

Jarosław KARDAŚ

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Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

## **SOUTH CAUCASUS IN THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION. DO DOCTRINAL ASSUMPTIONS TRANSLATE INTO REALITY?**

Foreign policy is largely determined by population size, military power and economic potential of a country. Taking historical experience into account, we can see that countries with a hegemonic status in a given region have always sought both to expand their territories and to exert influence on their neighbours. The entire history of the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union and the Russian Federation itself (created in 1991) is an excellent case in point here. All the actions Moscow has taken and still takes are aimed at weakening cooperation between the post-Soviet states and Western structures (such as NATO or the European Union), and consequently reintegrating the post-Soviet space under the Kremlin's leadership.

### **THE CIS AREA IN THE DOCTRINAL ASSUMPTIONS OF THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

South Caucasus, in addition to being part of the so-called near abroad, is also of great importance for Russia due to its strategic location and energy resources (*Region*, 2008: 251). Moreover, influence in this region is perceived by the Federation as one of the key factors determining its position in the international arena and a condition for bolstering its great power status. The broader Caucasus is also a source of potential dangers to Russia, such as Islamic fundamentalism, terrorism, drug smuggling, or illegal immigration (Falkowski, 2006).

When discussing the directions and doctrinal assumptions of Russia's foreign policy, it is necessary to refer to the 4 main ideological orientations that have clashed with each other since 1985. It is connected with the fact that there has always been quite a strong polarization among the Russian elites on the issue of conducting foreign policy. The first stream is the supporters of the so-called new political thinking from the time of Mikhail Gorbachev and the *perestrojka* he formulated. The concept was based primarily on recognizing general human, universal values, such as peace, security, freedom, sovereignty, or respect for human rights. It also called for the creation of the so-called common European home that would contribute to the elimination of the division of Europe into opposing political blocs (*Federacja*, 2002: 263). Gorbachev's policy was based on a departure from the Soviet foreign policy to date, or repudiation of the Brezhnev doctrine. One proof that the change was more than just declarative was Moscow's refraining from extending the so-called fraternal assistance to the govern-

ments of the Eastern bloc countries in their clashes with democratic opposition (Włodkowska, 2006: 76). Supporters of new political thinking proclaimed that security could not be built on a one-sided basis, because it is the result of joint efforts of the entire humanity, regardless of its political or ideological differences (*Federacja*, 2002: 261). This policy contributed, for example, to the transition from confrontation to cooperation with the West, the initiation of the processes of democratization in the Central and Eastern European countries, or the reunification of Germany (Bieleń, 2006: 63).

The second stream is the so-called pro-Western orientation. Its adherents were often called *zapadniki*, Atlanticists, or new realists. This way of thinking was represented by Russian politicians who were in power in early 1990s, such as the then Prime Minister Yegor Gaydar, or foreign minister Andrey Kozyrev. The main assumption of this concept is the ascertainment that Russia's place is in Europe rather than Asia. This positioning makes it necessary to bring the country closer to the West in the political and economic sphere, as well as, in some cases, the military one. Such rapprochement was to be facilitated by membership in, or at least partnership with, such Western structures as: the European Union, OECD, WTO, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, or NATO (Gołaś, 2013). Supporters of this orientation advocated that the most appropriate way for Russia in foreign policy was the strategy of bandwagoning with the strongest, meaning the West, to further its own interests (*Polityka*, 2006: 28). The concept assumed the existence of several circles. The diagnosis by the Atlanticists pointed out that the Soviet Union in its period of decline and the new Russia were sidelined in the development of the international relations system. Russia's objective was to quickly move to the center of the system, to the most developed countries making up the G-7 (*Federacja*, 2002: 266). This period included the signing of the Russia-US "Charter of partnership and friendship", which provided for the development of dialogue on different levels between the two former superpowers. Interestingly, the ruling team in 1991–92 that represented this stream did not oppose the expansion of NATO. Some politicians (e.g. Boris Yeltsin and A. Kozyrev) even made statements about the possibility of Russia itself joining the Alliance at some point. That's because NATO was then considered an important instrument for safeguarding Euro-Atlantic security. The period of Atlanticists' domination in foreign policy lasted just two years (1991–1992). A subsequent shift was caused by disappointment with the attitude of Western countries, since Russia did not receive any significant financial assistance from the West, nor was it brought into the Western economic, political or military structures. Russia's position was also ignored on important matters such as the so-called near abroad, or the issue of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia (Bieleń, 2006: 69).

