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Russian Federation: Domestic Issues and Legislative Branch
By Luba Schwartzman

CABINET
'New techniques'
On 16 October, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov discussed certain changes in the Russian government, including the dissolution of the Ministry of Federation Affairs, Nationalities and Migration Policy. Its area of jurisdiction will be divided between the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD), the Ministry of Economic Development, the foreign ministry, and a new ministry. The MVD will handle a large proportion of the issues, including those related to migration, which will "make it possible to create a unified administrative system in this sphere." According to Kasyanov, a new "post of Russian Federation Minister handling relations between nationalities as well as issues linked to autonomous areas, religious faiths, and ties to public organizations will be introduced in Russia; ...the Ministry of Economic Development will handle matters relating to regional relations and municipal entities, and... the Foreign Ministry will handle the problems faced by our fellow-countrymen abroad." (ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA, 18 Oct 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-1018, via World News Connection)

The presidential human rights commissioner in Chechnya, Vladimir Kalamanov, welcomed this "new approach," explaining that it "signifies the start of a search for new approaches to the migration problem," and that the current situation was "unsatisfactory." (ITAR-TASS, 0623 GMT, 17 Oct 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-1017, via World News Connection)
Others are concerned, however, about the way in which this administrative change could bring about a "night-watchman government rather than a socialist government." Even on the website of one of the government's main mouthpieces, www.strana.ru, an article appeared that suggested that this administrative move was a reflection of the diminished fear of the Federation's disintegration, and a prelude to the "abrogating [of] treaties between the federal center and the regions." (strana.ru, 17 Oct 01; via Johnson's Russia List)

Kalamanov had indicated that this move constituted an example of the ways in which the Russian president "personally devotes great attention to the problem of migration" and that "a quest for ways to elaborate new techniques to manage migration" was underway. (ITAR-TASS, 0623 GMT, 17 Oct 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-1017, via World News Connection)

But what kind of "new techniques" the interior ministry is going to devise is anybody's guess. It would not be surprising if, at some point in the near future, representatives of the minister handling nationalities affairs appeared in the seven federal districts -- Russia's answer to the national republics.

**REGIONS**

**Old grudges**

It is clear, however, that Russia still is unhappy with Tatarstan's failure to abolish some articles in that republic's constitution that allegedly do not comply with federal laws, and with that republic's insistence on switching to the Latin alphabet. The controversy continues with the federal center fielding more experts condemning the changeover and Tatar officials repeating that the federal concern is political, rather than linguistic.

Tatarstan's other policies also threaten federal cohesion -- especially the way in which the republic's government controls key enterprises and concentrates
capital in the region. For example, recently Tatneft, a local heavy-hitting joint-stock oil company, was allowed to acquire a number of independent enterprises in order to decrease the value added tax paid to the federal center. Also, unlike some of the other presidential plenipotentiaries to federal districts, Sergei Kirienko, whose Volga District includes Tatarstan, generally is compelled to secure the agreement of the Tatarstani government in making appointments. (IEWS RUSSIAN REGIONAL REPORT, 17 Oct 01)

In the republic's capital, Kazan, however, residents demonstrated that Tatarstan's special position, already under attack, falls short of their aspirations. In commemorating 15 October, the day on which Ivan the Terrible's troops seized Kazan several hundred years ago, a rally was held demanding full independence. About 2,000 persons attended, accusing the republic's leadership of the republic of betrayal. (TV6, 0700 GMT, 15 Oct 01; via Johnson's Russia List)

**POLITICAL PARTIES**
At a meeting of the Fatherland movement, its leader, Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov, spoke optimistically of the forthcoming November congress at which Fatherland will become a single party with Unity and possibly with the All Russia Movement. He predicted that the new party will become "a mass, powerful and influential political force capable of bearing responsibility for the country's fate."
He also criticized the oligarchs for earning their profits at Russia's expense and radical political forces for trying to destabilize the country. Finally, he appealed to President Putin to lead the projected unified centrist party, noting that this would be "not only desirable but also essential" for Russia's future. (INTERFAX, 13 Oct 01; via Johnson's Russia List) The presidential administration responded that President Putin had "more than once" stated that he did not plan on joining any political party. (RFE/RL NEWSLINE, 17 Oct 01)

**MEDIA**
On 12 October Alfred Kokh, the managing director of Gazprom-Media, resigned from the board of directors. Originally, he asserted that he made this decision because he had fallen victim to "bureaucratic intrigues" and was gradually "pushed out" of managerial decision-making. (ITAR-TASS, 1324 GMT, 12 Oct 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-1012, via World News Connection)

Later it became clear, however, that the resignation was motivated by his plans to buy Gazprom's media shares (including the NTV television channel and the Ekho Moskvy radio station) jointly with NTV's new director, Boris Jordan, and an undisclosed foreign investor. (EKHO MOSKVY, 1400 GMT, 17 Oct 01; via Johnson's Russia List)

This was not the only media deal on the market: Magnate Boris Berezovsky has made a $10 million offer for the TV6 television channel, to which some of the former NTV staff fled after new management took over. Berezovsky has political interests in taking over the channel; however, those interests were slighted shortly after his offer became public when yet another lawsuit -- by Television News Services for a $3 million early debt collection -- was instituted. (THE RUSSIA JOURNAL, 20 Oct 01; via Johnson's Russia List)

Others in the Russian media have more to worry about than just lawsuits. Amidst death threats, Novaya gazeta correspondent Anna Politkovskaya, known for her work in Chechnya, has been forced to flee to Vienna. These threats presumably relate to Politkovskaya's charge that a helicopter carrying high-ranking military officers, one of whom was to report to President Putin on the conduct of the Russian soldiers in Chechnya, was shot down not by rebels but by the military itself. (CPJ, 15 Oct 01; via www.cpj.org) The threats were given particular poignancy by the fact that a female resident of Politkovskaya’s apartment building was murdered. (See Politkovskaya's interview with ichkeria.org, 8 Oct 01)
The death threats are all the more menacing since they appeared soon after an assassination attempt against the editor-in-chief of Novaya gazeta's Ryazan bureau, Aleksei Frolov, and his family. The newspaper reports that, on the evening of 2 October, poisonous gas was leaked into Frolov’s apartment through the keyhole; the journalist, his mother and his pregnant wife were lucky to have survived. (NOVAYA GAZETA, 8 Oct 01; via www.novayagazeta.ru.)

