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Russia's Naval Revival

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I . Introduction

The resurgence of the Russian Navy in recent years is one of the clearest manifestations of Moscow's military revival. Sea power is critical for realizing Russia's economic and security goals. The Russian Navy's main missions include strategic deterrence, coastal defense, protection of sea lanes and maritime commerce, and foreign presence and power projection. Following the near collapse of its Navy in the 1990s, the Russian government has recently made progress in stabilizing fleet numbers and raising its foreign presence. Until a few years ago, Russian warships rarely ventured from home, and they suffered from severe maintenance and other problems. Now Russia has cast its eyes back across the deep blue water and Russian warships can be seen throughout the world (if not yet very often). Current government efforts aim to expand Russia's sea power by increasing the quantity and quality of Russia's naval ships and gradually expanding the fleet's international activities, sometimes in partnership with foreign countries. Essentially, Russia's short-term goal is to defend critical assets close to home, while the long-term objective, or at least aspiration, is to reclaim Russia's status as a global power with a far-reaching maritime presence. But the Russian Navy's sustained return to the high seas faces formidable impediments that will likely constrain Moscow's global reach. The Russian Federation will probably not have a genuine blue-water navy for decades. However, Russia should be able to renew its strategic submarine fleet, which will play a critical role in sustaining the country's nuclear deterrence, and field enough smaller ships to be able to defend Russia's coasts and Arctic claims against the modest military threats likely to face these regions.

II. Doctrine

In contrast to the Soviet period, current Russian Navy doctrine no longer describes the fleet's main purpose as engaging in global peacetime competition with Western navies or preparing for a potential world war with the United States and other NATO navies. Instead, with the important exception of Russia's strategic submarine fleet, which is part of Russia's sea-based nuclear deterrent, Russian doctrine emphasizes protecting Russia's economic and security interests in several important world regions. In 2001, President Vladimir Putin approved the "Maritime Doctrine of the Russian Federation until the Year 2020." The document's goals are defending Russia's territorial sovereignty, protecting Russia's access to natural resources, balancing U.S. and NATO power as well as China's naval expansion, and expanding Russia's status as a global power. According to the document, Russia's national interests include upholding Russia's sovereignty in its internal waters, territorial seas, maritime airspace; assuring Russia's sovereign rights and jurisdiction over its exclusive economic zone and its continental shelf; and maintaining Russia's freedom to navigate, operate, fish, and conduct research in the world's oceans. The Maritime Doctrine also supports such principles as compliance with international law, using primarily on non-military means in addressing conflicts and national security threats; but also having the military capabilities necessary to deter military threats and demonstrate Russia's international military power, which makes the Navy a foreign-policy tool.¹⁾

1) President of the Russian Federation, 'Maritime Doctrine of Russian Federation 2020', July 27, 2001, p.9

III. Force Structure

The Russian Navy consists of strategic and non-strategic submarines, surface ships, naval aviation, and ground and coastal troops. The fleet stagnated after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The Russian Navy receive considerably lower funding than during the Soviet period or compared with other branches of the military. For years, the new Russian government struggled just to complete the construction of ships already begun during the Soviet period. In the end, Russia only launched four new surface combat vessels in the first decade of the new millennium. These were only small frigates and corvettes; one vessel took a painfully slow 19 years to complete.²⁾ Due to inadequate funding, the Russian government sold off some ships, including two aircraft carriers, while leaving many others to rust in port. As late as 2008, about a third of the fleet's 115 combat ships were not operational.

Recent years have seen a remarkable reversal, with more shipbuilding and foreign deployments. The Russian Navy is finally receiving the capital it needs to modernize and rebuild its forces after decades of neglect. The State Armament Program (SAP) for 2011–2020 allocates approximately 4.7 trillion of its 19.5 trillion rubles to the Navy. This sum will purchase approximately one hundred new warships, mostly submarines and small ships such as frigates and corvettes but also a few big vessels. Though the timeline for naval modernization may be longer than that for Russia's other military branches, and the available monetary resource remains lower than that provided the Soviet Navy or currently available to the U.S. Navy, the Russian Navy has articulated a vision for comprehensive renewal that extends into 2050. The plan is to focus initially on strengthening the country's coastal defenses and

2) "Russian Navy's Regeneration Plans," IISS Strategic Comments, vol. 17, no. 8 (February 2011).

strategic deterrent, while laying the basis for Russia's long-term revival as a global maritime power.