The third orientation is the so-called Eurasians. The main assumption of the adherents of this stream is the uniqueness of Russia itself and its civilizational and cultural distinctness from Europe. This is the so-called third way concept. It sees Russia acting as a bridge connecting the two such different worlds – the oriental East and the pragmatic West. Eurasians believed that the Russian government focused too much on the Western direction in foreign policy, neglecting the other directions – the eastern and the southern ones. They maintained that the CIS region is an extremely important area for the Russian Federation, because it is a sort of lever to return to the international arena as a power. It is also in its interest to eliminate the influence of third countries in the re-

gion, above all the United States. Russia should also be the first defender of independence and sovereignty of its immediate neighbours, and also extend assistance, without imposing any forms of government. Eurasians (from the more democratic stream) influenced foreign policy in 1993, when, upon their urging, foreign minister A. Kozyrev connected the issue of withdrawing Russian forces from the Baltic states with the issue of protecting the Russian-speaking population living there (*Federacja*, 2002: 274). In that period, the strategy towards the area of the Commonwealth of Independent States was defined by the "Foreign policy concept of the Russian Federation" of 23 April 1993. In this document, relations with CIS countries were put first, ahead of those with the United States, Western Europe, or the Asia-Pacific region. Special importance was attached to solving conflicts and countering the destabilization of the post-Soviet area. Russia's primary objective was to overcome such conflicts and to prevent their spread onto the territory of the Russian Federation. There is an evident conviction in this concept that the security of Russia depends on the stability of the neighbouring countries. It also called for strengthening the common defense space and establishing a belt of good neighbourly relations along Russian borders. This concept also provided for Russia's scientific and technical cooperation with the CIS countries and the development of a common economic space (Włodkowska, 2006: 122). Also in this period, documents such the "Military doctrine" of 2 November 1993 and the "Strategic policy of the Russian Federation towards the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States" of 14 September 1995 were adopted. The "Military doctrine", just like the 1993 "Foreign policy concept of the Russian Federation", pointed to the main security threats to Russia. For the first time, it critically referred to the expansion of military blocs into the CIS countries (meaning mainly NATO). The document also included a provision on the possible use of RF's armed forces beyond its borders in order to defend its "vital interests". The "Strategic policy of the Russian Federation towards the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States" already in its introduction affirmed the great importance Russia itself attaches to relations with the CIS member states. Its primary objective with regard to the post-Soviet space was to create an integrated (politically and economically) union of countries that would enjoy a strong position in the international arena (*Стратегический*, 1995).

The fourth stream is the so-called *gosudarstvenniki*, also called *derzhavniki*. The supporters of this orientation proclaim that the Russian state must be self-sufficient, strong and it should guarantee internal stability. A strong state is the best alternative for Russia, as opposed to the status of a power, which is an obstacle to achieving development and stability. Russia, until it restores internal stability, needs to curtail its efforts to gain influence worldwide and focus strictly on the former USSR area, for which it is responsible (Wańczyk, 2007: 49). According to the *derzhavniki*, giving priority to the CIS area is not the same as power policy, since Russia is naturally predestined to assume responsibility for the post-Soviet space and its reintegration. This mainly concerns economic integration between the region's states (Włodkowska, 2006: 87). B. Yeltsin's resignation as president on 31 December 1999 and the assumption of his duties by Vladimir Putin ushered in a period of domination of the supporters of this concept. The most important documents on international matters issued early in the first presidency of V. Putin include: the "Military doctrine" and the "For-

eign policy concept of the Russian Federation”. These documents were issued by the Kremlin authorities in 2000.

