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SECURITY INITIATIVES OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS, AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA: THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL ASPECTS

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Abstract. This article examines changes introduced since 2022 in the strategic and doctrinal documents of the Russian Federation, the Republic of Belarus, and the People's Republic of China, as well as the practical security initiatives advanced by these states in response to the changing international order and current global situation. The 2023 Foreign policy concept of the Russian Federation introduced new regional categories and revised foreign policy priorities. The 2024 Concept of national security of the Republic of Belarus incorporated new concepts, including «biological security» and «electoral sovereignty». The People's Republic of China, for its part, has put forward the Global security initiative, which is based on cooperation among states, the rejection of bloc confrontation, and the peaceful coexistence of peoples. The article argues that the foundations of the existing international security system require reassessment, given its limited effectiveness and the extent to which it is increasingly disregarded by many international actors. It also evaluates the security initiatives proposed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Belarus, and the People's Republic of China, considering their prospects for implementation and their potential to gain support from other states.

Keywords: Global security initiative; international security; Eurasian charter of diversity and multipolarity in the 21st century; Russian Federation; Republic of Belarus; People's Republic of China.

ИНИЦИАТИВЫ РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ, РЕСПУБЛИКИ БЕЛАРУСЬ И КИТАЙСКОЙ НАРОДНОЙ РЕСПУБЛИКИ В СФЕРЕ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ: ТЕОРЕТИЧЕСКИЙ И ПРАКТИЧЕСКИЙ АСПЕКТЫ

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Аннотация. Рассматриваются новшества в концептуальных документах Российской Федерации, Республики Беларусь и Китайской Народной Республики, которые были утверждены после 2022 г., а также предложенные данными государствами практические инициативы в сфере безопасности в условиях изменившегося миропорядка и текущей международной ситуации. Так, в Концепции внешней политики Российской Федерации 2023 г. сменились приоритеты, появились новые региональные понятия. В Концепцию национальной безопасности Республики Беларусь 2024 г. были включены понятия «биологическая безопасность», «электоральный суверенитет». В основе Глобальной инициативы в сфере безопасности Китайской Народной Республики лежит сотрудничество и невступление в противоборствующие блоки всех государств, а также мирное существование народов. Делается вывод о том, что необходимо пересмотреть основы существующей системы международной безопасности ввиду ее неэффективности и игнорирования этой

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системы многими участниками международных отношений. Оцениваются инициативы Российской Федерации, Республики Беларусь и Китайской Народной Республики в сфере безопасности, потенциал их реализации и поддержки иными государствами.

Ключевые слова: Глобальная инициатива в сфере безопасности; международная безопасность; Евразийская хартия многообразия и многополярности в XXI веке; Российская Федерация; Республика Беларусь; Китайская Народная Республика.

Introduction

In the 21st century, the system of international relations has been undergoing profound transformation, with inevitable consequences for security. In 2025, which marks the 80th anniversary of Victory in the Great Patriotic War and the World War II, questions of peace, conflict resolution, stability and the sustainable development of states have acquired particular salience. Some states still protect their national interests and it may contradict the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the first universal organisation in 1945 to prevent a recurrence of the World War II and its consequences. As UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres noted in October 2025, the international community faces numerous dangers, including hunger, poverty and climate change, while continuing along a path of division. In his view, it is necessary not only to protect the UN, but also to strengthen it and act collectively. Against this backdrop, the concept of security has broadened: now it encompasses not only traditional domains but also new ones. In an age of expanding technological influence, particularly that of artificial intelligence, information security has become increasingly important, even as military, economic, political, social and environmental security remain central.

Many states support the idea of a multipolar international system. They seek a more equitable world order grounded in international law rather than in particular «rules» serving the interests of Western countries. One early and prominent indication of this shift was V. Putin's Munich speech in 2007. At present, Europe and Ukraine are undergoing extensive militarisation, while a range of arms-control treaties has been dismantled. Under these conditions, the regional status quo must either be restored to de-escalate tensions, or a new balance of power must be established to reflect the rise of new centres of influence and their security initiatives. This article focuses on the ideas advanced by Russia, Belarus, and China, arguing that these three countries constitute a strategic belt of cooperation and partner-

ship on the Eurasian continent that could become a core element of a future international security architecture.

The article examines three approaches, as reflected in the new conceptual documents of Russia, Belarus, and China with particular attention to the Russian-Belarusian initiative «Eurasian charter of diversity and multipolarity in the 21st century», its prospective implementation in international relations, and its implications for the security system.

