

## Section 4 Russia

### 1 General Situation

President Vladimir Putin, who has been seeking the revival of Russia as a strong and influential power, successfully achieved reelection in 2018. In his inaugural address in May of that same year, President Putin stated that Russia is a strong, active and influential participant in international life, and that the country's security and defense capability are reliably secured. He also stated that quality of life, wellbeing, security and health were his main goals, and that Russia has risen like a phoenix a number of times throughout history and would achieve a breakthrough again.

At the annual presidential address to the Federal Assembly of Russia in March of that same year, held prior to the presidential election, President Putin said, "Russia ranks among the world's leading nations with a powerful foreign economic and defense potential." At that same time, President Putin talked about modernizing Russia's military equipment, including its strategic nuclear forces, and emphasized that Russia would be developing new nuclear weapons as a measure in response to the deployment of missile defense systems by the United States domestically and abroad. President Putin also expressed the recognition that Russia's military power helped maintain strategic parity in the world, and remarked that Russia is prepared to negotiate toward construction of a new system for international security and sustainable development of civilization.

In response to the United States' February 2019 notification of its intention to withdraw from the INF Treaty, Russia announced in March that it had notified the United States that it would suspend implementing its obligations under the treaty.

With regard to the situation in Ukraine, ever since the efforts to implement ceasefire agreements (Minsk Agreements)<sup>1</sup> in the destabilized region of eastern Ukraine following the illegal "annexation" of Crimea by Russia, there have been no major developments in particular. The West has alleged that Russia attempted to change the status quo by



Ukrainian naval vessels seized and tied up in a port in Crimea (November 2018)  
[SPUTNIK/Jiji Press Photo]

force by engaging in "hybrid warfare," and it is increasing its sense of caution toward Russia.<sup>2</sup> Russia and Ukraine continue to have a tense relationship, as demonstrated by such developments as Ukraine's temporary imposition of martial law in November 2018, following the seizure of Ukrainian naval vessels by the Coast Guard of the Border Service of Russia.

In addition, Russia has been conducting military intervention in Syria since September 2015. Russia has indicated that it has the ability to continually and swiftly deploy military assets in remote areas while acquiring bases in Syria. At the same time, it is thought that Russia considers the intervention as an opportunity to test and demonstrate its equipment. As well as hosting Syrian peace talks brokered by Russia, Turkey, and Iran, while continuing the fight against ISIL and Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) (formerly known as Al-Nusra Front), Russia has signed a memorandum of understanding with Turkey on the establishment of a demilitarized zone around the northwestern Syrian province of Idlib, which is a stronghold for the remaining rebels. Russia's growing involvement in the Syrian situation will attract attention as a move aimed at expanding its influence in the Middle East.

<sup>1</sup> 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 Donbass and the recovery of economic activity in the region; and (12) provide personal security guarantees for the participants of the consultations.

Then, the Minsk Memorandum was signed in September 2014, and the package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk Agreement was signed on February 2015. These are collectively called the Minsk Agreements.

<sup>2</sup> 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 is reinforcing its security and defence initiatives.

**Q See** Chapter 3, Section 7 (Trends in International Terrorism and Regional Conflict)

While Russia faces severe economic conditions, forecasts indicate that following the recovery in oil prices, a major export product, the country will maintain positive economic growth in 2019.<sup>3</sup>

Under these circumstances, attention is being paid on how President Putin, while maintaining his power base, will deal with Russia's diplomatic isolation from Europe and the United States, and economic situation, as well as promote economic structural reforms and modernization of Russia's military forces, and its effort to expand international influence.



President Erdoğan (left) and President Putin (right) shaking hands after agreeing on the establishment of a demilitarized zone around the Syrian province of Idlib (September 2018) [AFP/Jiji]

## 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 Russian armed forces (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); formation of governments in neighboring countries that carry out policies threatening Russia's interests; and the incitement of ethnic, social, and religious confrontations in Russia.

The doctrine positions nuclear weapons as an essential component for preventing the outbreak of nuclear wars and military conflicts that use conventional weapons, and states that Russia will maintain an adequate level of nuclear deterrent capability. Additionally, it states that Russia reserves the right to use nuclear weapons in retaliation not only for the use of nuclear or other WMDs, but also in the event of invasion using conventional weapons, where the survival of the country itself is imperiled. In its assessment of Russia's non-strategic nuclear capabilities in the Nuclear Posture Review published in 2018, the United States stated that Russia recognized that its diverse and more numerous non-strategic nuclear weapons systems could overpower an opponent in a low-intensity conflict and believed that limited first-strike use of nuclear weapons — including the use of low-yield nuclear weapons — could give the country the upper hand over the United States and its allies.

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 executed FY2017 budget registered a year-on-year decrease of around 25% compared to the amount spent in the previous year, while the amounts executed for FY2011-FY2016 showed year-on-year double-digit growth. Although Russia faced a difficult fiscal situation in 2015 and 2016, including declines in

<sup>3</sup> The International Monetary Fund (IMF) predicted that Russia's GDP growth rate for 2018 would be 1.7% and would increase to 1.8% in 2019.

economic growth, it is said that the country has worked to secure a budget for national defense in order to achieve the goal of modernizing its equipment by 2020 and other targets. However, having used up the reserve fund<sup>4</sup> set aside for fiscal replenishment, it is deemed that since 2017, Russia's national defense budget has been allocated based on the amount of economic growth achieved.<sup>5</sup>

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

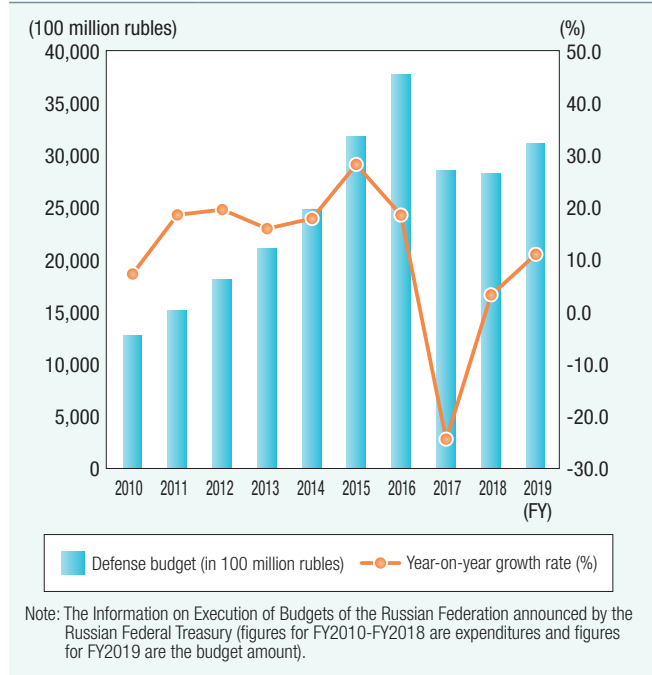
## 2 Military Reform

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 President Dmitry Medvedev (then) in September 2008, Russia is advancing measures including troop reductions, structural reform (from the division-based command structure to a brigade-based one<sup>6</sup>), 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.<sup>7</sup> 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.<sup>8</sup>

Regarding the modernization of the military forces, Russia is working to increase its percentage of new equipment up to

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



70%, and it announced in December 2018 that it had increased said proportion to approximately 61.5%. Within the State Armaments Program (GPV: Gosudarstvennaya Programma Vooruzheniya) 2018-2027,<sup>9</sup> it is said that Russia will continue to invest 19 trillion rubles over ten years to update equipment and an additional 1 trillion rubles to develop infrastructure needed for the deployment of that equipment. It is expected that Russia will continue modernization efforts in the future.