In the “Military doctrine” of 21 April 2000, similarly to the previous one from 1993, attention was primarily paid to national security threats resulting from the expansion of military blocs with regard to the countries of the so-called near abroad. In this document, the authors are particularly wary of cooperation between the post-Soviet states and NATO. It addresses the issue of conflicts arising close to Russian borders and the need to quickly resolve them. The entire post-Soviet region is, of course, treated here as Russia’s exclusive sphere of influence (*Военная*, 2000).

Another document (dedicated to foreign policy) issued in 2000 was the “Foreign policy concept of the Russian Federation” (28 June 2000). In this act, one can find strategies and policy measures towards the CIS, similar to those included in the earlier documents. It also refers to regional conflicts that occur in the CIS area or involve the post-Soviet countries. Russia’s primary objective is to seek to stabilize areas rich in energy resources. Importantly, in contrast to the 1993 “Foreign policy concept...”, the scope of Russian diplomacy’s conflict-solving efforts was expanded beyond the so-called near abroad – to include, for example, efforts for peace in the Middle East (Włodkowska, 2006: 112). Also in this document, the entire post-Soviet area is considered as the Federation’s exclusive sphere of influence. Foreign policy priorities include countering the expansion of influence of third countries in the region, as well as fighting terrorism, extremism, drug trade and arms trafficking. The authors of the document also address the issues of protecting Russian minorities in the post-Soviet countries. It is noteworthy that the protection of the Russian language in the Commonwealth of Independent States area was declared one of the objectives of Russian foreign policy (*Политика*, 2006: 27).

On 12 July 2008, already under the new president Dmitriy Medvedev, a new “Foreign policy concept of the Russian Federation” was adopted. Similarly to the above described documents, the Russian Federation considers the CIS area as its priority (a “sphere of privileged interests”). In the document it was emphasized that Russia will seek to enhance cooperation with the post-Soviet countries in the field of security and fighting international terrorism, extremism and drug trade, as well as illegal immigration (*Концепция*, 2008).

The latest “Foreign policy concept of the Russian Federation” comes from 2013. The document signed by V. Putin on 12 February contains a very pessimistic assessment of the state of international relations. According to its authors, it has a very negative impact on Russia itself. In their opinion, one is currently witnessing the rise of Asia (in political, economic, and military terms) in the international system. Western countries, which are struggling with an economic crisis, are also responsible for increasing destabilization of some regions of the world. The authors of the document refer here mainly to the events that took place during the Arab Spring, which swept away regimes in many countries in Africa and the Middle East. The collapse of the existing regimes triggered a huge crisis in those countries, and thus also contributed to the revival of radical Islamic movements. Referring in turn to the post-Soviet republics, it was stated that the area remains a priority direction in the Kremlin’s foreign policy. For Moscow, it is particularly important to re-integrate the region. Therefore, the Russian authorities will

seek to enhance cooperation within such structures as the Eurasian Economic Union, or the Collective Security Treaty Organization (*Концепция*, 2013).

Then, in 2014, V. Putin signed a new “Military doctrine”. It included statements about threats from Russia’s most immediate neighbours. It pointed out that regimes acting against the Federation’s interests could illegally take power in neighbouring countries. Therefore, Russia reserves the right to intervene (even militarily) in such cases. Significantly, NATO was named as Russia’s biggest threat (*Военная*, 2014). It is a crucial difference in relation to the previous military doctrines, which contained veiled statements that Russian authorities may be concerned about the expansion of other alliances’ borders and infrastructure. Such provisions are obviously the fallout of the crisis that has gripped Ukraine since November 2013.