In Belarusian scholarship, the analysis draws on the 2025 article by M. V. Ryzhenkov [1], which examines the evolution of this initiative, its historical roots and its possible future contribution. O. S. Zhuravskaya has analysed the new Military doctrine of the Republic of Belarus and Concept of national security of the Republic of Belarus, and has assessed NATO's response to the turbulent situation in Europe [2; 3]. In Russian scholarship, several authors have examined the innovations introduced by the Foreign policy concept of the Russian Federation, including O. V. Lebedeva, A. K. Bobrov [4], and M. A. Neimark [5]. To incorporate a Chinese analytical perspective, the author also considers the article by Wang Jinghua [6].

The primary source base for this article consists of the principal official documents of the three states: the Foreign policy concept of the Russian Federation (2023), the Concept of national security of the Republic of Belarus and the Military doctrine of the Republic of Belarus (2024), and China's White paper on security.

The study employs a systemic and structural approach, combined with political and comparative analysis. It also draws on content analysis of a wide range of sources, including official documents, concepts, strategies and programmes.

The question of establishing a new regional security system is particularly salient at present because of the competition between the United States and China for economic primacy and between Russia and the United States for influence in the post-Soviet space.

Conceptual documents of the Russian Federation

First, the 2023 Foreign policy concept of the Russian Federation offers a reassessment of the contemporary international environment. It underscores the importance of the UN as a neutral and independent platform for dialogue and decision-making. It also emphasises the need to uphold the principle of the sovereign equality of states and to restore the role of the UN. Particu-

lar attention is paid to preventing what the document describes as neo-colonial practices by certain Western states. The Concept also addresses nuclear weapons and the risk of war [4].

Second, the concept introduces a number of innovations, including an explicit focus on national interests and their protection as a foreign-policy priority,

as well as the identification of new domains of national interest: the World Ocean, airspace and outer space.

Third, the new concept sets out a revised hierarchy of regional priorities. Before 2023, for example, there were no separate references to the Islamic world or the Eurasian continent. These are now included among the priority areas, alongside the CIS, China and India, the Asia – Pacific region, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. The United States and its Anglo-Saxon partners, including Australia, Canada and New Zealand, appear at the end of the list, with future relations made contingent on their respective actions. The Arctic is also highlighted because of its considerable conflict potential, given its vast territory, extensive resources, the opportunities associated with the development of the Northern Sea route, and its potential use for military basing [5, p. 173].

Conceptual documents of the Republic of Belarus

The conceptual documents of the Republic of Belarus also warrant consideration, since they reflect changes in the political and military environment of the 21st century world order. Two documents are particularly important in this regard: the Concept of national security of the Republic of Belarus and the Military doctrine of the Republic of Belarus. These texts set out the official views of the Belarusian state on ensuring security and countering threats. The Military doctrine of the Republic of Belarus also defines the country's military policy and the main directions and measures in the military-political and military-technical spheres. Belarus previously adopted two national security concepts, in 2001 and 2010, and three military doctrines, in 1992, 2002 and 2016.

In April 2024, at the 7th session of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly, which for the first time acted as the highest representative body of popular authority, a new Concept of national security of the Republic of Belarus and a new Military doctrine of the Republic of Belarus were approved. These documents were adopted in response to a changing strategic environment. The emergence of new challenges and threats, new forms of warfare, including hybrid warfare, new diseases with pandemic potential such as COVID-19, and the existence of biological laboratories required a reassessment of security, its constituent domains, and the internal and external sources of threat. As a result, the 2024 Concept of national security of the Republic of Belarus introduced the concepts «biological security» and «electoral sovereignty», the latter being regarded as especially important in the aftermath of the events of August 2020 in Belarus. In addition, the erosion of the arms-control regime was identified as a new trend. Not only the Treaty on intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles is no longer in force, but confidence- and security-building measures linked to the Treaty on conventional armed forces in Europe have also wea-

The deployment of Russian nuclear weapons on the territory of Belarus, together with the security guarantees set out in the 2024 Treaty on security guarantees, is presented as an important deterrent even under conditions of escalating tension. In this context, an attempt to neutralise or damage this arsenal, or to harm Russian military personnel responsible for servicing nuclear weapons, may be regarded as an act of aggression against the Russian Federation and could prompt a military response. At the same time, the presence of nuclear weapons does not in itself eliminate the risk of escalation. On the contrary, this factor increases the significance of unconventional means of aggression, including hybrid operations, which complicate attribution and may confront the leaders of the Union State with difficult choices regarding an appropriate response [5, p. 178].

kened. Accordingly, the risks of nuclear conflict and the danger of the uncontrolled development of other types of weapons of mass destruction are seen as increasing. The documents also refer to new forms of warfare and to smart power instruments used to shape public consciousness and deploy technologies associated with colour revolutions.