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 (for noncommissioned officers and soldiers) which selects 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, and in the future the percentage of contract servicemen is set to increase further.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>4</sup> In order to replenish funds for the government budget lost due to a fall in oil prices, Russia set aside a portion (the surplus) of governmental income received from oil production and exports.

<sup>5</sup> According to the Russian Federal Treasury, the initial FY2019 defense budget increased by 10.1% from the initial budget of the previous fiscal year to 3.1134 trillion rubles, marking a 5.4% increase compared to the budget spent in the previous fiscal year.

<sup>6</sup> 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 Anatoliy 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.

<sup>7</sup> 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). According to TASS, an Executive Order issued by the President of Russia in July 2016 calls for the number of military personnel to be kept at one million.

<sup>8</sup> 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.

<sup>9</sup> The GPV was reportedly approved by President Putin by February 2018. While details have not been released, it is believed that, under the GPV, Russia will continue to prioritize the updating of its nuclear capability and that 70% of the Russian military's armaments are due to be modernized by 2021.

<sup>10</sup> 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). In March 2019, according to the Russian military newspaper *Red Star*, Minister of Defence Sergei Shoigu stated that contracted soldiers totaled approximately 394,000.

In the context of the 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 forces are 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. The RAF consists of three services and two independent forces: Land Forces; Navy; Aerospace Forces; Strategic Missile Forces; and Airborne Forces.

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

#### 1 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.

Russia still possesses ICBMs, SLBMs, and long range bombers (Tu-95 Bears and Tu-160 Blackjacks) comparable to 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.<sup>11</sup> Russia is working on accelerating the development and introduction of new weapons under the policy to prioritize the modernization of nuclear forces based on its GPV.

In March 2011, Russia started the deployment of RS24, which is considered a multi-warhead version of the "Topol-M" ICBM.<sup>12</sup> Since December 2012, three **Borey** class SSBN vessels, which carry the new-type SLBM "Bulava," were commissioned. There are plans to deploy four such vessels each to the Northern Fleet and Pacific Fleet in the future. In October 2018, firing training took place using an SLBMs from a SSBN in the Okhotsk Sea and a SSBN from the Barents Sea. Cruise missile firing training also took place using long-range bombers.

President Putin, at the Expanded Meeting of the Defense Ministry Board held in December 2018, noted that the share

of modern weapons in Russia's nuclear triad had reached 82%. Talking about priorities for 2019, he mentioned the need for modern strategic nuclear forces with enhanced missile defense system penetration capabilities, as well as laying emphasis on future mass production of the HGV "Avangard". That February, President Putin ordered that half-yearly progress reports be provided on the development and deployment of new weapons, including the "Avangard" HGV, the "Sarmat" ICBM, and the "Kinzhal" air-launched ballistic missile (ALBM). Additionally, he revealed for the



9M729 ground-launched cruise missiles unveiled by Russia (January 2019). The launch canisters for the missiles (foreground) and the transporter-erector launcher (background)  
[Jane's by IHS Markit]

#### Borey-class submarine

<Specifications,  
performance>

Water displacement:

19,711 tons

Maximum speed: 25 knots  
(approximately 46 km/h)

Main armament: SLBM Bulava (maximum firing range 8,300 km) torpedoes

<Description>

Russian Navy's new type of strategic nuclear-powered submarine carrying ballistic missiles, the first ship being commissioned in 2012. It can carry 16 SLBMs. It has been deployed with the Pacific Fleet since 2015.

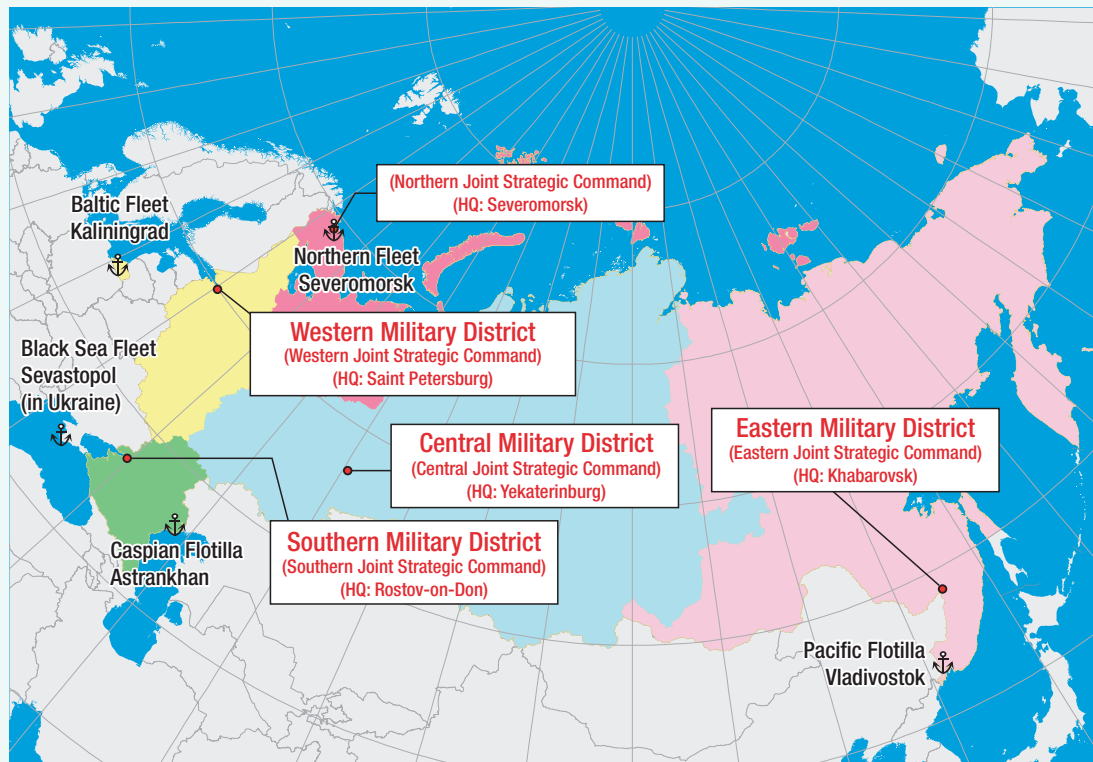


[Jane's by IHS Markit]

<sup>11</sup> 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. The United States announced that as of March 2019 the United States had 1,365 deployed strategic warheads and 656 deployed delivery platforms, and Russia announced that as of March 2019, it had 1,461 deployed strategic warheads and 524 deployed delivery platforms.