Russian Federation: Security Services
By Michael Varuolo

Concern and change
A growing concern over their personal safety has aroused Russian citizens to take new interest in domestic security measures. However, this renewed interest may not be shared by Russia's major security organs. With even the most powerful states vulnerable to terrorism, the newspaper Rossiyskaya gazeta decided to interview those charged with ensuring Russia's internal security.

The correspondents started with the Security Council, where staffers then passed them on to the press service. At the press service their requests for information were not answered. Not having received any information on the safety of Russian citizens, the reporters continued this search at all the other security organs. Time and again they were diverted to services that did not return their calls. It was not until they reached a staffer at the FSB Public Relations Center that they obtained any kind of response to their questions. The staffer’s reply may have caused the reporters more concern than relief. He reassured them "that nothing has been done recently to beef up security at enterprises representing possible targets of terrorist attacks" because, as he explained, "these facilities already adhere to strict security guidelines and need no additional security measures." (ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA, 10 Oct 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-1009, via World News Connection)
Apparently this did not alleviate the concerns of the reporters and they continued their search. In the end they were able to get responses only from two organs. One reply was provided by Sergey Fedkin, deputy division chief of the Main Criminal Investigation Directorate of the MVD, who said that his office was doing its best; however, the flow of ammunition, weapons, and explosives into illegal channels was continuing. The other reply was from Vitaliy Nasonov, deputy minister of the Atomic Energy Press Service. His reply was even more alarming than that of Fedkin. He stated that time and money are required to implement fully the new Russian security measures needed for the proper protection of nuclear facilities. (ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA, 10 Oct 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-1009, via World News Connection) Somehow, these responses seemed to do little to reassure the journalists.

Meanwhile, Moscow continues shuffling and reshuffling security cadres in Chechnya. The head of the Russian-installed Chechen cabinet, Stanislav Ilyasov, said that the new directors of the Department of the Interior and the Federal Security Service Department in the republic will be nominated by Moscow. As Ilyasov explained, "current law does not require mandatory coordination of such appointments with regional administrations." (INTERFAX, 0746 GMT, 12 Oct 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-1012, via World News Connection) Only a few days later, Ilyasov's rival, Akham Kadyrov, head of Moscow's Chechen administration, took local power organs under his personal control with Moscow's apparent blessings. (IZVESTIA, 19 Oct 01; What the Papers Say, via ISI Emerging Markets Database)

**Russian Federation: Foreign Relations**

By Scott Bethel

**Vladimir Putin: Hobnobber extraordinaire**
Russian President Vladimir Putin cashed in on his efforts to develop a network of relationships with foreign leaders during the recent Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum held in Shanghai. Putin clearly intended to waste no time during the conference, having already sent a high-level advance team to Shanghai, including Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Losyukov. (ITAR-TASS, 1105 GMT, 17 Oct 01; BBC Monitoring, via ISI Emerging Markets Database)

Putin arranged meetings with a number of Pacific leaders, both for closing deals and laying the groundwork for future cooperation. Among the highlights:

- **19 October meeting with South Korean President Kim Dae-jung.** The two leaders confirmed increased cooperation in transportation, energy and fishing. More significantly, Putin re-established a role for Russia in any settlement between the two Koreas. (ITAR-TASS, 1257 GMT, 19 Oct 01; BBC Monitoring, via ISI Emerging Markets Database) The statements were even more noteworthy in light of this summer's visit to Russia by North Korean President Kim Jung-il. During that visit, the first by the North Korean president since the early 1980s, similar cooperation agreements were discussed. (PRAVDA, 30 Jul 01; via online Pravda)

- **19 October meeting with Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri.** This meeting was notable because of the large Muslim population in both countries and in light of Russia's ongoing struggles with Muslim minorities throughout the North Caucasus. (ITAR-TASS, 1246 GMT, 19 Oct 01; BBC Monitoring, via ISI Emerging Markets Database, and PRAVDA, 19 Oct 01; via online Pravda) The meeting focused on efforts to curb international terrorism. However, Putin also raised the issue of increased security cooperation between the two countries and closer working relationships between the two governments. (ITAR-TASS, 1310 GMT, 19 Oct 01; BBC Monitoring, via ISI Emerging Markets Database) It is likely also that Putin used the increased security cooperation clause as a springboard for discussions of the Indonesian arms sales market. Russia has long desired
a greater market share in Asia and could offer Indonesia significant upgrades at low cost without the human rights limitations which often accompany Western arms sales. The recent major arms deal with Iran (another country with a large Muslim population) could serve as a model for increased cooperation between Russia and Indonesia, although the Iranian sale constitutes a violation of the "Gore-Chernomyrdin" agreement.

• Putin also met with other heads of state including those of China, Japan and Malaysia. Little or none of the substance of these talks has been publicized so far. (ITAR-TASS, 1610 GMT, 21 Oct 01; BBC Monitoring, via ISI Emerging Markets Database) Still, it is likely that Putin is laying the groundwork for further cooperation.

This is not to imply that everything went the Russian president’s way during the APEC summit. He was quick to point out that he had hoped that the conference could focus on economic issues. (THE NEW YORK TIMES, 17 Oct 01) However, never missing an opportunity or being slow to go with the flow, Putin appears to have put those aspirations aside for this conference and joined in the chorus condemning global terrorism. He figured prominently in all press releases and communiqués during the event. However, he saved the most dramatic announcement for the last day, again drawing attention to himself and to Russia as a regional as well as a global power broker.

**Giving Ground on ABM?**

On the last day of the summit, following a meeting with President Bush, the two issued a joint statement and held a press conference regarding the future of the controversial 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM). Until now, Putin has tried to hold the US to the terms and conditions contained in the ABM Treaty in an effort to slow American development of National Missile Defense (NMD). During the press conference Putin finessed the Russian position, stating that though Moscow’s position was "well known," it was important to "look to the future."
(THE NEW YORK TIMES, 22 Oct 01) This appears to acknowledge that there is room for the two sides to maneuver on this issue.

