

A new treaty on Euro-Atlantic Security

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A new treaty on Euro-Atlantic Security proposed by the Russian President Dmitry Medvedev last summer would meet 21st-century realities and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe is not the only platform for drafting it. The statement came from Foreign Minister Alexander Grushko during a session of the OSCE Council in Vienna.

The Russian diplomat's statement confirms the flexibility and multisidedness of President Medvedev's initiative. The new treaty is supposed to replace the Helsinki Act signed by 35 European countries, the United States and Canada in Helsinki in 1975. Moscow suggests using a variety of formats for talks on the new treaty, for example, the Russia-European Union forum, the Russia-NATO Council, and others. Mr. Grushko noted that the future pact should not be perceived as a substitute for the treaty on conventional armed forces in Europe or other security agreements. Meanwhile, some Western politicians argue that the existing international treaties and organizations are quite sufficient for ensuring peace and security in Europe and worldwide. It's hard to agree with that. This is obvious if we look at the U.S. and NATO military campaigns against former Yugoslavia and in Iraq, and Georgia's aggression against South Ossetia and Russian peacekeepers last August. Enormous geopolitical changes have taken place since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Treaty Organization, many new sovereign states have appeared on the maps of Europe and Asia. Russia and the West are no longer separated by ideological differences.

The essence of the proposed security doctrine is to take these new realities into account and work out a document based on true equality for all its signatories, respect for their sovereignty and territorial integrity, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the non-use of force. The latest responses suggest that President Medvedev's initiative is winning ground among European leaders.

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