These trends are presented even more explicitly in the Military doctrine of the Republic of Belarus. The document states that international organisations and institutions no longer shape geopolitical processes, but instead merely legitimise decisions taken against states viewed as adversarial. It further argues that NATO presents itself as the only effective military-political structure and assumes global responsibility for international peace and security. At the same time, it suggests that the interests of NATO member states do not always coincide with the hegemonic interests attributed to the United States, even though those states are nonetheless compelled to follow the US line.

As an illustration, the Belarusian doctrinal perspective highlights the role of certain European Union member states, particularly Poland and the Baltic states, in intensifying confrontational rhetoric, constructing Belarus as an enemy, and accusing it of escalating regional tensions. According to this view, their regional ambitions are supported by the United States and may at times diverge from the EU's common policy. Poland and the Baltic states are also described as seeking, through various means, to interfere in the internal affairs of Belarus and in the conduct of elections, with the aim of bringing pro-Western political forces to power [2, p. 551].

The new Military doctrine of the Republic of Belarus also refers to the conflict in Ukraine as a source of tension near Belarus' borders. From the perspective set out in the document, Western support for Ukraine, obstruction of a peaceful settlement, and the expansion of indirect participation in the conflict will not bring

peace to the region but will instead aggravate the existing situation. The doctrine also notes the emergence of a new arms race, including in outer space, the Arctic and the information domain.

The dangers identified by the Republic of Belarus are important not only in themselves, but also because they reflect official Belarusian perceptions of the emerging world order and the changing structure of the international system. Among internal military risks, the document includes the propagation of ideas aimed at changing the existing government. Although the ideas are described as usually coming from outside the country, they are said to be spread among citizens in Belarus to fuel anti-government mobilisation and demands for regime change. The document also lists rising crime and illegal migration among the risks, with the November 2021 Polish border crisis presented as an example. It additionally refers to the incitement of hostility and social discord within Belarus, including along political, linguistic, ethnic, or cultural lines. Examples cited include claims about the limited number of Belarusian-language schools and the absence of Belarusian-language place names in public spaces [3, p. 7].

The doctrine uses the term «challenges» to refer to a more serious degree of danger. Under this category, it lists several further concerns, such as the establishment and funding of organisations in Belarus allegedly aimed at preparing, supporting, or encouraging a change of government. These include non-governmental organisations, think tanks, analytical centres, and other intellectual platforms engaged with young people. Additional challenges include calls to seize weapons, incitement to harm security personnel, and the organisation of pickets, flash mobs and mass unrest. According to the document, more serious concerns include the creation and activities of illegal armed groups, including various self-defence units, evasion of service in the Belarusian Armed Forces, including by leaving the country, and ideological confrontation within society. External dangers are presented in the doctrine as evidence of a wider shift in international relations from cooperation and consolidation to confrontation and disorder.

The Military doctrine of the Republic of Belarus identifies 15 risks and 15 challenges, while specifying only five threats at present.

The first category, risks, includes the military activity of states in border areas adjacent to Belarus, the designation of Belarus and its allied states as enemies in doctrinal documents, the introduction of anti-Belarusian issues into the agenda of international organisations, statements by non-state actors about advancing their ideas and interests in Belarus by military means, a decline in transparency in the field of security and defence on the part of NATO member states, and the aspiration

of certain neighbouring states to deploy strategic nuclear weapons, biological weapons and their components on their territories, and to acquire the relevant technologies. Within the logic of the doctrine, these are treated as existing risks and are therefore incorporated into the document.

The doctrine classifies the following as challenges: armed actions undertaken for provocative purposes, demonstrations of military force near the border of the Republic of Belarus, intensified intelligence activity, the establishment of centres designed to carry out malicious informational and technical impacts on critical infrastructure in Belarus, pressure by Western states on Belarus' allied countries, the obstruction of military-political initiatives aimed at strengthening security, and the withdrawal of a state from a military-political association in which Belarus participates, as illustrated by Armenia's declared intention to withdraw from the CSTO.

The Concept of national security of the Republic of Belarus is broad in scope and comprehensive in character, as it addresses not only the military sphere but also eight others: political, economic, demographic, environmental, biological, information, social, and scientific and technological security. Under current international conditions, especially in the environment surrounding Belarus and Russia, the military sphere is presented as the area undergoing the most significant changes and facing the greatest external pressure. It is therefore unsurprising that the two documents were revised simultaneously in order to ensure their coherence [3, p. 8].

