ability to conduct humanitarian-type work as much as traditional military missions. These types of missions lie relatively far from Russian traditional military training and way of thinking.

On the other hand, UN operations have changed considerably since the drawing-board concepts for peacekeeping were made in the period 1978-1995. UN peacekeeping mandates have become broader and the peacekeeping troops' Rules of Engagement have been strengthened, i.e. has the use of force been permitted beyond purposes of self-defense. Domitilla Sagramoso argues that the UN peacekeeping doctrine has moved closer to what has constituted Russian peacekeeping doctrine throughout the 1990s.[36] The challenges Russian peacekeepers have met in the CIS area and at home, with regard to terrorist threats, insurgents and guerrilla warfare are no doubt valuable and highly relevant in today's complex world of peacekeeping. Both Russian and UN peacekeepers have had some tough situations to deal with, and in the longer terms this might contribute to bringing the two traditions together.

### **3.3 Experience from NATO and UN operations**

Russia's participation in operations on the Balkans in the 1990s was highly valuable in terms of experience and interoperability, as well as politically significant. This constitutes the second building bloc of Russian experience of international peacekeeping, this time under the auspices of the North Atlantic Alliance.

Russia participated with airborne troops in both the IFOR and KFOR operations in Bosnia and Kosovo. This was the first time that Russian forces were deployed to interoperate with NATO troops. The operation in Bosnia saw Russia deploying 1600 troops, the 629<sup>th</sup> airborne battalion, in the period between 1992 and 2003. In 1999 Russia also deployed 3600 peacekeepers to Kosovo, from three airborne brigades (106<sup>th</sup>, 76<sup>th</sup> and 98<sup>th</sup>). With such a large Russian contingent, both sides were anxious to see how Russian forces would interoperate with NATO troops in a large scale peacekeeping operation.

A number of political and operational issues complicated cooperation between NATO and Russian troops in these operations. Some of the issues had direct operational consequences, like questions regarding chains of command. The Russian contingent would not be subordinated NATO command, and this issue was solved differently in the IFOR and KFOR operations. The Russian deployment was made within other countries' zones of responsibility, but the degree to which the forces had to interoperate was limited, as the Russians were allotted particular areas of land. The test of interoperability was thus limited by these divisions. Still, the experience of cooperation between NATO and Russian troops was deemed a success and demonstrated once and for all that these troops were able to interoperate without severe difficulties. In the aftermath of these operations lessons learned have been attempted manifested under the auspices of the

NATO-Russia Council (NRC). Some results of this work have been forthcoming, like the production of a joint peacekeeping concept to be used in a possible future joint operation.

One of the areas of concentration in the NRC is the development of interoperable structures with the aim of joint peacekeeping operations. The Rome declaration of 2002 reiterated this focus on peacekeeping on the NATO-Russia bilateral agenda. The work in this sphere has manifested itself through training and exercises, culminating in the current Russian participation in the NATO monitoring operation “Active Endeavour” in the Mediterranean. The realization of this operation was largely due to the previous training of these same capabilities within the framework of the NRC. Similarly, the conduct of the joint rescue operation of the Priz mini-submarine on the coast of Kamchatka in August 2005 was a result of those same capabilities being exercised some weeks before in a bilateral Anglo-Russian exercise.[37] These examples go to show that real practice, even of narrow capabilities, does lead to joint operations.

However, exercising such narrow joint operations capabilities does not make Russian and NATO forces truly interoperable. The work on developing and improving interoperability lacks joint commitment and long-term planning, and the capabilities developed tend to be scattered. In many instances Russia prefers to train and cooperate militarily with the NATO allies on a bilateral basis rather than through alliance mechanisms.

In addition, air and sea components and interoperability programs seem to have progressed further than the training of land-based components. Both naval and air operations are easier to conduct on a bi- or multilateral basis, as they do not require the same level of interoperability across lower level of troops. In addition, a Status of Forces Agreement is normally not needed for air and naval operations. The ratification of such agreements has proved to be a hindrance to land-based exercises in recent years. Similarly, Russia is developing a number of bilateral joint capabilities (with NATO member countries, rather than with NATO), which may come in handy in the framework of international peacekeeping operations. This is a very positive development.

However, also the land side should be incorporated into the cooperation. It seems that the Russian side has been reluctant to commit ground forces to real cooperation with NATO structures, and that it appears to resist the interaction of troops of all levels, an imperative interface if cooperation is to work properly. This might be due to the previously mentioned differences in military culture, where the Russian military culture leaves little room for manoeuvre for officers of lower ranks.[38] NATO troops on lower levels tend to be designated with a higher degree of independence in the execution of their mission. This difference in mindsets can hinder real cooperation, as officers of similar rank are not left with the same level of freedom when executing missions.