### THE IMPLEMENTATION SPHERE OF THE RUSSIAN POLICY TOWARDS SOUTH CAUCASUS

The above doctrinal postulates referred not only to the South Caucasus area, but obviously to the entire CIS region. Bearing them in mind, it is worth analyzing their implementation with regard to the South Caucasus countries. Borrowing from Tadeusz Świątochowski, six primary objectives of Russia’s foreign policy with regard to the Trans-Caucasus countries can be listed: maintaining political and military presence, strengthening control over both production and transport of Caspian oil, striving to weaken the influence of its potential geopolitical rivals – the United States, Turkey, and Western European countries, countering the spread of Islamic fundamentalism, protecting the rights of Russian language speakers (mostly sparse and leaving the Trans-Caucasus voluntarily), and also preventing any harmful, from the Russian point of view, impact on North Caucasus (Świątochowski, 2006: 192–193).

Russia is yet to develop a uniform strategy of action towards the South Caucasus countries. Its very good relations with Armenia and bad relations with Georgia are a great case in point here. Russia relations with Georgia are marked by great mistrust, at times even hostility. Only in 1993–1997 was there a rapprochement between the two countries, as seen, for example, by Georgia’s accession to CIS (Materski, 2000: 270). At present, tense political and military relations also affect economic ties between the two nations.

A bone of contention in their mutual relations is Georgia’s territorial integrity and related attempts at independence, starting from early 1990s, by two provinces: Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The reason for hostile relations between Russia and Georgia was unofficial support for separatist units of the rebellious provinces in the 1990s. Russia’s assistance was extremely important, because the separatists were highly unlikely to prevail in an open confrontation with Georgia’s central government (*Region*, 2008: 213). Russia, in its doctrinal assumptions (from early 1990s till now), has officially declared a desire to settle all the conflicts in the CIS area, including those in the Trans-Caucasus, but this commitment can only be described as “declarative”. The support for both the republics, as *quasi*-states independent from Georgia, provides the opportunity to control them, and dampen or inflame the conflict, depending on the state of

Georgian-Russian relations (*Region*, 2008: 259). It appears, however, that Russian authorities will seek to integrate the two *quasi*-states with Russia as much as possible. One example here is the signing of the “Russian-Abkhaz treaty of alliance and strategic partnership” on 24 November 2014. The document provides for cooperation in the sphere of defense, border controls, customs, and in the social sphere. It is a document that in a way expands and complements the “Agreement on friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance”, which was signed back in 2008. Western countries and Georgian authorities considered the signing of this treaty as a step towards Abkhazia’s annexation by Russia (Falkowski, 2014b). Similar actions have been taken by Russians with respect to South Ossetia. On 18 March 2015 in Moscow, president V. Putin and the breakaway South Ossetia’s leader Leonid Tibilov signed the “Russian-Ossetian treaty of alliance and integration”, which provided for a full integration with Russia, e.g. in the spheres of customs, defense and internal security (Falkowski, 2015).

The “rose revolution” that broke out in November 2003 also casts a shadow on the Russian Federation’s relations with Georgia. The pro-Western stance of President Mikhail Saakashvili, elected at the time, caused strong opposition and fierce rhetoric from Russia. The Russians particularly resented the fact that the camp of the leader of the United National Movement openly declared it would seek membership in Western structures (such as NATO) and eliminate people with communist background from public life and administration (Trzaskowski, 2009: 143).

The events of 2008, or Georgia’s war against Russia, and also the Russian Federation’s recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, led to a further deterioration of bilateral relations (Matusiak, 2012: 8). As a result of the war, Georgia officially broke diplomatic relations with Russia in early September of 2008, maintaining only consular relations. In the same year, it also decided to quit CIS. The conflict also saw a widespread use of the postulate so often highlighted in many documents issued by Russian authorities, the protection of the Russian population or Russian language speakers in the areas where the conflict took place. It is noteworthy, however, that after the removal of M. Saakashvili’s camp from power and its takeover by the Georgian Dream (2012), relations between the two countries have improved in some areas. One example here is e.g. the opening of the Russian market to Georgian goods, or the restoration of direct air services. But what has not changed is Russia’s primary objective, or its consistent drive to make Georgia abandon the pro-Western course charted back in 2003 (Falkowski, 2014a).