It was widely believed that Putin was not overly concerned about the conditions of the treaty (which constrain the use of anti-missile defense systems), but rather wanted to use the ABM treaty as leverage to blunt other Western initiatives, such as NATO enlargement and condemnation of Russian human rights abuses in its war in Chechnya. However, since the terrorism crisis on 11 September, Russia has soared to new heights on the international stage and has had some of its concerns alleviated. Not only has the West backed off on Chechnya, but Secretary of State Colin Powell has made several statements in support of the Russian offensive against "Chechen terrorists." (THE NEW YORK TIMES, 19 Sep 01, and ITAR-TASS, 1804 GMT, 19 Sep 01; BBC Monitoring, via ISI Emerging Markets Database) In addition France, NATO's harshest critic of Russia's Chechen policies, has agreed to rethink its position. Furthermore, not only may NATO enlargement have been slowed by the crisis, but Russia has been included in several important NATO conferences and Putin himself has been lavishly courted by NATO Secretary-General Robertson. (NATO.INT, 3 Oct 01) The result of this windfall of foreign policy successes for Russia may have led Putin and Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov to determine that the time was right to offer the US a carrot. However, it remains to be seen what further concessions Russia may want in exchange for moderating its tough position on the ABM treaty. This is to be expected, considering how much Russia's foreign policy agenda has gained, remarkably, as a result of the al Qaeda assault.

**BRAC, Russian style**

Russia has decided to close two of its highest-profile and longest-standing overseas military installations at Lourdes, Cuba and Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam. The Cam Ranh Bay facility had been used as a staging and refueling installation for the Russian Air Force and Navy, while Lourdes has been a listening post for the Russian intelligence services for more than 40 years. (RUSSIAN PUBLIC TV
ORT, 1700 GMT, 17 Oct 01; BBC Monitoring, via ISI Emerging Markets Database) The official explanation for these proposed closures is that the savings to the Russian economy will be on the magnitude of $200m annually for the Lourdes site and about half of that for the Cam Rahn Bay location. (REUTERS, 18 Oct 01) However, some analysts believe that these figures are somewhat inflated.

Regardless of whether the numbers are entirely accurate, it is clear that the Russian military would benefit from any reduction in expenses for overseas locations. Moreover, deployments by the Russian military to the Pacific have been reduced greatly since 1993 and the utility of the Lourdes site is questionable because of the introduction of highly capable eavesdropping satellites and ship-borne intelligence-collection packages.

Some analysts believe that the Russians may want also to use the closure of these two installations as leverage to induce the US to reduce its much larger overseas presence. Moscow already has mentioned the US radar installation in northern Norway as a place for such a "trade-off."

Russian Federation: Armed Forces
By Walter Jackson

Is it really all about a war on terrorism?
Despite otherwise incompatible views, governments within the "coalition" do agree that the Taliban regime of Mullah Omar needs to be replaced (not necessarily by a Northern Alliance-dominated government), and that Osama bin Laden and his Al Qaeda followers have to go. This consensus works especially well for Russia, which, with minimal effort and risk, seems to be getting what it wants: the demise of a radical and potentially threatening fundamentalist Islamic regime which had required a significant military commitment along the Tajik-
Afghan border. (The Russians maintain at least 10,000 troops along that border.) Most recently, it appears that Russia (along with China and Iran) has been sketching out the Afghanistan politico-military end game.

**What Russia wants**
Russia wants the former Soviet Union's global power status back, along with economic prosperity and a modern military capable of enforcing that status, but without the consequent economic drain. Russia's president clearly is using the 11 September attacks and American coalition-building efforts to improve his bargaining position vis-à-vis President Bush. In the spirit of the old adage, nothing ventured, nothing gained, some items on Moscow's wish list include: Washington giving up its National Missile Defense (NMD) plans, ending criticism of the war in Chechnya, halting NATO expansion initiatives, and lifting the sanctions against Iraq.

**The Russian scorecard so far**
Russia's position on US National Missile Defense is that its existence could not have prevented the 11 September attacks; therefore, the US should abandon this effort. However, US National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, after making positive comments about US-Russian cooperation, staunchly defended the US position on NMD. In fact, she said, the US position is even more persuasive now than it was prior to the attacks, since the threat of ballistic missile attacks by terrorists cannot be ruled out. This may be a subtle way of letting Moscow know that Washington still views with concern the DPRK and Iran (plus Iraq) as potential threats to US and regional security. (IZVESTIA DAILY, 15 Oct 01; United Press International, via lexis-nexis)

Unlike the Chechen war itself, Putin can claim a clear victory in the media campaign. Not only has the US diminished its criticism of the war in Chechnya, but some administration officials have echoed Russian sentiments labeling Chechen rebels as "terrorists." (INTERFAX, 28 Sep 01; via RFE/RL Newsline)
Wasting no time, Putin appears to be expanding the notion of Russia battling “terrorists” to include potential military actions in Georgia, without rebuff so far. Lately Russia and its Abkhaz allies have muddied the waters, asserting that a Chechen-Georgian group had attacked Abkhazia. Putin apparently is using the threat of extending Russia's war in Chechnya into Georgia's Kodori Gorge to force President Eduard Shevardnadze to abandon his efforts to oust the Russian military presence from Georgia. (INTERFAX, 1132 GMT, 9 Oct 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-1009, via World News Connection) Tbilisi consistently has leaned more toward the West than toward Russia. However, there has been little visible support for Shevardnadze from the West in recent weeks. Thus the Russian military is obtaining a free hand in Chechnya, and perhaps in Georgia as well.

**Full speed ahead**

As the US focuses most of its attention on building a global "coalition," Russia is moving ahead at warp speed in an effort that amounts to picking the pockets of the US by luring away traditional American arms purchasers. During the last few weeks Moscow has turned its attention to Southeast Asia to make a run on a bigger portion of the nearly US $200 billion that the region spent on weapons last year. Southeast Asia accounts for nearly one-quarter of the global demand for military purchases, and Moscow wants a bigger slice of that pie. Cheap Russian military products are appealing to many Third World countries that are trying to stretch their small budgets. At the international air and naval show LIMA-2001, Russia's deputy chairman of the committee for military cooperation with foreign states, Mikhail Novikov, stated that substantive talks were held with military representatives from Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines and Brunei. Moscow was offering the latest short-, medium- and long-range missile defense systems. (ITAR-TASS, 1015 GMT, 14 Oct 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-1014, via World News Connection)

Farther to the East, for the first time a South Korean military delegation arrived in Russia's Far Eastern Military District. This symbolic visit by the ROK deputy chief
of the combat training directorate featured tours of military educational institutions, museums and memorials. (ITAR-TASS, 0258 GMT, 15 Oct 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-1015, via World News Connection) Although only a cordial military-to-military meeting, it does set the stage for future contacts.