<sup>12</sup> In addition, it is believed that Russia is developing a new heavy ICBM "Sarmat" (RS-28) that can destroy robust ICBM launch sites and be equipped with many warheads, a light-weight mobile solid-fuel ICBM "Rubezh," (RS-26) as well as new warheads aimed at enhancing the capability to penetrate MD.

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



Russia		
Total military forces		Approx. 900,000 troops
Ground forces	Ground troops	Approx. 330,000 troops
	Tanks	T-90, T-80, T-72, etc. Approx. 2,800 (Not including mothballed tanks. Approx. 13,000 including mothballed tanks)
Maritime forces	Warships	Approx. 1,119 vessels Approx. 2,075,000 tons
	Aircraft carriers	1 vessel
	Cruisers	4 vessels
	Destroyers	13 vessels
	Frigates	14 vessels
	Submarines	75 vessels
Air forces	Marines	Approx. 35,000 troops
	Combat aircraft	Approx. 1,516 aircraft
	Modern fighter aircraft	142 MiG-29 aircraft      133 Su-30 aircraft
		124 MiG-31 aircraft      17 Su-33 aircraft
		199 Su-25 aircraft      112 Su-34 aircraft
		144 Su-27 aircraft      73 Su-35 aircraft (4th generation fighter aircraft: Total 944)
Reference	Bombers	16 Tu-160 aircraft 60 Tu-95 aircraft 63 Tu-22M aircraft
	Population	Approx. 142.12 million
Reference	Term of service	1 year (In addition to conscription, there is a contract service system)

Source: "The Military Balance 2019," etc. Ground troops include 280,000 ground force personnel and 45,000 airborne unit personnel.

first time that Russia was developing the "Zircon", a sea-launched hypersonic missile that is believed to have a firing range of over 1,000 km and be capable of speeds up to approximately Mach 9.

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 INF Treaty with the United States, and the following

year removed tactical nuclear weapons from naval vessels for storage onshore. Russia, however, still possesses a broad array of other nuclear forces and has in recent years been moving forward with deployments of the “Iskander” ground-launched ballistic missile system, which is believed to be capable of carrying either conventional or nuclear warheads, and the “Kalibr” sea-launched cruise missile system.

As well as commenting on Russia’s breaches of the INF Treaty since May 2013 and repeatedly demanding that the country return to compliance with the treaty, the United States announced that Russia had deployed Ground-Launched Cruise Missiles (GLCM), which violate the treaty. On the other hand, Russia has consistently denied violating the treaty and has criticized the United States, saying that it is itself in breach of the INF Treaty, on the grounds that Aegis Ashore is equipped with a system capable of launching Tomahawk missiles. Thus, the United States and Russia remain as far apart as ever on matters concerning the treaty.

Amid this situation, the United States provided notice in February 2019 of its intention to withdraw from the treaty within six months and announced its intention to develop surface-launched intermediate-range missiles capable of carrying conventional warheads. Russia adopted a response that was both symmetrical and asymmetrical, announcing

plans to develop a ground-launched adaptation of the Kalibr sea-launched cruise missile system, along with hypersonic ground-launched cruise missiles and, that March, notified the United States that it was suspending its own participation in the treaty. Russia confirmed that the treaty ceased to have effect due to the United States’ complete withdrawal, and criticized the United States by saying that all the responsibility for escalating tensions across the world will rest with Washington. Furthermore, Russia stated that it is essential to resume full dialogues to safeguard strategic stability and security, and that Russia is open to that.

## 2 Conventional Forces and Other Issues

Russia is 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 “Su-57”<sup>13</sup> currently under development as the so-called “fifth generation fighter” and the T-14 Armata tank,<sup>14</sup> 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,<sup>15</sup> since February 2013, the RAF has been conducting surprise inspections designed to validate the combat readiness of the military districts, etc. since the collapse of the Soviet Union.<sup>16</sup> These inspections are contributing to the improvement of long-distance mobilization capability of the

### KEY WORD

#### Russian ground-launched cruise missiles deemed by the United States to violate the INF Treaty

The United States first officially referred to the existence of Russian ground-launched cruise missiles that violated the INF Treaty in July 2014; subsequent references were made to what the United States and others called the “SSC-8” and Russia called “9M729” and, by the latter half of 2018, the United States announced that several of these missile battalions had been deployed. While the United States has not revealed such details of the missiles as their range, it has pointed out that they were developed on the basis of the Kalibr sea-launched anti-surface cruise missiles, which are believed to have a range of 2,000 km. In January 2019, Russia unveiled the 9M729 claimed by the United States as being in violation of the treaty and again denied that the missile breached the treaty, claiming that it was an improved version of the SSC-7 (called the 9M728 in Russia) cruise missile carried by the Iskander surface-to-surface missile system and had a range of 480 km.

#### Su-35 fighter

<Specifications,  
performance>

Speed: Mach 2.25

Main armament: RVV-BD  
air-to-air missiles

(maximum firing range 200  
km), Kh-59MK air-to-ship  
missiles (maximum firing  
range 285 km)

<Description>

New type of multipurpose fighter of the Russian Air  
Force, it has been deployed in the Far East since 2014.



【Jane's by IHS Markit】

<sup>13</sup> In August 2018, the Russian military ordered two Su-57 fighter aircraft with interim engines; some have noted that this fighter is due to enter mass production in 2023.

<sup>14</sup> 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, self-propelled howitzers, and so on. A contract for 100 tanks was concluded in 2016, with the delivery of the tanks scheduled to occur in 2020.

<sup>15</sup> As it proceeds with its military reform, Russia has conducted large-scale exercises for verification and other purposes in recent years. Among them are large-scale annual exercises covering all aspects of combat training, which are held in a round-robin format involving all military districts Russia plans to hold the Tsentr 2019 exercise this year. (Exercises from the previous four years included: Tsentr 2015 [Central Military District], Kavkaz 2016 [South Military District], Zapad 2017 [West Military District], and Vostok 2018 [East Military District].)

<sup>16</sup> 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.

RAF.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, outside of Russia, the RAF have been deploying vessels mainly formed of the Black Sea Fleet to the Mediterranean Sea.<sup>18</sup> In September 2018, the Northern Fleet, Baltic Fleet, Black Sea Fleet and Caspian Flotilla gathered off the coast of Syria, east of the Mediterranean Sea, and conducted a major joint exercise that also involved aircraft. A plan is underway to construct or rebuild 10 airfields in the Arctic, and between August and October 2018, a flotilla mainly comprising Northern Fleet Udaloy-class destroyers took part in various landing drills during ocean navigation from the Kola peninsula to the eastern Arctic.<sup>19</sup> Additionally, some fleets advanced into the Bering Strait as part of the large-scale Vostok 2018 exercise. The RAF has been conducting activities including not only such deployment and exercises of naval vessels and resumption of military facility operation, but also strategic nuclear deterrence patrols by SSBN and patrol flights by long-range bombers. Particularly

in 2018, Tu-95 long-range bombers flew to western Alaska in September, and Tu-160 long-range bombers flew more than 10,000 km to Venezuela over the Barents Sea, the Norwegian Sea, the Atlantic Ocean, and the Caribbean Sea in December.