Exposure to interoperability training with NATO is extremely important in order to make Russian troops deployable to international peacekeeping operations, either under UN or NATO auspices. In order for Russia and NATO to carry out joint operations in the future, however, interoperability must be further enhanced through the development and exercising of *broader*

joint capabilities. This will need to extend to ground as well as air and sea forces, and needs to become part of a long-term plan for the development of meaningful joint capabilities, rather than cherry-picking on the Russian side. In both 2006 and 2007, joint exercises had to be cancelled due to the lack of ratification of the SOFA by the Russian Parliament (Duma). As the situation stands today, commitment is lacking both on the NATO and particularly on the Russian side to commit troops and efforts to developing a broad and long-term capability to carry out joint operations. Better coordination of NATO's efforts with the bilateral military-to-military cooperation programs is also needed. The relationship is suffering from the lack of a clear Russian policy with regard to what the purpose of military cooperation with the NATO bloc and its member countries really is. Some experts argue that the purposes are merely superficial and political.[39] The dual use of the 15<sup>th</sup> MRB at Samara is the best example of this unclear Russian policy.

<b>Current Russian deployment to NATO operations</b>	
Operation Active Endeavour	2 warships from the Black Sea Fleet

*Table 3.2. Current Russian deployment to NATO operations*

Russia has participated only to a limited degree in UN operations. Although Russia is today one of the countries with the highest number of military observers in peacekeeping operations (96), the number of actively participating troops is relatively low (122 as of 31 October 2006).[40] First of all, Russia has been too preoccupied in her own back yard to actively take part in peacekeeping operations elsewhere. The capacity for such operations within the Russian armed forces has been stretched thin. With a 1.13-million strong army, 20 per cent of whom are destined to be professional soldiers by the end of 2007, there should be a larger capacity to take part in traditional UN peacekeeping operations, including with the deployment of larger units.

Russia currently has small units in UN operations in Liberia, Burundi, and Sudan. In Sierra Leone they deployed 4 (Mi-8) multi-purpose helicopters with a supporting staff of 114 in 2000.

<b>Current Russian deployments to UN operations[41]</b>	
Liberia	40
Burundi	40
Sudan	133

*Table 3.3. Current Russian deployments to UN operations*

Russia also has a unit of engineers in Lebanon, as part of the international rally to rebuild that country. However, this unit has been deployed independently under Russian, rather than under UN flag, after a bilateral agreement between Russian and Lebanese authorities. The troops were deployed to a geographically different area than the rest of the UNIFIL force, thus avoiding direct interaction with UN peacekeeping troops. This might indicate the preferred mode of deployment for Russian forces: small and independent units that are not subordinated to foreign or international authorities. The current trend seems to manifest the Russian focus on larger

deployments within the CIS area, and only smaller deployments to UN operations.

### **3.4 The Collective Security Treaty Organisation's peacekeeping force**

Russian forces seem to prefer to operate independently rather than as part of a large multinational force. This has been the case all along in the CIS region, and it was also seen in Lebanon. In Bosnia and Kosovo, we saw that Russia was reluctant to be subordinated NATO command and preferred special arrangements with a Russian commander in the NATO HQ. These examples indicate a Russian tendency to prefer not to place troops under the control of multilateral organisations.

The exception to this rule might be the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO), an organisation dominated by Russian political and military structures. The CSTO has established a special peacekeeping rapid deployment force. Russia has called for the CSTO to be granted status as a regional organisation by the UN. This would make it able to fulfil peacekeeping missions with or without UN mandates on the same level as e.g. NATO or the African Union. Such legitimacy for regional policing has been sought by Russia since the early 1990s, when Foreign Minister Primakov applied to the UN to grant Russia status as a "guarantor for peace" in the CIS region, and sought UN mandates for the CIS operations there. The UN was and still is reluctant to grant the CSTO this status.

Russia might envisage the use of a CSTO peacekeeping force in the case of regional instabilities in the CIS area, which is one of Russia's main security concerns. In such a scenario, it would seem more legitimate that a joint operation under this organization's lead was launched, rather than only Russian forces being deployed. Still, an operation conducted by CSTO peacekeeping forces would, in fact, consist of mainly Russian forces, which make up a the majority of the force components in all CSTO military and command structures. It may be claimed that the CSTO is not a collective organization in the word's right meaning, in the sense that it does not represent the equal interests of all the member states. It is rather a Russian instrument to further its own interests in the CIS region. Even the CSTO's Secretary General admits to the fact that Russia's "plays the first violin within the organization, seeing as she has the largest potential in terms of military capabilities and with regard to other resources." [42] Russia is likely to continue its efforts toward creating a modern CSTO peacekeeping force. Even without a UN mandate, a CSTO operation would seem more legitimate than a purely Russian operation beyond its own borders. The CSTO collective forces will constitute an additional resource for the Russian leadership to draw on for peacekeeping operations.