Of all the Caucasian countries, Armenia has the best relations with Russia. This country is Russia’s biggest and apparently staunchest ally. To understand this stance of the Yerevan authorities, it is necessary to refer to historical experiences. For centuries, a belief has prevailed among the residents of this country that Russia is indeed their main protector against the Turkish threat. This threat is one of the most important elements of the Armenian national consciousness (*Polityka*, 2006: 99) (as seen, for example, in the ever-living memory of the Armenian massacre perpetrated by the Turks in 1915). Armenia’s dependence on Russia has increased even more in recent years. This is related to two strategic decisions taken by the Yerevan government in 2013. These were its green light for Gazprom to take over a controlling stake in a monopolistic concern distributing gas in Armenia, and joining the Eurasian Economic Union. In Septem-

ber 2013, Armenian president Serzh Sargsyan and V. Putin adopted a statement on the accession of Armenia to the Customs Union of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan (Ananicz, 2013) and the Eurasian Economic Union (Jarosiewicz, Fischer, 2015).

A very important issue in bilateral relations is the Azeri-Armenian conflict over Nagorno Karabakh. Russia plays a similar role there to the above described conflicts between Georgia and Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Its actions aim to maintain the existing *status quo* as long as possible. Russia's official position on this issue boils down to advocating a peaceful solution to the conflict between the two countries. It should be noted, however, that during armed clashes the Russians unofficially gave military aid to Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh (*Region*, 2008: 259). In this conflict, Russia tries to play the role of a mediator between Armenia and Azerbaijan. It took the credit for hammering out a ceasefire agreement between the warring parties (signed on 12 May 1992) at the 1994 CSCE summit (Bryc, 2004: 53). Russia's role in this conflict is to some extent determined by Russian interests in the Caucasus region. The Federation's uses the territories of the South Caucasus states (including the unrecognized Republic of Nagorno Karabakh) as a buffer zone to protect itself from the influence of other regional actors, such as Turkey or Iran.

Russia also provides support to Armenia in the event of internal crises and opposition demonstrations against the state authorities (e.g. during the events that took place in autumn of 2003 and spring of 2004). The support is usually extended through direct meetings of both presidents. The Armenian authorities realize that in case of an outbreak of a "colour revolution" (similar, say, to the one that took place in Georgia), they can only hope for help from the Russian Federation (*Region*, 2008: 255).

What is more, Russia provides considerable military assistance to Armenia. Russian troops work with Armenian troops to secure the Armenian border. Significant numbers are also stationed at the military base in Gyumri. The presence of Russian forces in the 1990s was governed by two agreements: the "Agreement on the legal status of the armed forces of the Russian Federation stationed on the territory of Armenia", which was signed on 21 August 1992, and the "Agreement on the Russian military base on the territory of Armenia" signed on 16 March 1995 (Wańczyk, 2007: 134–135). It also needs to be remembered that, unlike Georgia or Azerbaijan, Armenia is a member of CSTO.

Russia's relations with the third South Caucasus country – Azerbaijan – are influenced by three major problems: the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Nagorno Karabakh, Russia's desire to dominate the process of production and transport of oil and natural gas from the Caspian Sea shelf, and Russia's influence over the shape of changes taking place in the political life of Azerbaijan.

But at the very beginning it is worth taking a look at the evolution of Russian-Azeri relations in the 1990s (*Polityka*, 2006: 92). Early in the last decade of the XX century, under president Albufaz Elchibey, Azerbaijan pursued a clearly pro-Western foreign policy. The then-government called for stronger cooperation with the West, and with the culturally close countries of Turkey and Iran, while demanding the withdrawal of the Russian forces stationed on the territory of Azerbaijan. This trend clearly changed in 1993, when Gaydar Aliyev became president. Even though the foreign policy he pursued was oriented more towards cooperation with Moscow and the CIS, it was not always fully in line with Russian interests. Declaring a desire to cooperate with the West

(on the issue of building democracy, free market), the Azerbaijani government hoped not so much for assistance in democratizing the country, but for support in the conflict over Nagorno Karabakh. Since 2003, G. Aliyev's son Ilham has been trying to pursue a very similar policy.