In addition, the RAF continues to operate two permanent bases within Syria, though in December 2017 it largely terminated the military operations that it had conducted in Syria since 2015.

Russia thus appears to be stepping up military activities not only in the Arctic, Europe, areas near the United States, and the Middle East, but also in the Far East, so close scrutiny of developments in this regard will be required.<sup>20</sup>

In addition, as Russia's levels of economic and social development going forward and trends in its diplomatic relations with European and other countries will influence the future of the RAF, continuous attention should be paid to its movements.

## 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. 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 activity, including the trend related to deployment of new units and military facility development.

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 intertheater 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, three Delta III-class SSBNs and two Borey-class SSBNs equipped with SLBMs are deployed in and around the Sea of Okhotsk, and approximately 30 Tu-95 long-range bombers are deployed in Ukrainka. Russia is prioritizing the reinforcement of its maritime strategic deterrence posture which had been greatly scaled-down compared to the former Soviet Union, and as part of these efforts, it plans on deploying four Borey-class

#### Tu-95 long-range bomber



[Jane's by IHS Markit]

<Specifications,  
performance>

Speed: 924 km

Maximum radius of action: 6,398 km

Main armament: Kh-101 air-to-surface cruise missiles  
(maximum firing range 4,500 km)

<Description>

Produced between 1956 and 1994, the final version is currently under refurbishment for modernization. Capable of carrying eight air-to-surface cruise missiles (conventional or nuclear warhead).

<sup>17</sup> 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.

<sup>18</sup> 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.

<sup>19</sup> Among the military installations being developed in the Arctic, it is believed that the bases under construction on Alexandra Island in the Franz Joseph Land and Kotelnny Island in the Novosibirsk Islands will house 150 and 250 personnel each and have enough supplies to continue operations without assistance for a period of 18 months. In addition, the Northern Fleet has conducted long distance navigation to the Novosibirsk Islands every year since 2012.

<sup>20</sup> 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.

SSBNs to the Pacific Fleet by 2020.

## (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 ten brigades and two divisions with approximately 80,000 personnel in total as well as a marine brigade equipped with amphibious operations capability. The Eastern Military District has introduced new equipment, such as the “Iskander” surface-to-surface missile system,

### Surface-to-ship missile Bal

<Specifications,  
performance>

Maximum firing range: 130 km

<Description>

Surface-to-ship missile with the objective of coastal defense, etc., it has been deployed to the Pacific Fleet since 2016. An improved missile with a maximum range of 260 km also exists (the 3M-24U).



【Jane's by IHS Markit】

### Surface-to-ship missile Bastion

<Specifications,  
performance>

Maximum firing range: 300 km

<Description>

Surface-to-ship missile with the objective of coastal defense, etc., it has been deployed to the Pacific Fleet since 2014.



【Jane's by IHS Markit】

### Anti-air Missile system S-400

<Specifications,  
performance>

Maximum firing range: 250 km (anti-aircraft), 60 km (anti-ballistic missile)

Maximum height: 27 km

<Description>

This missile has the capability to intercept ballistic missiles and act as an air-defense missile. It was deployed in the Eastern District in 2012. It has been pointed out that a missile with a maximum range of 400 km also exists (the 40N6).



【Jane's by IHS Markit】

“Bal” and “Bastion” surface-to-ship missiles, 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 640,000 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 310,000 tons. It also plans on deploying four multipurpose Steregushchiy-class frigates,<sup>21</sup> and the “Gremyashchiy” — an improved version of the Steregushchiy-class frigate that could be deployed as early as 2019 — is believed to be the first vessel in the Pacific Fleet to be armed with Kalibr cruise missiles.

## (4) Air Forces

In the Eastern Military District, Russia deploys approximately

### Steregushchiy-class frigates

<Specifications,  
performance>

Full load displacement: 2,235 tons

Speed: 26 knots

Main armament: SS-N-25

anti-ship missiles (with a maximum firing range of 130 km (or 260 km for the improved version)), 9M96 ship-to-air missiles (maximum firing range 60 km)

On-board aircraft: One helicopter (Ka-27)

<Description>

The Russian Navy's new type of frigate, the first of which was commissioned in 2007. The Russian Ministry of Defence is scheduled to deploy Sovershenny (fourth ship), Gromkiy (seventh ship), Alda Tsydenzhapov (11th ship), and Rezkiy (12th ship) to the Pacific Fleet.



【Jane's by IHS Markit】

### Su-34 fighter-bomber

<Specifications,  
performance>

Speed: Mach 1.6

Main armament: RVV-BD air-to-air missiles (maximum firing range 100 km), Kh-59ME air-to-surface missiles (maximum firing range 200 km)

<Description>

New type of fighter-bomber of the Russian Air Force, it has been deployed in the Far East since 2016.



【Jane's by IHS Markit】

<sup>21</sup> The first of these, the Sovershenny, was commissioned in July 2017, and the second, the Gromkiy, was commissioned in December 2018.

350 combat aircraft from its Air Force and Navy combined. Existing models are being modernized and new models, such as the Su-35 fighters and the Su-34 fighter-bombers, are being introduced<sup>22</sup> to improve their capabilities.

## 2 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.

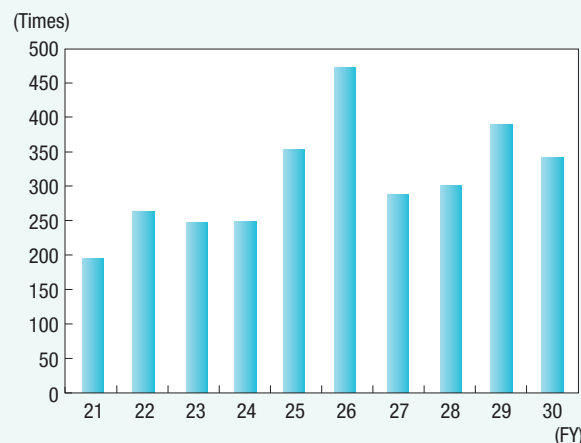
In September 2018, Vostok 2018, considered the largest since 1981, was carried out in the Eastern Military District. According to a Russian Defense Ministry announcement, approximately 300,000 personnel, 36,000 tanks and other vehicles, 80 vessels, and 1,000 aircraft participated in the exercise. The participating units undertook long-distance maneuvers over distances of up to 7,000 km, while vessels of the Northern Fleet sailed up to 4,000 nautical miles. The Chinese and Mongolian militaries also participated in the exercise. Vostok 2018 is positioned as an annual strategic military exercise hosted in turn by each of four military districts and is regarded as an initiative aimed at giving the participating military forces the capacity to engage in large-scale conflicts with military superpowers over a short period and the ability to wield influence over potential enemies. Notable features of this year's exercise were the size of the units deployed and the participation of countries other than Russia's allies.