Overall, Belarus' updated doctrinal documents widen the range of instruments intended to protect national security and support the strengthening of the Union State. Against the backdrop of a worsening regional military-political environment, measures have been introduced to improve the regulatory framework and review logistical and mobilisation capacities. Training for territorial defence and the people's militia has also intensified. At the same time, the strategic documents of the Republic of Belarus place clear emphasis on continued reliance on the military-political alliance with the Russian Federation and its further consolidation. The Concept of national security of the Republic of Belarus states that the most important component of ensuring Belarus' military security is «strengthening the collective security system through coordinated measures to ensure military security within the framework of the Union State, developing a regional grouping of troops (forces) of the Republic of Belarus and the Russian Federation, and increasing the effectiveness of military command bodies, forces and means of collective security of the CSTO»¹. Chapter 7 of the Military doctrine of the

¹On approval of Concept of national security of the Republic of Belarus : decision of the All-Belarus. People's Assembly, 25 Apr. 2024, No. 5 // National legal internet portal of the Republic of Belarus. URL: <https://pravo.by/document/?guid=12551&p0=P924v0005> (date of access: 10.02.2026) (in Russ.).

Republic of Belarus sets out the official position on the use of tactical nuclear weapons located on Belarusian territory. Such weapons are regarded «as an important component of preventive deterrence of a potential ene-

my from unleashing armed aggression and as a forced response to the non-compliance by Western guarantor countries with the terms of the Memorandum on security guarantees»².

White paper on China's national security in the new era

On 15 April 2014, early in what China describes as the new era, Xi Jinping introduced the Comprehensive national security concept. The concept is presented in Chinese official discourse as drawing on China's traditional culture and consolidating the Communist Party of China's theoretical achievements and practical experience in safeguarding national security. The concept is described as the first major strategic framework to be established as a guiding ideology and as an important contribution by contemporary China to global thinking on security [6, p. 158].

The Comprehensive national security concept is framed as part of the new era of socialism with Chinese characteristics and is presented as addressing both global security challenges and the specific security concerns of China as a major Eastern power. In this formulation, China's pursuit of peaceful development requires it to reconcile national security with common security. The concept therefore offers an institutional framework for national security governance grounded in a holistic understanding of security [6, p. 158].

The contemporary era may be understood as one defined simultaneously by challenges and opportunities. Speaking at the Boao forum for Asia in April 2022, Xi Jinping stated that «changes in the world, our time and history are unfolding like never before»³. In that context, he argued that the international community must preserve peace and stability and that one way to advance these goals would be through the development and adoption of the Global security initiative [6, p. 157].

This initiative extends the Chinese concept of building a community with a shared future for humanity. As the economy of China expanded and the country's international standing strengthened, China increasingly

came to present itself as a proponent of comprehensive security for all.

First, the initiative calls for the preservation of «indivisible security» and the construction of a balanced and sustainable security architecture. It also opposes the strengthening of one state's security at the expense of others, supports common development and security through cooperation, encourages dialogue and consultation as means of resolving disputes, and advocates closer coordination and cooperation in global security governance⁴.

From a theoretical perspective, one interpretation is that, in order to advance its interests and values, China seeks «to transform its concept of regional security into a global security architecture that protects sovereignty, encourages non-interference, promotes multipolarity, and opposes the US-led international order and multilateral treaties. To become a world power, the PRC should expand its influence and project its power in the western Pacific and other regions»⁵.

As V. Putin noted in an article published in the People's Daily newspaper, «Russia and China have consistently worked to create an equitable, open and inclusive regional and global security system that is not directed against third countries. In this regard, we note the constructive role of China's Global security initiative, which is in line with the Russian approaches in this area»⁶. Moreover, the Russian vision of a new international security system is presented as not only compatible with, but also complementary to, the basic principles of the Chinese initiative in the field of global security. Belarus also supports the idea of a greater Eurasian partnership, proposed by V. Putin in 2015. It is therefore necessary to consider the Russian-Belarusian security initiative.

The Russian-Belarusian initiative: Eurasian charter of diversity and multipolarity in the 21st century

In a speech delivered at a high-level international conference in 2023, Minister of foreign affairs S. Aleinik stressed the need both to strengthen existing international organisations and to develop new frameworks

of cooperation, including the EAEU, SCO, BRICS, CSTO and CICA. In this interpretation, these bodies represent a new generation of organisations operating on more equitable principles, in which West-centric approaches

²On approval of Military doctrine of the Republic of Belarus : decision of the All-Belarus. People's Assembly, 25 Apr. 2024, No. 6 // National legal internet portal of the Republic of Belarus. URL: <https://pravo.by/document/?guid=12551&p0=P924v0006> (date of access: 10.02.2026) (in Russ.).