**Who wants to join the Russian military?**
The overall image of the Russian military probably is near an all-time low. However, President Putin continues to press on with military reform, reducing the total number of servicemen to 1 million by the end of 2001, and retiring 300 generals. Proposed budget increases will pay for part of the modernization and some quality of life improvements. However, the lack of enthusiasm among the military for reductions in force structure, and no real roadmap for procurement, surely will impede the entire military reform process. (IZVESTIA, 16 Oct 01; via ISI Emerging Markets Database)

Other issues are affecting the reform process. With a decreasing population of eligible draftees, plus a Russian youth apathetic about military service, and with increasing numbers of draft-age men classified as "not suitable for military service," Russia's military recruitment process is in trouble. The fall callup began on 1 October, concurrent with an alternative military service bill submitted to the Duma. Of the annual quota of eligible draftees, only 12 percent were actually sworn in to serve. Many received college deferments, but most were rejected for health reasons, and a strikingly large number (27,000) were classified as draft dodgers. According to the head of the main mobilization directorate of the General Staff, Col-Gen Vladislav Putilin, "overall 54 percent of young men called up for military service have various health problems, including their psychological state and other limitations affecting their suitability for military service." (In some parts of Russia, the figure is are reported to be as high as 75 percent.) This constitutes an increase from the 1998 level of 47 percent. Putilin stated that the figure during the Soviet (1989) era was only 2 percent. (ITAR-TASS, 1236 GMT,
4 Oct 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-1004, via World News Connection) Of course, the accuracy of the 1989 statistics is debatable.

Overcoming the draftees' lack of enthusiasm for service (who wants to go to Chechnya or Tajikistan?), low pay, inadequate housing and poorly maintained equipment has proven to be a major challenge for the Russian military. As the economy gains momentum, military reform should accompany this trend, or the Russian military will continue to atrophy. Putin recently has portrayed the announced closure of expensive bases in Cuba and Vietnam as cost-cutting measures. (KOMMERSANT DAILY, 18 Oct 01; via ISI Defense and Security) This may mean increased funding for modern planes, tanks and ships; Russia historically has been big on showmanship over substance, quantity over quality. However, to create a modern, effective, well-trained and motivated 21st-century military, Moscow must be able to balance appropriately modernization and quality of life without overextending its assets.

Newly Independent States: Western Region
By Tammy Lynch

UKRAINE
And now for the scapegoats...
Now that Ukraine has been forced to admit its culpability in the downing of a Russian Sibir Airliner on 4 October, the search for those who will shoulder the blame publicly has begun. Not long after Russian officials announced that a Ukrainian anti-aircraft missile fired during training exercises had indeed caused the crash, the first two of "the chosen" were ordained. Volodymyr Tkachov, head of Ukraine's anti-aircraft forces, and his deputy, Volodymyr Dyakov, were suspended on 16 October. The suspensions will remain in effect "until Ukraine's investigating commission has reached its final conclusions" about the causes of the incident, defense ministry spokesman Konstantin Khivrenko told reporters.
(REUTERS, 1118 EST, 17 Oct 01; via Yahoo! News) Since those final conclusions are likely to include a finding of negligence on the part of those in charge of the exercises, one can assume that these "suspensions" eventually will become permanent. Khivrenko, however, did not specify how long the Ukrainian investigation will take. However, one can assume also that officials will not rush to complete it, given a recent promise from Sibir Airline spokesman Andrei Pozdnyakov. "We'll definitely sue as soon as the legal side responsible for the crash is determined," he said, suggesting $10 million as a rough estimate of corporate damages. This figure, of course, does not include the inevitable individual lawsuits. (KIEV POST, 18 Oct 01)

Given the gravity of the situation, Tkachov and Dyakov shouldn't worry about being lonely as the hatchet falls. Several political leaders quickly began calling for the resignation of Defense Minister Oleksandr Kuzmuk. In fact, Kuzmuk himself offered his resignation directly to President Leonid Kuchma on the very day of the disaster, and now admits that he never doubted a Ukrainian missile downed the aircraft. "For me, from the very beginning," he recently said, "there were no other versions and there could not be." (ASSOCIATED PRESS, 1511 EST, 19 Oct 01; via Yahoo! News) This statement, of course, differs greatly from his denials of responsibility directly following the disaster. On the day of the crash -- the very day on which Kuzmuk offered his resignation -- Khivrenko told reporters that the defense minister had ruled out the possibility that Ukraine was responsible. Then, on 9 October, Kuzmuk told the Rada that the missile in question fell into the sea two minutes before the plane exploded. "The plane could not have been covered by the lighting beam from a locator, nor could the missile have been aimed at it," he said. (INTERFAX, 9 Oct 01; via lexis-nexis) [ED. NOTE: At press time, Kuzmuk's resignation was accepted]

Today, following his about-face on the issue, it does not appear that Kuzmuk's political rivals will be satisfied with his dismissal; they are also suggesting that he be criminally charged with, among other things, "deliberately providing false
information to people's deputies" and "abuse of office by a military official."

(INTERFAX, 1012 GMT, 16 Oct 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-1016, via World News Connection) In a motion supported by the Rada, Deputies Hryhoriy Omelchenko and Anatoliy Yermak requested that the prosecutor's office consider opening a criminal inquiry into the issue. They wrote, "Ukrainian Defense Minister Oleksandr Kuzmuk and Ukrainian Air Defense Commander Volodymyr Tkachov knew the plane had been hit by a missile on the day it happened. Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma later confirmed this..., saying that Kuzmuk had filed his resignation on 4 October 2001." Defense officials, they continued, "misled the people's deputies by saying that the missile could not have hit that plane." And, of course, they did.