However, with the ever increasing burden of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and more troops in UN peacekeeping operations than ever before, the UN is in dire need of assistance. The use of regional organisations in peacekeeping is becoming more and more common, from the Balkans operations to the ever increasing tasks of the African Union (AU) in that continent. There is a growing tendency of regional organisations playing a leading role in peacekeeping, peacemaking and peace building in their own areas. [43] Such involvement of regional organisations often disregards the original UN peacekeeping principle that neighbouring



states were not to take part in a peacekeeping force. However, the changing concepts of peacekeeping and the ever increasing need for world policing have led to the erosion of many of the original UN principles for peacekeeping.

## 4 Conclusions

The Russian leadership has expressed a willingness to take part in international peacekeeping operations, and has pointed to its responsibility as a world power and member of the UN Security Council to take on its share of international policing tasks. With the modernisation of the Russian armed forces that is currently underway, the capacity to take part in such operations is likely to be enhanced. However, for Russia to deploy large units to international peacekeeping operations, two conditions must be fulfilled: First, political will to accelerate the process of modernising the armed forces must be demonstrated, especially with regard to personnel reform and peacekeeping doctrine. Second, the Russian leadership must recognise the benefits of training for and deploying to peacekeeping operations, also beyond the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) area.

The peacekeeping operations in the CIS area are, as we have seen, in many ways different from truly multinational peacekeeping operations, and they place differing demands on the peacekeepers. As the participants in the Russian peacekeeping missions in the CIS do not normally receive particular peacekeeping training, any of the units on permanent combat readiness could be used to handle the missions within the CIS. With time, the capacity to fulfil peacekeeping missions in the CIS area will thus become considerable. If the current modernisation efforts are successful, all these units could be used for peacekeeping tasks, also beyond the CIS area, if they received the proper training. If Russia wanted to deploy large units to international peacekeeping, it could then also look beyond the designated peacekeeping unit in Samara.

For the time being, however, only the 15<sup>th</sup> MRB for peacekeeping is developing the necessary capabilities to take part in international peacekeeping operations, but the capabilities are insufficient also within this specially designated unit. The process of developing interoperability with NATO lacks vision and long-term planning, and it is suffering under political pressures. Some narrow capabilities are being developed with NATO and other partner countries, but this is largely a scattered effort, rather than part of a concerted Russian attempt to enhance her interoperable capabilities. This might be due to the lack of ownership of and interest in peacekeeping operations within the Russian state and military bureaucracy.

Although Russia has stated its intention to take part in multilateral peacekeeping operations, this willingness has not yet been demonstrated by large deployments to such operations, or by developing the necessary capabilities. There exists little or no institutional interest in Russian deployment to peacekeeping operations beyond the CIS area. In order for Russian peacekeeping to move beyond the CIS area, clear Russian national interests would have to be defined in the area of operations. Only then would the Russian leadership see peacekeeping operations as a valuable foreign policy tool. The necessary steps would then be taken to make the Russian armed

forces ready to step up their efforts in the sphere of international peacekeeping. This includes acceleration the modernisation of the armed forces.

Until such a scenario emerges, the current Russian capability to take part in peacekeeping operations can be summed up as follows:

- The 15th MRB for peacekeeping will continue to be earmarked for peacekeeping operations, mainly in the CIS region. However, this unit will also continue the process of cooperation toward interoperability with NATO partners.
- We will see scattered deployments of elements already interoperable with NATO, like Operation Active Endeavour in the Mediterranean. The Theatre Missile Defence system is a promising part of this cooperation.
- For joint deployment, Russia might prefer to utilize naval and air components rather than ground forces, as the need for interoperability and interaction among lower level officers can be kept to a minimum. Such units are also more easily deployable.
- Russia seems to prefer bilateral modes of interoperability training to joint NATO-Russia training. Such bilateral training also enhances the Russian capability to deploy such forces, albeit on a somewhat smaller scale.
- Other specialized branches of the armed forces that are being trained and equipped as a part of the high combat ready core of the armed forces might be used for peacekeeping purposes, in or outside the CIS area.
- Small and specialised units might be deployed independently or as part of peacekeeping operations, like the one seen in Lebanon. This is a cheap and effective way of showing the Russian flag. However, any major deployment will likely not be forthcoming.
- Russia might draw on CSTO resources for peacekeeping operations in the future, to gain political legitimacy for intervention in her near abroad, or as a regional security organisation ready to take on out-of-area peacekeeping missions.

*Table 4.1. Current Russian ability to take part in international peacekeeping operations*

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