³China released Global security initiative concept // TASS : website. URL: <https://tass.ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/17099845> (date of access: 14.11.2025) (in Russ.).

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Vladimir Putin's article for People's Daily newspaper, Russia and China: a future-bound partnership // President of Russia : website. URL: <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/70743> (date of access: 14.11.2025).

are being replaced by multipolarity and polycentricity. Most states, from this perspective, support diverse paths of development and seek equality in international affairs, with Eurasia occupying a central place in this process. The Belarusian position is that the future lies in Eurasian interconnectedness, grounded in a common security system, stable economic ties, and energy, transport and logistics corridors⁷.

From this standpoint, there is no need to devise new principles of security and peaceful coexistence, since these have long been enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the Helsinki final act and other OSCE documents, all of which affirm the principle of the indivisibility of security. According to this argument, however, that principle failed to operate in Europe because certain actors chose to violate it and to strengthen their own security at the expense of others. This, in turn, produced serious adverse consequences. As S. Aleinik argued, Eurasia shows a stronger appreciation of the importance of indivisible security, as well as greater respect for international law and for the national, religious and cultural characteristics of others. In his view, this constitutes the principal foundation for the emergence of a harmonious common security space. Belarus has welcomed and supported initiatives aimed at deepening integration processes in Eurasia, although their further development remains difficult to predict under current conditions. No state currently possesses ready-made solutions for constructing a Eurasian security model. Nevertheless, the present period, in this view, requires leadership: if not a complete concept, then at least the basic elements and contours of such a model must be proposed so that states may subsequently use them as a foundation⁸.

Speaking to representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation on 14 June 2024, V. Putin argued that the Euro-Atlantic security system no longer existed and that a new system would need to be built together with partners and all interested states. What, then, is the content of this initiative?

The first element is the establishment of dialogue with all parties, including the European member states of NATO. Since they are situated on the same continent, the argument holds, they must be able to cooperate and work together⁹.

The Russian vision, therefore, is to develop a security system in which all states would have confidence above all in their own security, since insecurity and the absence of mutual trust are seen as characteristic not only of the Eurasian continent but of the wider international system. This is linked both to rising tensions and to the interconnectedness and interdependence of states [5, p. 172].

At the meeting of the foreign ministers of Russia and Belarus in Brest on 22 November 2024, a joint vision of the Eurasian charter of diversity and multipolarity in the 21st century was formulated. Representatives of the two countries signed the document.

The text underscores the significance of the Eurasian continent. Eurasia is presented as the geographical centre and material foundation of the emerging multipolar world [1, p. 78].

A central element in the construction of a new security system, according to this initiative, is resistance to attempts by external forces, especially states outside the continent, to interfere in the affairs of Eurasian countries [1, p. 79].

Another related proposal is the BRICS plus format, advanced at the BRICS summit in Kazan in October 2024. In the interpretation presented here, this framework of cooperation is regarded as one of the most progressive and equitable.

Belarus and Russia jointly presented this Charter in Geneva on 25 February 2026 in order to promote a new concept of Eurasian security and to invite European partners to engage with it. Earlier, on 3 February 2026, five states (Belarus, Iran, Myanmar, North Korea and the Russia) signed the joint declaration «On the way to the Eurasian charter of diversity and multipolarity in the 21st century».

Conclusions

Current developments suggest that Eurasian states may in future seek to build a new continental security system capable of ensuring the stable and sustainable development of the region. Such a development, in turn, could contribute to the emergence of a broader global security system with the potential to reshape international order in the interests of wider humanity. China, Russia and Belarus have advanced different initiatives in this sphere. At the same time, these three states are

presented as sharing several core principles: cooperation in security, consultation in international affairs, humanity, and the indivisibility of peace for all states and nations. For this reason, both the Global security initiative and the Russian-Belarusian initiative, the Eurasian charter of diversity and multipolarity in the 21st century, are presented as open to other countries. Their principal objective is the same: to promote peace and security and to reduce the potential for conflict.

⁷Statement of S. Aleinik, Minister of foreign affairs, at the high-level international conference «Eurasian security: reality and prospects in a transforming world» (26 October 2023, Minsk) // Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus : website. URL: https://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/d7371731881f8f54.html (date of access: 14.11.2025) (in Russ.).

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