

Russia's New Military Doctrine Mentions Belarusian Security



On February 5, 2010 President Dmitri Medvedev approved a new Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation. The document replaces the version adopted in 2000 and will serve as a frame of reference for the Russian military through 2020.

Among other things, the doctrine addresses the security of the so-called Union State of Belarus and Russia. According to the text of the doctrine, Russia “considers an armed attack on the state-participant in the Union State, as well as all other actions involving the use of military force against it, as an act of aggression against the Union State, and it will take measures in response.”

The new doctrine provides that Russia's main priorities for its military-political cooperation with the Republic of Belarus are the following:

- (a) coordinating efforts in developing the national armed forces and using military infrastructure;
- (b) developing and coordinating measures toward maintaining the defense capabilities of the Union State in accordance with the Military Doctrine of the Union State.

According to the new doctrine, Russia can use nuclear weapons in response to the use of any types of weapons of mass destruction against itself or its allies. However, the doctrine does not provide for pre-emptive nuclear strikes. In fact, it reduces Moscow's reliance on nuclear weapons,

contrary to the predictions and concerns raised in the Western media throughout 2009.

The doctrine names the expansion of NATO first in a list of major external threats to Russia. Commenting on the reflection of Russia's threat assessment in the new doctrine NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen told Reuters that the document "does not reflect the real world" and that "NATO is not an enemy of Russia."

[Read the full text of the doctrine in Russian.](#)