Realizing these ambitions could prove difficult given Russia's current and anticipated future economic problems, the crippled state of the national shipbuilding industry, and the additional challenges of pervasive corruption and inefficiency in Russia's defense sector. Even as Russia resumes naval construction, this Navy fleet may decline in the near term as the replacement rate on new vessels fails to keep up with the rate of decommission for ships that have reached the end of their operational lifespans. Another problem is that the Russian Navy currently looks like a shrunken version of its Soviet predecessor. One major consequence is that the fleet has a small number of vessels distributed across a large quantity of ship classes. For example, the Navy has one type of aircraft carrier, two types of cruisers, and several types of destroyers, frigates, and corvettes. These ships also have a wide variety of weapons systems. This diversity of ship and weapons types makes maintaining, training, and equipping the fleet complicated and expensive. The Russian government is trying over time to reduce the variety of platforms in its fleet and standardize its wide assortment of ship designs and major components to improve the quality and reduce the costs of maintenance and training. But thus far the Navy has lacked the funds and Russian shipbuilding has lacked the capacity to achieve the comprehensive replacement of older models. Russia has made only limited progress in developing deep-water, multi-purpose vessels rather than single-purpose ships. But while Russia may never achieve its admirals' dreams of rivaling the U.S. Navy, even modest upgrades and technological advances should sustain Russia's coastal defenses and asymmetric capabilities and give Russia a Navy larger and more powerful than all but a handful of countries.³⁾

3) David Axe, "The Russian Navy Is on the Verge of Collapse," War Is Boring, January 18, 2015, <https://medium.com/war-is-boring/the-russian-navy-is-on-the-verge-of-collapse-b0ce344ebf96>

1. Submarines

The 2011–2020 SAP will purchase approximately two dozen submarines. The Navy will procure 6–8 Project 955A and 955U Yuriy Dolgorukiy class strategic ballistic missile submarines, 150 R–30 Bulava submarine–launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), about 40 R–29RMU–2 Sineva SLBMs, 6 Project 885/885M fourth–generation nuclear–powered Severodvinsk class multipurpose submarines, two St. Petersburg class Project 677 diesel–electric submarines, and three Project 06363 Novorossiysk class diesel–electric submarines. The Navy will also upgrade its fleet of third–generation Project 971, 949A and 945 nuclear–powered submarines.

Investment in the Project 955 Borei–class nuclear–powered strategic submarines will remain a priority. Russia aims to acquire approximately six to eight of these submarines by 2020 and more after that. These boats will be deployed with both the Northern and Pacific fleets. They are equipped with R–30 Bulava submarine–launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs). Three of the Borei–class submarines have already been completed, the Yuriy Dolgoruky, the Alexander Nevsky, and the Vladimir Monomakh, and a fourth, the Knyaz Vladimir, is under construction.⁴⁾ This puts the Russian Navy well on pace to meet its goal of adding eight Borei–class submarines to its fleet by 2020, replacing its Typhoon–class submarines, its Delta–III submarines, and Delta–IV submarines.⁵⁾ Though concern was raised over the ability to meet its 2020 deadline after a Bulava test launch failed in September 2013, a successful test of this missile has since been completed and testing is expected to conclude by 2016.⁶⁾ Despite this missile’s poor test record,

4) “3rd Russian Borei–class nuclear sub raises its colors,” RT, December 19, 2014, <http://rt.com/news/214155-russia-submarine-vladimir-monomakh/>.

5) Bill Powell and Owen Matthews, “Enemy Ahoy: China and Russia Strive for Naval Supremacy,” Newsweek, July 1, 2014, <http://www.newsweek.com/2014/07/11/enemy-ahoy-china-and-russia-strive-naval-supremacy-256825.html>.

moreover, the Russian Navy lacks a viable alternative delivery system. Russia is withdrawing all 14 of its Project 667BDR (Delta III) class submarines from service. Although the government is modernizing its six Project 667BDRM (Delta IV) class submarines and fitting them with new missiles, they will not provide an adequate deterrent by themselves.⁷⁾ As a result, the military intends the Borey–Bulava combination to serve as the foundation of Russia's sea-based nuclear force through at least the 2040s.