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, various exercises and long distance voyages have been carried out by Pacific Fleet vessels, along with assigned missions involving operations in Syria and patrols by nuclear-powered submarines. In September 2018, 28 naval vessels including a Slava-class guided missile cruiser passed through the Soya Strait. This was the largest number of vessels announced by the Ministry

Fig. 1-2-4-3

Changes in the Number of Scrambles against Russian Aircraft



of Defense as having transited this strait at the same time since the end of the Cold War. In recent years, ten or more Russian naval vessels have passed through the Soya Strait one to three times a year.<sup>23</sup> Additionally, survey activities have taken place on Matsuwa Island located roughly in the middle of the Chishima Islands, with the objective of studying the feasibility of deploying Pacific Fleet's forces there in the future, and it is said that a new runway has been completed on that island as well.<sup>24</sup> It is also pointed out that bases will be constructed on Matsuwa Island as well as Paramushir Island, located in the north of Chishima Islands, and that there are plans to deploy Bal and Bastion surface-to-air missiles there. Attention must be paid to movement towards the construction of a coastal defense system covering the Northern Territories and Chishima Islands.

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. Also, there were flights of Tu-95 long-range bombers refueled in mid-flight and supported by A-50 early warning and control aircraft and Su-27 fighters as well as flights of Tu-160.

Russian aircraft were particularly active in FY2014 during the height of tensions in Ukraine, and in April the same year when eastern Ukraine began to destabilize, unusual flights took place with Tu-95 long-range bombers conducting flights around Japan on four occasions in one month. On two of these


<sup>22</sup> According to "The Military Balance 2019," in addition to 34 Su-35 fighters, 26 Su-34 fighter-bombers have been deployed to the Eastern Military District (11th Army of Air and Air Defence Force).

<sup>23</sup> 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 FY2018 is as follows: 17 cases in the Soya Strait (12 in FY2017, 18 in FY2016, 22 in FY2015); 0 case in the Tsugaru Strait (1 in FY2017, 1 in FY2016, 0 in FY2015); and 4 cases in the Tsushima Strait (3 in FY2017, 7 in FY2016, 4 in FY2015).

<sup>24</sup> 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. Furthermore, it was announced that three ships of the Pacific Fleet and around 100 personnel arrived on Matsuwa Island in June 2017 in order to conduct a secondary survey. Sakhalin.info reported in October 2017 that a new runway had been completed on Matsuwa Island, and that it was accepting aircraft landings around the clock. In March 2018, the Russian military newspaper Red Star reported that Russia's Pacific Fleet is currently developing a military airport on the island that has the capacity to receive military light transport aircraft and rotorcraft.

occasions, a total of six Tu-95 flew on the same day.<sup>25</sup> While the number of scrambles against Russian aircraft fell from the previous year, Russian aircraft continued to be active in FY2018, as shown by the flights by Tu-142 maritime patrol aircraft around Japan in September 2018. In June 2019, two Tu-95 long-range bombers flew around Japan, and intruded into Japan's territorial airspace twice when they flew northward over the Pacific Ocean. In July last year, two Russian Tu-95 long-range bombers carried out "first Russia-

China joint air patrol" with two Chinese H-6 bombers from the Sea of Japan to the East China Sea. In addition, one Russian A-50 early warning and control aircraft allegedly supporting Tu-95 long-range bombers<sup>26</sup> intruded into Japan's airspace above the territorial waters of Takeshima Island in Shimane Prefecture.

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

## 5 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, one division is still stationed in Kunashiri and Etorofu Islands. Furthermore, tanks, armored vehicles, various types of artillery, and anti-air missiles are deployed.<sup>27</sup>

After then President Medvedev visited Kunashiri Island for the first time as head of state in November 2010, Russian ministers and others have made repeated visits to the Northern Territories. In the recent past, Prime Minister Medvedev visited Etorofu Island in August 2019.<sup>28</sup> Also, Russia is proceeding with the development of military facilities in the

Northern Territories.<sup>29</sup> In November 2016, Russia announced that it deployed coastal (surface-to-ship) missiles to Etorofu and Kunashiri Islands.<sup>30</sup> In January 2018, the new civilian airport built in 2014 in Etorofu Island in addition to Tennei military airfield was opened up to joint military and civilian use, with three Su-35 fighter aircraft reportedly deployed to the new airport in August 2018. Russia also continues to carry out military exercises on islands that can include the Northern Territories and announced in April 2018 that it had conducted a military exercise that involved more than 2,500 personnel, along with multiple rocket launchers, tanks, and helicopters.

As described above, Russia continues to station RAF in the Northern Territories, which are inherent territories of Japan,

<sup>25</sup> The number of times Russian military aircraft flew around Japan since FY2013 was: one time in FY2013; six times in FY2014; two times in FY2015; one time in FY2016; one time in FY2017; and one time in FY2018.

<sup>26</sup> According to Russian reports, at a briefing held on July 23, Lieutenant-General Kobylash, commander of Russia's Long-Range Aviation announced that the first Russia-China joint air patrol on the same day was backed up by aircraft of the combat forces, a Russian A-50 and a Chinese KJ-2000 early warning and control aircraft.

<sup>27</sup> 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 to prevent landings. 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. However, the total number of troops on the Northern Territories is believed to have increased, due to the deployment of a naval surface-to-ship missile unit announced in November 2014 and an air force fighter unit reported in August 2018.

<sup>28</sup> Visits to the Northern Territories by Russian government dignitaries are as follows (titles shown are those at the time):

- December 2010: First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov (Kunashiri Island and Etorofu Island)
- January to February 2011: Regional Development Minister Viktor Basargin (Kunashiri Island and Etorofu Island)
- January 2011: Deputy Minister of Defence Dmitry Bulgakov (Kunashiri Island and Etorofu Island)
- February 2011: Minister of Defence Anatoliy Serdyukov (Kunashiri Island and Etorofu Island)
- May 2011: Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Ivanov (Kunashiri Island and Etorofu Island)
- September 2011: Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev (Kunashiri Island and Suisho Island of the Habomai Islands)
- July 2012: Prime Minister Medvedev and three ministers (Kunashiri Island)
- September 2012: Minister of Agriculture Nikolai Vasilyevich Fyodorov (Etorofu Island)
- July 2015: Minister of Healthcare Veronika Skvortsova (Kunashiri Island and Shikotan Island)
- August 2015: Prime Minister Medvedev and three ministers (Etorofu Island)
- September 2015: Minister of Agriculture Alexander Tkachev (Etorofu Island), and Minister of Transport Maksim Sokolov (Kunashiri Island and Etorofu Island)
- September 2017: Minister of Natural Resources and Environment Sergei Yefimovich Donskoi (Etorofu Island)
- February 2019: Special Presidential Representative Sergei Ivanov and Ministry of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media Konstantin Noskov (Shikotan Island)
- August 2019: Prime Minister Medvedev and two ministers (Etorofu Island)

<sup>29</sup> 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 actively being built in the military facility areas on Etorofu and Kunashiri Islands. In December 2018, the Eastern Military District Commander inspected dormitories on Etorofu and Kunashiri Islands and announced plans to develop two new dormitories on Etorofu and one on Kunashiri in 2019.