But what of Kuzmuk's offer to resign on 4 October? Surely, the defense minister must have explained to the president why he felt he ought to resign. Still, Kuchma immediately rejected the minister's offer. Even more, both Kuzmuk and Kuchma soon began denying all responsibility for the incident. On 6 October -- two days after Kuzmuk must have expressed his belief that Ukraine was responsible for the crash -- Kuchma talked to the press. He explained, "All our experts, Ukrainian and Russian, rule out such a possibility from a technical point of view," and suggested that the missiles and the plane were on a "completely different path." (AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, 6 Oct 01; via lexis-nexis) On 11 October, Kuchma defended his rejection of Kuzmuk's resignation offer by suggesting that the cause of the crash remained unknown. "Being the President and Supreme Commander-in-Chief, I have not let valuable people go and I won't do that in the future," he said. However, "If the culpability of the launching crew is confirmed,... that will be a different matter. Somebody will have to bear responsibility." (INTERFAX, 1220 GMT, 11 Oct 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-1011, via World News Connection) Yes, somebody, but naturally not he -- despite the fact that as "President and Supreme Commander-in-Chief" Kuchma ultimately is responsible both for the condition of his country's military and for the way his
country responds to crises. In both cases, the performance has been abysmal of late.

Following the crash, Ukrainian denials of responsibility smacked of an odd combination of incompetence and deception. (See THE NIS OBSERVED, 10 Oct 01, for further background) The leadership's refusal to accept responsibility caused a further erosion of respect in some international circles.

Even more importantly for the country's future stability, this accident clearly illustrates the sad state of certain areas of Ukraine's military performance. The wayward missile -- the second in two years -- reportedly was manufactured in 1979 and was near the end of its 25-year operational life. According to Ukrainian military experts interviewed by the Kiev Post, the country's missile arsenal consists solely of Soviet-era items, since Ukraine cannot afford to update its stock. Leonid Polyakov of the Ukrainian Center for Political and Economic Studies told the Post that the country's $550 million defense budget covers neither the maintenance of combat potential, nor upgrades of the military hardware, nor science. (KIEV POST, 18 Oct 01) Of course, the country receives some money from other Western sources for certain programs, such as Partnership for Peace, but military needs clearly are not being met.

Oleksandr Kuzmuk must pay the price for the loss of the Russian airliner on 4 October, and perhaps, given the seriousness of the situation and the state of the country's military, that isn't altogether bad. It will be unfortunate, however, if others involved -- from those who helped avoid the truth to those who failed to deal with problems in the military -- are absolved somehow by the blame placed on Kuzmuk. Indeed, it will be unfortunate, but also very probable.

MOLDOVA
Russia vs. Romania
The Moldovan government over the past month has left no question as to the future direction of its foreign policy. Despite statements playing down any interest in the Russia-Belarus Union, and repeated suggestions that the country is interested in joining the European Union, a clear schism is developing along Moldova's border with the West. For the first time, it seems that the country's leaders are at least outwardly attempting to break away from Romanian influence. In a "nation-building" sense, this development could be seen as positive. But unfortunately, the reason seems to have little to do with the desire to create a strong, independent identity; instead, the country simply appears to be swapping Romanian for Russian influence. With that, Moldova is exchanging its strong anchor to Western institutions for Russia, a country desiring that Moldova be anchored to it alone.

The Russia vs. Romania debate took center stage earlier this month at the European Court of Human Rights. At the hearing, justices listened to a complaint from the Romania-based Bessarabian Metropolitan Church of Moldova. The church repeatedly has been refused registration in Moldova, although the reasons for that refusal have shifted over the years. The church first applied for registration in October of 1992. Less than one year before that, Romania had responded to the independence of the westernmost former Soviet republics with demands that the Molotov-Ribbentro Pact be voided, thereby returning most of Moldova to Romanian control. Moldovans, naturally, were not pleased with these statements. Unfortunately, the Romanian Metropolitan Church was one of the most fervent supporters of a return to pre-World War II borders. So it was understandable that Moldova had no interest in allowing the Romanian church on its territory. (For further background, see ROMPRES, 1928 GMT, 30 Nov 91; and ROMANIAN RADIO, 1046 GMT, 28 Nov 91; BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, via lexis-nexis)

By 1997, when the Moldovan courts attempted unsuccessfully to force the government to register the religious institution, Russia had gained considerable
influence in the country, and pushed for the protection of the Moldovan Metropolitan Church (subordinate to the Russian patriarchy) as the main Orthodox Church in the republic.

Consequently, the Bessarabian Church took its case to the European Court, where the Moldovan justice minister used the opportunity to rail against Romanian "expansionism" in his prepared testimony. "Direct interference with the affairs of sovereign and independent Moldova is masterminded by Romania," Ion Morei said, "through some domestic pro-Romanian forces." (BESAPRESS, 1730 GMT, 3 Oct 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-1003, via World News Connection) In fact, this statement is in some ways true: The vocal Greater Romania Party repeatedly refers to Moldova as Romanian land, while the Romanian government itself occasionally makes negative comments on Moldovan policies regarding Russia. Most recently, for example, Romania took issue with the decision of Moldovan officials to make Russian a compulsory subject in schools. However, Moldova generally has accepted these statements as a troubling but necessary facet of the partnership between the two countries. That seems to have changed. The rhetoric from Moldova rarely has been so public and blunt as the justice minister's speech before the court. The government's decision to allow this speech -- and despite vigorous protests from Romanian officials, the decision not to retract it afterward -- speaks volumes about the future foreign policy tilt of the Republic of Moldova. Romania seems to understand this, and sent Interior Minister Ioan Rus to Chisinau on 14 October to attempt smoothing over the disagreement. While there, Rus asked the Moldovan authorities to provide an explanation for Morei's remarks. His requests for answers, however, so far have gone unheeded. It seems Moldovan officials have other priorities.