The SAP calls for six Project 885 Yasen-class nuclear-powered multi-purpose (SSN) submarines (NATO code name Graney). These submarines, the pride of the non-nuclear fleet, have many automated subsystems and other cutting-edge capabilities that have impressed even U.S. admirals.⁸⁾ The submarine is equipped with mines, torpedoes, short range anti-ship missiles, as well as Onyx and Kalibr supersonic anti-ship missiles and land attack cruise missiles.⁹⁾ After decades of development, this advanced submarine was finally deemed operational in 2014. Being a multipurpose boat, the Yasen class submarines fulfill two roles--that of traditional attack submarines, which primarily confront other ships, and that of cruise missile-launching submarines, which can also attack land targets. As an attack submarine the Yasen boats would replace the Akula attack submarines, while as a submerging platform for submarine-launched cruise missiles (SLCMs) the Yasen would replace Russia's Oscar II class submarines.¹⁰⁾ The

6) The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2015*, "Chapter 5: Russia and Eurasia," pp.159–206.

<https://www.iiss.org/publications/military%20balance/issues/the-military-balance-2015-5ea6/mb2015-05-russia-and-eurasia-435f>.

7) "Russian Nuclear Strategic Forces," Russian Forces, www.russianforces.org/navy, 25 February 2015.

8) Dave Majumdar, "U.S. Navy Impressed with New Russian Attack Boat", *USNI News*, October 28, 2014, <http://news.usni.org/2014/10/28/u-s-navy-impressed-new-russian-attack-boat>.

9) "Russia's New Fourth-Generation Submarine to Become World's Quietest," *Pravda.ru*, June 16, 2010, <http://english.pravda.ru/russia/politics/16-06-2010/113862-submarine-0>.

10) Dave Majumdar, "U.S. Navy Impressed with New Russian Attack Boat", *USNI News*, October 28, 2014.

Yasen boats will probably be assigned to the larger Northern and Pacific Fleets due to their size, capabilities, and cost. Their long endurance, stealth, diverse armaments, and other advantages will have a greater impact in larger bodies of water. Another mission for the Yasen submarines could be defending Russia's extensive claims over the natural resources on the floor of the Arctic Ocean; their long-range cruise missiles and other weapons systems would be able to defend large areas of the Arctic Ocean from a distance.

Despite its capabilities, the Yasen-class are incredibly expensive to build, forcing the Russian government to procure other less-expensive submarines.¹¹⁾ For example, the Navy will buy several non-nuclear submarines, including the Project 677 Lada-class diesel electric submarines, which will be quieter and have more advanced anti-ship weaponry than the venerable Russian Kilo-class diesel-eclectic submarine, which it will replace.¹²⁾ Under the 2011-2020 SAP, Russia will also produce several Project 06363 Novorossiysk class diesel-electric submarines as well as upgrade its fleet of third-generation Project 971, 949A, and 945 nuclear-powered submarines, with improved Kilo-class boats for the Black Sea Fleet.¹³⁾ The government is also acquiring Project 210 Losharik and Project 09851 Khabarovsk special purpose submarines for classified missions.¹⁴⁾ The Russian Navy still has several types of multi-purpose submarines inherited from the Soviet period. These include Oscar II, Victor III and Sierra attack submarines. In March 2014, the Russian government announced that Russia was

<http://news.usni.org/2014/10/28/u-s-navy-impressed-new-russian-attack-boat>

- 11) "Project 885 Yasen/Graney/Granay," GlobalSecurity.org, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/russia/885.htm>.
- 12) "Project 885 Yasen/Graney/Granay," GlobalSecurity.org, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/russia/885.htm>.
- 13) The plan is said to be extending towards 2050. The source of the plan presented by us is: Dmitry Gorenburg, 'Here Are Russia's Grandiose Plans For Upgrading Its Navy', [uk.businessinsider.com](http://uk.businessinsider.com/here-are-russias-grandiose-plans-for-upgrading-their-navy-2015-1?r=US), January 23, 2015: <http://uk.businessinsider.com/here-are-russias-grandiose-plans-for-upgrading-their-navy-2015-1?r=US>
- 14) "Russia and Eurasia," *The Military Balance 2015* (London: The IISS, 2005), chapter 5

working on a new-type fifth-generation conventional submarine, dubbed Project Kalina, which will be fitted with an air-independent propulsion (AIP) system design to stay submerged longer and sail more quietly than even nuclear-powered submarines.¹⁵⁾