<sup>30</sup> In March 2016, Russia's Ministry of Defence announced that it planned to deploy surface-to-ship missiles "Bastion" and "Bal" to the Northern Territories and Chishima Islands before the end of the year. In November 2016, Boyevaya Vakhra, a newsletter published by the Pacific Fleet, mentioned that a "Bastion" coastal missile unit is being rotated to Etorofu Island and a "Bal" coastal missile unit to Kunashiri Island using an artillery squadron.

Russian Forces conduct a large-scale strategic military exercise as a climax of annual exercises alternately in four military districts – Eastern, Central, Southern and Western – and call the four exercises Vostok (east), Tsentr (central), Kavkaz (Caucasus) and Zapad (west), respectively.

The annual climax exercise is reportedly designed for the General Staff to accomplish presidential missions to (1) plan and verify the transition of Russia, including the Ministry of Defense and other government agencies and private enterprises, from peacetime to wartime and (2) test a setup for a large-scale severe war that requires national response.

Vostok 2018, conducted mainly in the Eastern Military District, was announced as the largest exercise since 1981, mobilizing about 300,000 troops, about 36,000 battle tanks and other vehicles, about 80 ships, and about 1,000 aircraft from the Central Military District and the Northern Fleet as well as the Eastern Military District. The disclosed number of 300,000 participating troops is viewed as covering all participants in the main exercise during the disclosed exercise period of September 11-17 and various preparatory activities from July (such as long-range unit deployment drills, logistic and combat support drills and surprise drills for checking readiness), with the main exercise participants limited to less than 100,000 troops, or as exaggerating the number of participants to demonstrate a strong military presence.

At a drill site close to the border with China and Mongolia, about 3,200 servicepersons, about 900 tanks and other vehicles, and about 30 fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft from China conducted a joint drill with Russian Forces. A China-Russia-Mongolia military parade was conducted at the site, with Russian President Vladimir Putin and the Russian and Chinese defense ministers visiting the site. Although Russia and China earlier conducted naval and other joint drills, Vostok 2018 was the first Russian annual climax exercise in which China participated. Earlier, Russia conducted annual climax exercises alone or jointly with some allies (Belarus and Kazakhstan among the members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization). Vostok 2018 attracted attention as China emphasized that it participated in the Russian exercise by dispatching the largest number of troops abroad in history and as it was pointed out that China and Russia could have been further promoting their military cooperation to check the United States.

Vostok 2014, conducted four years ago, was also a large-scale exercise with about 155,000 troops participating. While the exercise centered on Far Eastern and Arctic coastal zones and islands, including the Kamchatka Peninsula that the Russian defense minister visited during the exercise, Vostok 2018 featured dominant inland drills, including those at the site visited by the Chinese and Russian defense ministers, with coastal and island drills limited to those by the Northern Fleet in Arctic coastal zones and islands and in the Bering Sea.



Military parade conducted in Vostok 2018 by Russia, China, Mongolia (September 2018) [AFP/Jiji]



Russian Minister of Defense Shoigu (right foreground) and President Putin (left), and Chinese Defense Minister Wei (center in the back) observing Vostok 2018 (September 2018) [AFP/Jiji]

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 SSBN.<sup>31</sup>

During the Japan-Russia Foreign and Defense Ministerial

<sup>31</sup> In Soviet Military Power 1989, the U.S. DoD refers to "Bastion" as the activity area of SSBN to be protected by land, sea, and air assets while utilizing topography in the territorial waters of the former Soviet Union. It was assumed that in the Pacific region, the former Soviet Union had set up a "Bastion" mainly in Okhotsk Sea. Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Navy stated that regular long-term patrols of SSBN, which were greatly curtailed since the former Soviet Union, would be restarted in 2012.

Meeting (2+2) held in May 2019, Japan stated that the military build-up in the Northern Territories by RAF is inconsistent with Japan's legal positions. In addition, Japan expressed a concern about the vigorous activities of Russian

military aircraft around Japan and called for a calm response from Russia. Closer attention must be paid to Russian military movements in the Far East, including the Northern Territories.

## 6 Relations with Other Countries

### 1 General Situation

Russia considers the realization of its national interests as a guiding principle of its foreign policy, recognizing the multipolarization of international relations, the shift of global power to the Asia-Pacific region, and the growing importance of force in international relations.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, based on its National Security Strategy, Russia engages in open, rational, and pragmatic diplomacy to protect its national interests. It aims to pursue multidirectional diplomacy by ruling out futile confrontation and acquiring as many partners as possible around the world.<sup>33</sup>

For this reason, Russia has been working on deepening its economic partnerships with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)<sup>34</sup>. Furthermore, Russia aspires to deepen its relations with the Asia-Pacific countries, seen as drivers of the global economy, and in recent years, has attached importance to China and India as 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, Russia is exploring the possibility of cooperation with other countries towards stabilizing Syria and countering international terrorist organizations, including ISIL.

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

### 2 Relations with Asian Countries

Russia recognizes that the significance of the Asia-Pacific region is increasing within its multi-pronged foreign policy, and considers it strategically important to strengthen its status in the region from the viewpoint of socioeconomic development in Siberia and the Far East, and security.<sup>35</sup> 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 also intends to assign an important role for the privileged strategic partnership with India.<sup>36</sup>

Russia continues to advance close military cooperation with China. Export agreements on new armaments such as the S-400 surface-to-air missile system and Su-35 fighter jets were concluded in 2015, and since 2012, Russia and China have been conducting joint naval exercise "Joint Sea." In July of this year, two Russian Tu-95 long-range bombers flew with two Chinese H-6 bombers from the Sea of Japan to the East China Sea. Russia and China called this joint flight the "first Russia-China joint air patrol" conducted in line with the annual military cooperation plan between the two countries.<sup>37</sup> This indicates progress in the military cooperation between Russia and China.

In 2018, Russia concluded agreements to supply India with new armaments such as the S-400 surface-to-air missile system and Admiral Grigorovich-class frigates. The two countries have completed joint development of the "BrahMos"

<sup>32</sup> The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (November 2016).

<sup>33</sup> 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."

<sup>34</sup> In October 2011, eight CIS countries (Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Moldova, and Armenia) signed the CIS Free Trade Zone Agreement.

<sup>35</sup> The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (released in November 2016). Under this policy, Russia has participated in various frameworks in the Asia-Pacific region. Since 2015, the Eastern Economic Forum has been held in Vladivostok for accelerating the economic development of Eastern Russia and expanding international cooperation with the Asia-Pacific region. In addition, Russia has participated in regional frameworks, such as the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and the East Asia Summit (EAS; since 2011).

<sup>36</sup> 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."