Russia currently does not take a clear position on the issue of the future status of Nagorno Karabakh (i.e. whether it should constitute an integral part of Azerbaijan, or be a sovereign country). Despite officially advocating a peaceful solution to the conflict, the Kremlin in fact supports the Armenian side. The support provided to the Armenians does not, however, cover the entire history of the dispute. It is noteworthy that in the early phase of the conflict over Nagorno Karabakh, the Russians helped Azerbaijan. A radical shift came in 1992, when the reformist and pro-Western A. Elchibey became president. One of the main reasons for discontinuing military aid to Azerbaijan was its decision to withdraw from CIS. In response, the Russian government not only began to back Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh forces militarily, but also imposed economic sanctions on Azerbaijan (e.g. raised customs duties on Azeri goods, while most Russian businesses cancelled commercial contracts concluded earlier) (*Polityka*, 2006: 92). After G. Aliyev took over power, Azerbaijan rejoined CIS, but, significantly, it managed to avoid deployment of Russian troops on its territory.

Azerbaijan strives to pursue a policy independent from Russia, primarily in the economic sphere. The oil and gas sector not only underpins the economy, it is also an important determinant of Azerbaijan's domestic and foreign policies. The key thing here is the interest of Western countries, which constantly seek alternative suppliers of energy resources (e.g. the development of the Southern Gas Corridor). It is also worth adding that the current president I. Aliyev pursues a strategy where the main objective is to build economic power. Boosting its strength in the energy field would lead to the restoration of Azerbaijan's proper place in the international arena in the near future, and also help to eliminate conflicts in the Trans-Caucasus, naturally including a solution to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict (Western investments would bring greater concern for security and stability in the region, and also lead to a weakening of Russian influence) (*Region*, 2008: 115). Examples of an independent (from Russia) energy policy can be seen in two pipelines: Baku – Supsa (opened in 1999) and Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (opened in 2006), as well as the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline (opened in early 2007). This energy policy, of course, causes great discontent and anxiety in Russia, which had a monopoly on supplying energy resources to external markets until the first of the above mentioned pipelines was opened (*Geopolityka*, 2008: 158). Azerbaijan also received an official invitation to join the Eurasian Economic Union in June 2014, but the government in Baku has refrained from accession so far (Jarosiewicz, 2014b). This is, of course, related to the fact that Azerbaijan wants to conduct its own policy (particularly in the energy field), and joining the Eurasian Economic Union would mean it would have to take the Kremlin's opinion into account.

A significant issue that demonstrates the independent policy of Azerbaijan towards the Russian Federation is also the absence of Russian military bases on its territory. Neither has Azerbaijan agreed to cooperate on border protection or to bring in CIS peacekeeping forces (Wańczyk, 2007: 141–142). It should also be remembered that Azerbaijan is not a member of the Collective Security Treaty Organization.



When it comes to the third of the above mentioned problems (Russia's influence over the shape of changes in the political life of Azerbaijan), it is in the Kremlin's interest for the group around president I. Aliyev to remain in power for as long as possible. The current elite enjoys good personal relations with representatives of the Russian elite, because it comes from the old communist nomenclature (*Region*, 2008: 255–256). These good contacts are to be seen mainly in the Kremlin's backing for the authoritarian regime of I. Aliyev. What also binds representatives of Azerbaijani and Russian elites is a similar worldview (a product of the Soviet times) and similar patterns of action (especially the use of similar methods towards the opposition). Russia, unlike the West, does not criticize the Azerbaijani government for cracking down on the opposition (through arrests, beatings, demonstration bans) and considers it an internal matter of this country (Falkowski, 2006). With regard to democratic standards, the ruling camp centered around I. Aliyev has been increasingly moving away from the West with its behaviour in recent years. Western calls for democratization and respect for human rights in Azerbaijan cast a shadow on relations between the West and Azerbaijan. The United States and the European Union had many reservations about the 2009 constitutional amendment (which abolished a presidential term limit) and, indeed, about the presidential elections held on 9 October 2013.