Newly Independent States: Caucasus

By Miriam Lanskoy
AZERBAIJAN

907 hampers anti-terrorism operations

Azerbaijan has joined the anti-terrorism coalition and offered the US use of its airspace, bases and intelligence resources. Yet the US cannot utilize this friendly and highly strategic country fully because of outdated restrictions embodied in (the pro-Armenian) Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act. On 9 October Senator Sam Brownback introduced legislation that would waive restrictions of aid to the Azeri government if the president determines this is in the US’ national security interest. (thomas.loc.gov)

In a letter to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee leadership, Secretary of State Colin Powell called for "a national security interest waiver" of restrictions on military and intelligence cooperation with Azerbaijan, saying that the US urgently needs to foster ties to "track and disrupt assets of the terror network [Al Qaeda]." On 11 October, Azerbaijan extradited an Egyptian national suspected of links to the terrorist attacks a month earlier. (INTERCON DAILY REPORT, 17 Oct 01; via ISI Emerging Markets Database)

Section 907 penalizes Azerbaijan, as though it were the aggressor, when Armenia in fact is occupying 15% of Azeri territory. By any logical standard those restrictions should have been repealed long ago. Now, however, they not only damage US impartiality in the dispute between Azerbaijan and Armenia, inhibiting normal democratic development in Azerbaijan, but also hamper the US war effort.

This week Azerbaijan has acknowledged that the US has been using Azerbaijan's airspace for humanitarian missions. Last week, ITAR-TASS reported that two US military transport Hercules aircraft had been sighted in the skies over the Azeri capital. The Baku media reported on Wednesday that both aircraft had been seen approaching Bina international airport. Ross Wilson, US ambassador to Azerbaijan, confirmed a report about flights of US aircraft over Azeri territory.
US military aircraft were observed in the skies over Baku on the night of 13-14 October and in the afternoon of 14 October. (ITAR-TASS, 17 Oct 01; via ISI Emerging Markets Database) Since the use of the airspace does not constitute aid to the Azeri government, this does not constitute a violation of 907.

GEORGIA
Kodori Gorge goes nuts
"Every fall during the hazelnut-picking season, in the area near the Kodori Gorge, there is a little Abkhaz-Georgian war, which ends naturally, when the mountain passes become blocked with snow," writes Pavel Felgenhauer an independent defense analyst, in the 22 October issue of Moskovskiy novosti. "The nut harvest is a golden time for the partisans... the Georgian group seeking the 'liberation' of Abkhazia and for unemployed Chechen fighters who provide 'protection.'"

The current round of fighting in Abkhazia began on 4 October when ethnic Chechen and Georgian fighters attempted to enter Abkhazia through the adjacent Kodori Gorge. What began with a trivial clash can have profound consequences. A turf war over hazelnuts can reignite the Abkhaz-Georgian war of 1992-93 and have even wider repercussions for regional security, if Russia enters the conflict.

What unites paramilitaries?
The governments of Georgia and Chechnya condemned the incursion into Abkhazia and denied any connection with the offending militants. These denials seem true because the ethnic Chechens and Georgians in question had been in open revolt against their respective governments.

In the case of ethnic Chechens, Ruslan Gelaev is widely rumored to be the leader. There is, however, doubt on this score. Gelaev's family has denied these rumors. Similarly Akhmad Kadyrov, Putin's administrator for Chechnya,
commented that he did not know Gelaev's whereabouts. (NOVAYA GAZETA, 15 Oct 01) Shevardnadze told Obshchaya gazeta on 18 -24 October 2001 that neither Gelaev nor any other Chechen was involved in the events in the Kodori Gorge. "As to Gelaev, you have created him like you did all the rest. Incidentally, why is Gelaev taken to task but lightly in Russia?"

Shevardnadze's comments should be considered in light of Gelaev's background. Gelaev fought together with Shamil Basaev in Abkhazia against Georgia during the first war, in 1992-1993. Ostensibly a spontaneous action of North Caucasian volunteers, this was in fact a campaign of the Russian security services, especially GRU. Later, Gelaev joined the Shura, a shadow government working for the overthrow of President Aslan Maskhadov's government. With the start of the second Chechen war, Gelaev and his units briefly fought on the side of the Chechen government, but, according to Maskhadov, were relieved of their duties a year ago.

"Gelaev doesn't represent the Chechen people,... the Chechen government and the Chechen resistance," says Maskhadov, "a year ago I enacted an order to relieve him from his position... because he proved to be on the territory of Georgia. And there is a second order from the commander-in-chief: Generally, categorically, in accordance with this order, it is forbidden to attack even Russian military targets on the territory of Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia. Knowing that the Russian special services want to provoke this conflict, I especially enacted this order." (RADIO LIBERTY, 11 Oct 01)

The Georgian paramilitary "Forest Brothers" led by David Shengelia, definitely were involved. They repeatedly have staged provocations in the contact zone which are roundly condemned by official Tbilisi. The Forest Brothers recruit from among the over 250,000 ethnic Georgian refugees who seek a return to their homes in Abkhazia.
Last Spring Shengelia teamed up with seasoned mafiosi and former KGB agent Jaba Ioseliani. (IPRINDA, 24 Apr 01; via BBC) Released from jail in the summer of 2000 after having served 2 years of an 11-year sentence for an assassination attempt against Shevardnadze, Ioseliani has been trying to revive his Mkhedrioni militia and making new provocative gestures against Shevardnadze. (RFE/RL CAUCASUS REPORT, 15 May 01) Identified as a former KGB agent, Ioseliani played a key role in ousting Georgia's first president, Zviad Gamsakhurdia.


Criminal elements in the employ of Russian security services undermine the legitimate authorities. This situation bears uncomfortable resemblance to the circumstances that gave rise to the Russian-Chechen war. If the governments concerned adopt responsible policies they can isolate and defeat these criminal-chekist elements. Or they can exploit these events to launch a new war.

**Russia’s response**

The Russian foreign ministry issued a statement on 12 October accusing Georgia of harboring terrorists:

"The tragic events today are the result of the continued policy of appeasement and tolerance toward the Chechen terrorists entrenched in Georgia pursued by the Georgian authorities. According to incoming information, these events are tending to grow in scope... The present situation being what it is, it only confirms the fact that some circles in Tbilisi want a forcible resolution of the Abkhazian issue. The situation as it is now taking shape is fraught with the resumption of a large-scale armed conflict between Abkhazia and Georgia with the participation of international terrorists. The Russian side categorically warns Tbilisi against allowing this course of events and insists that Georgia strictly observe its commitments under the May 4, 1994 agreement on a cease-fire in the zone of
the Georgia-Abkhazia conflict and the corresponding resolutions of the UN Security Council." (NTV, 12 Oct 01; via Chechnya list)

President Putin promised on 12 October to remove Russia's "peacekeepers" in three months, but for now it seems that the Russian military remains engaged. Georgia's foreign ministry issued a statement complaining that Georgian villages have suffered repeated bombardment by planes coming from Russian air space. (KOMMERSANT, 20 Oct 01)

"In 1994 I talked to Russian pilots who in 1992 and 1993 covered up the national insignia on their planes and flew raids against Georgian positions in Abkhazia," Felgenhauer comments. "One can not dismiss the possibility that the same thing occurred this time. In the Abkhaz conflict all the sides lie shamelessly."