<sup>37</sup> According to Russian reports, on July 23, Lieutenant-General Kobylash, commander of Russia's Long-Range Aviation held a briefing on the joint air patrol on the same day, and announced that the air group composed of two Tu-95MS bombers of Russia's Long-Range Aviation and two Chinese H-6 bombers, had flown along a pre-planned route over neutral waters of the Sea of Japan and the East China Sea. The commander also stated that the flight was performed in line with the international military cooperation plan of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation for 2019.

supersonic cruise missile and are now jointly developing the hypersonic cruise missile “BrahMos-II.”<sup>38</sup> Another example of the ongoing wide-ranging military cooperation between Russia and India is the joint exercise “INDRA,” which has been taking place since 2003 with the involvement of the armies and navies of both countries, with their air forces also taking part in recent years. 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

As antagonism between Ukraine and Russia has continued since 2014, Ukraine has shifted away from non-alignment policy that Ukraine once held and is pursuing efforts to join NATO. In March 2018, then President Petro Poroshenko stated that Ukraine would participate in a NATO Membership Action Plan (MAP).<sup>39</sup> Sporadic clashes between Ukrainian troops and separatist armed forces continue in the eastern part of the country, with over 10,000 people reported to have died since April 2014. Furthermore, the political processes set out in the Minsk agreements seem to have stalled, including the holding of local elections and allowing more autonomy in the areas controlled by separatists. The unstable situation in eastern Ukraine and the Russian “annexation” of Crimea have taken on aspect of being entrenched.

In November 2018, there was an incident in which the Coast Guard of the Border Service of Russia seized three Ukrainian naval vessels near the Kerch Strait, a channel — over which Russia has built a bridge to provide an overland link between the Crimean Peninsula and mainland Russia — connecting the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. Ukraine declared martial law in response to this incident. While then President Poroshenko criticized the move as a Russian attempt to take possession of the Sea of Azov, following on from its seizure of Crimea and eastern Ukraine, President Putin hit back, calling the response a provocation aimed at increasing popular support immediately before the Ukrainian presidential election.

### 4 Situation in Syria

Since September 2015, while acquiring Tartus Naval Base

and Khmeimim Air Base as bases of its operations in Syria, the Russian military has conducted aerial bombing using fighter-bombers and long-range bombers as well as red cruise missiles from surface vessels and submarines deployed to the Caspian Sea and Mediterranean. In December 2016, a nationwide ceasefire agreement brokered by Russia and Turkey took effect between the Assad administration and opposition forces. While Russia has continued to fight ISIL and Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS; formerly the “al-Nusra Front”) since January 2017, it has also held Syrian peace talks in Astana, Kazakhstan together with Syria and Iran. Russia has been increasing its presence in the Middle East by promoting initiatives that aim for political resolutions in the future.

In December 2017, President Putin visited a base in Syria, where he announced that the fight against terrorism in the country had been largely resolved, that Russia would continue to operate two permanent bases within Syria, and that he had decided that most of the Russian forces in Syria would be redeployed back to Russia.<sup>40</sup>

Russia is working to bolster its naval forces and enhance their cooperation with its air force in Syria. For instance, in September 2018, Russia mustered 26 naval vessels from the Northern Fleet, Baltic Fleet, Black Sea Fleet and Caspian Flotilla in the eastern Mediterranean off Syria and held the first major joint exercise involving the navy and air force, in which 34 aircraft — including strategic bombers — took part.

 Chapter 3, Section 7 (Trends in International Terrorism and Regional Conflicts)

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, operations in Syria using cruise missiles and strategic bombers have provided the ideal setting to demonstrate Russia’s long-range precision strike capabilities. Considering the significant influence of

<sup>38</sup> Aside from this cooperation, it has been noted that India is considering the lease of another nuclear-powered attack submarine to replace the Akula-class nuclear-powered attack submarine that it began leasing from Russia in 2012.

<sup>39</sup> The NATO MAP is a NATO program to offer advice and support to countries wishing to join NATO. However, participation in a MAP does not mean that the country will decide to participate in NATO in the future.

<sup>40</sup> In December 2017, at an Expanded Meeting of the Defence Ministry Board, it was announced that since the start of its military operation in Syria, Russian air units have launched approximately 34,000 strikes, damaging or eliminating approximately 8,000 armored vehicles, 718 weapons and ammunition production facilities, and 60,318 combatants. At the December 2018 Expanded Meeting of the Defence Ministry Board, it was announced that armaments not included in the reorganization of the Khmeimim and Tartus bases had been removed and the number of personnel reduced, and that flights by air force units were primarily being conducted for reconnaissance purposes.

Russia's military intervention on the course of the Assad administration, coupled with the expanding partnerships between Russia and surrounding countries such as Turkey and Iran, Russia's influence on future stability in Syria and on the political settlement process cannot be neglected.

## 5 Relations with Commonwealth of Independent States

Russia positions the development of bilateral and multilateral cooperation with the CIS as one of its most important foreign policy objectives. Russia considers that its vital interests are concentrated in the territories of the CIS, and deploys its troops in Ukraine (Crimea), Moldova (Transnistria<sup>41</sup>), Armenia, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia (South Ossetia, Abkhazia), which withdrew from the CIS in August 2009.<sup>42</sup> Through the conclusion of an alliance and strategic partnership treaty with Abkhazia in November 2014, the conclusion of an alliance with South Ossetia in 2015, and other efforts,<sup>43</sup> Russia has been working to ensure its military influence.<sup>44</sup>

Due to increasing activities by Islamic armed insurgents in Central Asia and the Caucasus, Russia has been pursuing military cooperation primarily on counterterrorism 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).<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, in June 2009, a permanent joint rapid reaction force was established to strengthen the functions of the CIS Collective Rapid Deployment Force.<sup>46</sup>

President Putin once remarked, "The collapse of the Soviet Union was a major geopolitical disaster of the 20th century," and he has been working to unify and strengthen

the sphere of the former Soviet Union through such as the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the CIS Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), and the creation of the Eurasian Economic Union in 2015.

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.<sup>47</sup>

## 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."

Feeling that the United States' installation of missile defense systems both at home and abroad — including in Europe and the Asia-Pacific — undermines global and regional security, Russia has criticized these moves for upsetting the strategic balance. Russia is also moving forward with the development of new strategic weapons that are said to be capable of reliably penetrating missile defense systems.

While expressing concerns about preemptive and space-based missile defense in response to the MDR published by the United States in January 2019, Russia stated that dialogue between the two countries needed to resume.

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.<sup>48</sup> In addition, the United States dispatched a missile destroyer to the Black Sea and provided nonlethal weapons

<sup>41</sup> 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 then 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.

<sup>42</sup> 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.

<sup>43</sup> 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.

<sup>44</sup> While some CIS countries continue to prioritize their relations with Russia, such as Belarus and Kazakhstan, others attempt to maintain a distance from Russia. In addition to Georgia which has already withdrawn from CIS and Ukraine which is announcing plans to withdrawal, countries such as 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.

<sup>45</sup> 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.

<sup>46</sup> 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), has been implemented every year since 2009.

<sup>47</sup> In February 2018, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov stated that the ISIL presence in northern and eastern Afghanistan had become serious, with thousands of combatants active there. However, the U.S. commander of the NATO mission stationed in the country to train Afghan security units said that Russia was exaggerating the ISIL threat to justify its provision of military assistance to the Taliban.