### IN THE DIRECTION OF IMPERIAL POLICY

Russian policy in South Caucasus is not a fully effective policy, as Russia's actions towards Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia are dominated by bilateral relations rather than a single, coherent strategy towards the region. The policy towards these countries also bears the hallmarks of an imperial policy, since it boils down to rewards (in the political, economic or military sphere) for cooperation, or punishments for any action against Russian interests. An excellent case in point are, for example, Russia's moves towards Armenia (a gas price cut in exchange for joining the Eurasian Economic Union), or towards Georgia (the 2008 military intervention, which greatly complicated this country's path to future NATO membership). In addition to enhancing bilateral relations, Russia makes efforts (in accordance with documents issued by official bodies) to integrate the CIS area, of course including the Trans-Caucasus, under its leadership. The objective is to strengthen the political, economic and military ties weakened in the aftermath of the collapse of the USSR, and to restore its former position in the area. But it comes up short in these efforts, because not all the Caucasus countries are interested in Russian-led economic integration (within the Eurasian Economic Union), or political and military integration (within CIS, CSTO).

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### ABSTRACT

Russian policy in South Caucasus is not a fully effective policy, as Russia's actions towards Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia are dominated by bilateral relations rather than a single, coherent strategy towards the region. The policy towards these countries also bears the hallmarks of an imperial policy, since it boils down to rewards (in the political, economic or military sphere) for cooperation, or punishments for any action against Russian interests. In addition to enhancing bilateral relations, Russia makes efforts (in accordance with documents issued by official bodies) to integrate the CIS area, of course including the Trans-Caucasus, under its leadership. But it comes up short in these efforts, because not all the Caucasus countries are interested in Russian-led economic integration (within the Eurasian Economic Union), or political and military integration (within CIS, CSTO).

**Key words:** South Caucasus, Russian Federation, the foreign policy, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia

### KAUKAZ POŁUDNIOWY W POLITYCE ZAGRANICZNEJ FEDERACJI ROSYJSKIEJ – CZY ZAŁOŻENIA DOKTRYNALNE PRZEKLADAJĄ SIĘ NA RZECZYWISTOŚĆ?

#### STRESZCZENIE

Polityka Rosji na Kaukazie Południowym nie jest polityką w pełni efektywną, bowiem działania Rosji wobec Armenii, Azerbejdżanu i Gruzji są zdominowane przez relacje dwustronne, a nie poprzez jednolitą spójną strategię wobec regionu. Polityka wobec tych państw ma także znamiona polityki imperialnej, bowiem sprowadza się do ich nagradzania (czy to w sferze politycznej, gospodarczej czy militarnej) za współpracę, bądź też karania za wszelkie wystąpienia przeciwko interesom Rosji. Oprócz budowania stosunków dwustronnych Rosja podejmuje (w zgodności z dokumentami wydawanymi przez oficjalne organy) działania integracyjne obszaru WNP, w tym i oczywiście Zakaukazia pod jej przywództwem. Na tym polu nie odnosi jednak wielkich sukcesów, bowiem nie wszystkie kraje kaukaskie są zainteresowane integracją gospodarczą (w ramach Euroazjatyckiej Unii Gospodarczej) czy polityczno-wojskową (w ramach WNP, OUBZ) pod przywództwem Rosji.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Kaukaz Południowy, Federacja Rosyjska, polityka zagraniczna, Armenia, Azerbejdżan, Gruzja