"Today the Kodori gorge is being bombed by Mi-24 of the 'Abkhaz air force' but there is no way that the Abkhaz can legally purchase Mi-24s, much less obtain parts, train crews, or keep them in battle-worthy condition," Felgenhauer maintains. (MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI, 22 Oct 01)

In fact, additional Russian forces are being readied. A reinforced battalion of the Russian 58th Army started moving towards the Kabardino-Balkaria sector of the Russo-Georgian border to seal off the border against possible incursions from Abkhazia. The Russian military plans to deploy similar groups along the entire Russian-Georgian border. (RUSSIAN TV, 1600 GMT, 20 Oct 01; via BBC) On 10 October a representative of the rebel Abkhaz government confirmed that "volunteers" from the North Caucasus, including Cossacks, already have started to arrive in Abkhazia. (INTERFAX, 10 Oct 01; via BBC)

Abkhazia's response
The prime minister of the rebel entity, Anri Dzhergenniya, has said that Abkhazia has appealed to become a member of the Russian Federation. During a
nationally televised interview on TV6 Sunday night, Dzhergenniya emphasized that an official notification of the region's political initiative already had been sent to Moscow regarding the "associate membership" of Abkhazia within the Russian Federation.

Dzhergenniya went on to say that the concept would mean Abkazia's incorporation into Russia's legal system. "We're talking about unified legislation, a single currency, as well as joint border and customs services," said the premier, adding that, "fundamentally, we're talking about Abkhazia joining Russia." (strana.ru, 15 Oct 01)

**Georgia's response**

Georgia has refrained from military actions. Instead it renewed its requests to introduce United Nations peacekeepers to the region. (AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, 13 Oct 01; via ISI Emerging Markets Database) Georgia initially sought a UN force after the end of the war in 1993, but on that occasion Abkhazia rebuffed UN mediators and held out for a CIS mandate instead. This time, having endured all the hardships of "CIS" (actually Russian) mediation, the Abkhaz will prove more amenable -- particularly since Putin has promised to remove the Russian "peacekeepers." The UN should renew its mediation efforts and peacekeeping mission.

**Newly Independent States: Central Asia**

By Fabian Adami and Michael Donahue

**UZBEKISTAN**

**Karimov's gamble**

For all of Uzbek President Islam Karimov's cooperation with the US in its war on terrorism, he knows that his country could face repercussions from various sources. In the wake of granting permission for the US to use airbases in the
country, Karimov has cracked down on the Uzbek media, and imprisoned several thousand "Islamic radicals" -- or rather oppositionists -- since 11 September. Karimov views such actions as necessary, since the Taliban government in Afghanistan has threatened explicitly to attack Uzbekistan, should bases in the country be used for launching airstrikes. A Taliban source stated that all necessary preparations had been made to launch an attack, should it be necessary, and there are unconfirmed reports that 8,000 Taliban fighters have moved to the Uzbek border. (PAKISTAN OBSERVER, 11 Oct 01; FBIS-NES-2001-1011, via World News Connection)

President Karimov is worried sufficiently by the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and the Taliban that he has sketched out a media policy for Uzbekistan which aims to control the news released to the population. The government has gone to great pains to insist that Uzbek bases are being used only for humanitarian purposes, and that "not a single US aircraft which has taken part in bombing strikes against the territory of neighboring Afghanistan will be given permission to land in Uzbekistan." (EURASIA INSIGHT, Uzbekistan Daily Digest, 16 Oct 01; via Eurasianet) But all of these efforts may be in vain: Russian and Western media reports are readily accessible on TV, and are trusted by Uzbeks because of their timeliness.

Although it is encouraging that Uzbekistan has distanced itself from Russian influence, there is concern among some observers, such as the International Crisis Group (an international organization devoted to encouraging early response in conflict areas) that the US need for a Central Asian ally will dampen criticism of Karimov's human rights record and the absence of free media in the country: "Following these events (11 September), it becomes much more difficult to give the Uzbek government a negative rating, because this might be seen as interfering with the war effort and military cooperation between the two countries." Additionally, there is concern that the "potential for increased anti-Western feeling" will come to the forefront. (EURASIANET Q &A, "Assessing The
Ramifications of US Troop Deployment in Central Asia," 16 Oct 01; via Eurasianet) The IMU generally has not expressed anti-US or anti-Western sentiments, but might do so now that Uzbekistan actively is aiding the fight against the IMU's Taliban allies.

There is an opportunity for Uzbekistan to enhance its new friendship with the US, as exemplified by a joint statement issued on 12 October:

"The Government of the United States of America, and the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan recognize international terrorism as a serious threat to peace and to global and regional stability. Our two governments have decided to establish a qualitatively new relationship based on a long-term commitment to advance security and regional security." Furthermore, the press release stipulated, the US would provide assistance in the event of a threat to Uzbekistan's territorial integrity. (EURASIA INSIGHT, Uzbekistan Daily Digest, 12 Oct 01; via Eurasianet)

Uzbekistan's position is finely balanced: The country has pulled out of the CIS Collective Security Treaty and joined GUUAM. Yet Karimov recently felt Russian pressure sufficiently to join the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. It is important, therefore, to note that the United States has an obligation to Uzbekistan, both in terms of dealing with the IMU, and in economic terms. For if this operation were to be short, and the US presence to disappear quickly, Uzbekistan once more might be drawn back into the Russian sphere of influence.

Is Russia experiencing a crisis of influence in Central Asia?
The current American "War on Terrorism," and the new US-Uzbek relationship it has created, have triggered growing concern on Putin's side over Russia's putative diminution of influence in Central Asia. However, the joint US-Uzbek statement delivered on 12 October is only the latest in a line of signals that
Central Asia is slipping, or at least trying to slip, from the Russian sphere of influence.