<sup>48</sup> Following the occupation of the Crimean Peninsula by Russia, then U.S. DoD 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.

to the Ukrainian Government.<sup>49</sup>

In regard to the situation in Syria, there were some positive developments, including the recognition of the importance of U.S.-Russia cooperation to eliminate ISIL, a U.N.-led political resolution to the conflict, and provisional safe zones as shown in a joint statement released at the U.S.-Russia Summit Meeting held in November 2017. However, antagonism between the two countries has continued, with both the United States and Russia criticizing each other over the alleged use of chemical weapons by the Assad regime in April 2017, and also the missile strikes against Syria by the United States, the United Kingdom, and France in April 2018. At the U.S.-Russia summit meeting held in July 2018, disarmament issues as well as international affairs including North Korea and Syria were discussed based on the recognition of a need to improve U.S.-Russia relations, which have deteriorated. At the U.S.-Russia foreign ministers' meeting held in May 2019, both countries expressed their interest in having many more opportunities for conversation on arms control and multiple strategic security issues between the two countries. Furthermore, at the U.S.-Russia summit meeting held in June 2019, the leaders agreed to continue discussion on a "21st century model of arms control." Although a U.S.-Russia deputy-ministerial strategic security dialogue was held in July of the same year, no concrete result was confirmed.



See Chapter 3, Section 7 (Trends in International Terrorism and Regional Conflict)

## 7

### 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 common 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.<sup>50</sup> Additionally, NATO and European countries have maintained a severe diplomatic stance towards Russia while working together with the Ukrainian Government.

At the NRC summit held in Lisbon in November 2010 prior to the suspension of working level cooperation, Russia and NATO would work towards building a true and modernized strategic partnership. They have continued searching for possibilities of dialogue and cooperation in fields such as MD, Afghanistan, cooperation on counterterrorism, 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 NR 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 Russia aiming at "sector MD" in which both sides operate integrally by setting zones for 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.<sup>51</sup>

Furthermore, the Ukrainian crisis has represented existing 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.<sup>52</sup>

Russia revealed that it has deployed two army divisions near the border with Ukraine, and one army division near its border with Belarus, and Russia conducted the strategic command and staff exercise Zapad 2017 in its Western Military District and Belarus in September 2017.<sup>53</sup> That exercise was brought up at the NATO-Russia Council meeting held in October of that same year, where it was pointed out that the number of actually participating soldiers and the area used for the exercise were larger than indicated in the announcement made by Russia prior to the exercise. However, there were no invasions into other countries by Russia, and no Russian units stayed in Belarus following the

<sup>49</sup> 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. In March 2018, following the U.S. State Department's announcement to Congress that it had approved the sale of anti-tank missiles to Ukraine, the Russian Foreign Ministry attacked the decision, stating that the sale of the missiles would not resolve the conflict in Ukraine.

<sup>50</sup> 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.

<sup>51</sup> 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.

<sup>52</sup> See Chapter 2, Section 8 for more about NATO's initiatives.

<sup>53</sup> According to a Russian Defense Ministry announcement, approximately 12,700 personnel, 10 ships, 70 aircraft and helicopters, and 250 tanks participated in this exercise.

exercise, which were points of concern.

Russia's Foreign Policy Concept announced in November 2016 states that containment policies of the United States and its allies undermine regional and global stability, and Russia would maintain its negative perspective towards NATO expansion. In December 2018, Minister of Defence Sergei Shoigu stated that the establishment of NATO's new headquarters would enable units to be deployed more rapidly from the United States to Europe and within Europe to areas close to Russia's border, and that NATO was beefing up its military capacity, with members in the process of achieving the goal of dedicating 2% of GDP to defense spending. The minister then emphasized that Russia was prepared to counter both current and future threats with its modern, agile, compact and effective military.

## 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

Aircraft carrier Admiral Kuznetsov

<Specifications,  
performance>

Full load displacement:  
59,439 tons

Speed: 30 knots  
(approximately 56 km/h)

On-board aircraft: Maximum 20 fighters and attack  
aircraft

Main armament: Ship-to-ship missiles (maximum firing  
range 550 km)

<Description>

Commissioned in 1990, it is currently the only aircraft  
carrier that the Russian Navy possesses. Carrier-based  
aircraft take off by the ski jump method. Scheduled to  
begin refurbishment in 2021.



【Jane's by IHS Markit】

policy. The country's export value has been increasing in recent years.<sup>54</sup> In January 2007, the Russian Government granted the exclusive authority 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.<sup>55</sup> Russia concluded an agreement with China to sell new Su-35 fighters and the S-400 surface-to-air missile system. All the 24 Su-35 fighters<sup>56</sup> agreed on had been delivered by 2018, with the first delivery of the S-400 reportedly due to take place that year. 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.<sup>57</sup>

In recent years, Russia has been aggressively marketing its arms to allies and partners of the United States, including Turkey and Saudi Arabia, in addition to traditional export destinations. In particular, the export of S-400 to Turkey,<sup>58</sup> a member country of NATO, has met with strong opposition from the United States.

### KEY WORD

#### Fifth generation fighter

While there are no clear standards for demarcating fighter generations, it is pointed out that a fifth generation fighter has more advanced capabilities than those of previous generations by combining the latest technologies, such as various types of electronic equipment and stealth.

<sup>54</sup> According to SIPRI, Russian arms exports between 2014 and 2018 decreased by 17% compared to that of the period between 2009 and 2013. Russia has the second largest share of arms exports in the world (21%) after the United States.

<sup>55</sup> Russia has delivered to Indonesia 5 Su-27 fighters and 11 Su-30 fighters. Furthermore, it was reported in 2016 that Russia signed an agreement to sell 11 Su-35 fighters to Indonesia. To date, Russia has delivered 18 Su-30 fighters to Malaysia and 12 Su-27 fighters and 36 Su-30 fighters to Vietnam. There are also reports of a sales contract with Vietnam for Kilo-class submarines. All six of these submarines were delivered to Vietnam by January 2017. With regard to India, aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov, which had been refurbished in Russia, was delivered to India, renamed as INS Vikramaditya in November 2013, which arrived in India in January 2014. Moreover, to date, Russia has delivered to Algeria 52 Su-30 fighters and to Venezuela 24 Su-30 fighters. 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. Russia plans to supply the S-400 system to India, in addition to China and Turkey, and is believed to be engaged in ongoing discussions concerning an agreement to supply the system to Saudi Arabia, as well.

<sup>56</sup> According to reports, contracts have been concluded to export 24 Su-35 fighter jets for approximately USD 2 billion and to export 32 S-400 missile launchers for approximately USD 3 billion.

<sup>57</sup> 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."

<sup>58</sup> Russia and Turkey made an export contract for S-400 in 2017. The first delivery of the S-400 was reportedly completed in July 2019. In particular, regarding the export of S-400 to Turkey, a member country of NATO, the United States expressed concern that some intelligence on the F-35 would leak to Russia via S-400, as a result of which, Turkey was unable to participate in the F-35 development program.