

PRAGMATISM AND MESSIAHSHIP IN WORLD POLITICS: BATTLE OF PARADIGMS

International relations today are in the midst of deep transformation. This is a very natural period of transition from the unipolar (in many ways illusionary and mythical) worldview to a polycentric model. The transformation process in its turn is accompanied by competing foreign policy trends of pragmatism and messiahship of leading world nations.

Since recently separate representatives of the world community have been trying to impress upon us (and, obviously, upon themselves, too) that Russia's foreign policy is the policy of messiahship. With enviable regularity they offer condemnations that say that Russia exists specifically in order to teach other nations a lesson, or, to the contrary, to show how things are not to be done. This is, to put it mildly, untrue. Russia has never intended and never will impose ideas on others.

Russian foreign policy is focused first and foremost on its national interests, respect of international law and principles of equality. In the process of trying to find a balance in the system of international relations we value above all transparency and consistency. It is hard to ignore the fact that over centuries Russia has played a balancing role in the development of the world civilization. Moreover, if we choose to abandon empty slogans, we will see that over centuries Russia has

¹ Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (since 2011), Doctor of Law (International Law), Professor. Since 1976 has held various diplomatic posts in the main office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia and abroad. Former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (2005–2011). Author of several books on international space law, as well as more than 200 publications on international relations and issues of foreign policy, science, education and culture. Fellow of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences; Member of the Russian Academy of Cosmonautics; Corresponding Member of the Academy of Sciences of Tatarstan; Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences' Space Board, International Institute of Space Law (IISL, Paris), International Academy of Astronautics (IAA, Paris); Professor Emeritus of the University of Edinburgh (United Kingdom). Awarded the Orders of Honor and Friendship, 1st and 2nd Class Medals of the Order of Merit, Commendations of the Government and the President of the Russian Federation.

proven again and again in practice her adherence to the principles of stable and sustainable world order. International security is something we do not take lightly. Among the practical (far from ephemeral) measures implemented by Russia in order to promote international stability are contributions to the Middle East peace process, counteracting organized crime, drug trafficking, and many other threats and challenges.

Historically speaking, any ties to messianic ideology were cut off quite logically ever since the dissolution of the USSR. Moreover, Russia abandoned all other ideologies in favor of the ideology of life. The ideological component has been removed from Russian foreign for more than 20 years. We simply don't need that. Instead of exporting fanatically the values, thoughts and ideas (as the West often does), Russia calls upon other nations to get together and to face the common challenges and threats, exercising the pragmatic model of multilateral diplomacy in its most adequate form.

Those of our partners who are sincerely focused on the primacy of international law, justice, healthy traditions and values, and those who build rational collective approaches to solving present-day problems, fit well into this main vector of Russia's foreign policy. They will not be confused by colorful verbiage on supposedly "destructive force of Russia's foreign policy," supposedly geared toward damaging the West, in the state of "relative decline." On the contrary this rhetoric is more characteristic for aspiring "world leaders" who are never shy to use the methods that are inconsistent with international communication rules and human ethics overall. They are also possessed by the desire to spread their values worldwide. In our view, however, these are pseudo-values, or post-Christian values. Moreover, the attempt to force someone to accept others' opinions has always been met with resistance. Messiahship in foreign policy is just a waste of time and energy that leads to zero results and sometimes even to devastating losses. The Cold War, essentially repeated the experience of religious wars in Europe. Now, just as then, there are no alternative to Westphalian

principles, which take the ideology beyond the framework of international relations.

In short, Russia has long chosen the path of balanced pragmatism, which on the one hand provides for the countries development, and on the other rests on the premise of universality of political and diplomatic methods of approaching international relations.