The agreement reached between the United States and Uzbek President Islam Karimov includes American security guarantees to Karimov's government in exchange for the use of military facilities for launching operations against the Taliban in Afghanistan. (EURASIA INSIGHT, 21 Oct 01; via Eurasianet) While initially US military forces based in Uzbekistan were going to be limited to conducting only support functions, presumably to avoid stirring opposition within the radical Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), it appears that the American commitment to Karimov's security and the dollars that will undoubtedly accompany it have changed the playing field.

Even before the events of 11 September, Tashkent and the other Central Asia capitals were doing their best to move out of Moscow's sphere of influence, albeit with varying results. Long the driving force behind the region's security strategy, Russian diplomatic sources report misgivings about the newly minted Shanghai Cooperation Organization (of which it was a founding member), in that the organization now appears to become a likely vehicle for diminished, rather than expanded, Russian influence in the area. (EURASIA INSIGHT, 20 Jun 01; via Eurasianet)

The new group is more likely to be dominated by China, which has been taking a growing interest in the Central Asian nations' security and economic affairs. An official with the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation indicated on 14 October that relations between China and the neighboring Central Asian nations are set to enter a new stage. One can assume that this new relationship will be based on continuing Chinese investment in the region -- which recently surpassed US $500 million. (XINHUA, 1545 GMT, 14 Oct 01; FBIS-CHI-2001-1014, via World News Connection)
Growing foreign investment and increased domestic efficiency are setting the stages for further independence, specifically in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. While the new security arrangement between Washington and Tashkent has set the conditions for the Uzbeks, international investment, specifically from Beijing, Berlin and Washington, and positive domestic economic signs are doing the same for Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev. Kazakh Economics and Trade Minister Zhaksybek Kulekeev reported a 14% increase in GDP and a 13.8% rise in industrial production for the first nine months of 2001 which, coupled with the production of an estimated 46 million tonnes of oil and gas condensate in 2002, seems to indicate that foreign investment is likely to expand in the future. (INTERFAX, 15 Oct 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-2016, via World News Connection)

While the spirit of autonomy is alive in some of the Central Asian nations, Tajikistan remains firmly in Russia's camp. As the entire region tightens its borders in anticipation of possible Afghan refugees attempt to escape the American "War on Terrorism," the Tajiks appear to be more than just on the defensive. On the Tajik-Afghan border, and in front of Tajik troops, stands the Russia 201st Division, consisting of 20,000 soldiers, 180 tanks, 340 armored personnel carriers, 180 artillery pieces, and significant air support. (EURASIA INSIGHT, 13 Oct 01; via Eurasianet) In light of President Putin's determination not to be left on the sidelines as the US conducts its military operations, it is likely that Russia will resort to offensive operations based on Tajikistan and post-conflict security arrangements linking Dushanbe and Moscow even more closely.

Newly Independent States: Baltic States
By Michael Varuolo

Terrorism and its impacts
Recently the Baltic states not only have expressed their heartfelt sympathy for the American public and those affected by the 11 September terrorist attacks, but
also have affirmed their support for NATO and the United States in the "War on Terrorism." However, these expressions have placed the Baltic states in a somewhat uncomfortable position. As the "War on Terrorism" escalates into direct confrontation between the combatants, the Baltic states seek to address domestic issues related to this support as well as to ponder the direction in which new American/Russian relations will proceed.

The Baltic states' support has not gone unnoticed by the United States or NATO. In a letter sent to Latvian President Vaira Vike-Freiberga, President Bush stated, "the American people are grateful for the expressions of friendship and support." (LETA, 1347 GMT, 11 Oct 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-1001, via World News Connection) However, this support has generated minor repercussions internally.

Fear of an anthrax outbreak developed in Estonia, after a letter -- containing an unidentified white powder -- was found in Parnu. The fear caused Social Affairs Minister Eiki Nestor to make a public address in which he stated, "the danger of anthrax reaching Estonia is real, but there's no cause for panic." (BNS, 1332 GMT, 16 Oct 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-1015, via World News Connection) He went on to explain that, although Estonia was at risk, it should not be a primary concern because the stores of antibodies in the country are sufficient and the ability to obtain proper medical treatment is also sufficient to handle any emergency of this kind.

In Latvia, the insignificant Islamic minority has voiced dissension and views the attacks on Afghanistan as a general attack on all of Islam. The leader of the Latvian Muslims, Musans Macigovs, "pointed out that criminals are residing in Latvia as well, however, nobody walks in the streets with an automatic rifle to kill them." (LETA, 1000 GMT, 8 Oct 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-1008 via World News Connection) Meanwhile, the Christian Democrats in Riga have called on the US Republican Party not to escalate the operations, and is further calling on it to seek a peaceful settlement to the situation. However, while these domestic
aspects have had a limited impact on the overall desire of the Baltic states to join NATO and other Western institutions, the new relationship between the United States and Russia has caused alarm throughout the Baltic states.

Baltic leaders are concerned that the new relationship will affect the NATO expansion process, which is scheduled currently for the alliance's autumn 2002 summit. After observing a recent NATO Parliamentary Assembly, the chairman of the Estonian parliament's defense commission, Tiit Tammsaar, commented on the potential fallout of recent events. "The effect of the terror attacks and the war in Afghanistan could be clearly felt at the NATO Assembly session where more attention than usual was given to the Russian delegation and no name of a concrete candidate country was included in the final resolution on NATO enlargement." (BNS, 1107 GMT, 12 Oct 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-1012 via World News Connection) This comes on the heels of the announcement by the Russian ambassador to Lithuania that, despite recent proclamations, Russia's position on NATO enlargement has not changed. That has caused the Baltic states to seek support by reiterating official expressions of their desire to join NATO and other Western institutions.

The autumn NATO summit still may be over a year away, but the Baltic states are not going to sit around while the United States and NATO conduct coalition building for the war on terrorism. They are seeking to reaffirm their security needs in order to ensure that consideration for membership in NATO remains open for all aspirants. After all, as the president of Lithuania, Valdas Adamkus, explained, "NATO enlargement will help create an alliance of democracies sharing and defending common ideals." (BNS, 0915 GMT, 5 Oct 01; FBIS-SOV-2001-1005, via World News Connection)