2. Surface Ships

Although submarines have been a long-standing priority for the Russian Navy, the 2011–2020 SAP will also provide dozens of new surface ships by 2020, including two foreign-made landing helicopter docks (France's Mistral class ships), smaller Project 11711 Admiral Ivan Gren class tank landing ships, Project 22350 Admiral Gorshkov class frigates, Project 11356M Admiral Grigorovich-class frigates, and a Project 11661K frigate.

The acquisition that has received the most attention has been the Mistral-class warship, an amphibious assault ship that can carry 177 crew, 16 heavy helicopters or 30 light, 70 armored vehicles, 450 tools, and four landing craft, while serving as a command and control center and fully equipped field hospital. The original plans had been for the first two carriers to be built in France, and for the other two to be built in Russia to include advanced Russian weapons including supersonic cruise missile launchers, missile and air defense systems, and anti-submarine warfare systems and complexes. However, the crisis in Ukraine and significant international pressure has forced the French government to suspend implementation of the deal.¹⁶⁾ Russia currently plans to manufacture the smaller Project 11711 Admiral Ivan Gren class

15) Zachary Keck, 'Russia May Sell China New Advanced Submarines', *The Diplomat*, March 28, 2014, < <http://thediplomat.com/2014/03/russia-may-sell-china-new-advanced-submarines/>>.

16) 'Russia Sees Little Chance of Getting Mistral Warships From France - Report', *The Moscow Times*, March 27, 2015: <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/business/article/russia-sees-little-chance-of-getting-mistral-warships-from-france-report/518147.html>

tank landing ships indigenously.

The SAP will also finance the repair and upgrade of Russia's cruisers, with priority being given to modernizing Russia's single Kirov class Project 11442 heavy nuclear-powered guided missile cruiser, the Pyotr Velikiy (Peter the Great). The Pyotr Velikiy is the only nuclear-powered surface ship currently in active service with the Russian Navy and serves as the flagship of the Northern Fleet. The Russian Navy often sends its sole Kirov cruiser on lengthy deployments to showcase the Russian flag throughout the world.¹⁷⁾

Furthermore, the development of Project 11356 Gorchkov frigates is progressing, with a targeted completion date of 2017 for the six frigates. The frigates, small warships generally used to protect other ships or conduct in anti-submarine warfare, will involve new modular constructions to enable to ships to conduct escort, patrol, counter piracy and other missions that can utilize their anti-ship, anti-submarine, and anti-air weapons. The fleet will also have a new class of multifunctional Project 22350 Admiral Gorshkov class frigates. Their modular construction will enable them to conduct escort, patrol, counter-piracy and of other missions with their anti-ship, anti-submarine, and anti-air weapons. Construction delays with these ships have resulted in the Russian Navy's ordering several Krivak IV class frigates, which were originally intended for export.¹⁸⁾ The ships have a 100-mm gun, a SHTIL medium-range air defense system, Club-N supersonic anti-ship missiles, two Kashtan point defense systems, two twin 533-mm torpedo launchers, and an anti-submarine warfare helicopter. The Krivak IV class frigates will be assigned to the Black Sea Fleet.¹⁹⁾

17) Russia's Most Powerful Warship Returns Home after Tour-of-Duty," RIA Novosti, December 9, 2010, http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20100912/160562800.html.

18) Dmitry Gorenburg, March 2, 2011" The Future of the Russian Navy Part 2: Smaller Surface Ships," August 29, 2010, <http://russiamil.wordpress.com/2010/08/29/the-future-of-the-russian-navy-part-2-smaller-surface-ships/>.

19) "Russian Navy orders 3 more Krivak IV class frigates," RIA Novosti, September 14, 2011, http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20110914/166846372.html.

In addition, the 2011–2020 SAP will fund procurement of 12 Project 20381 and 20385 Steregushchiy-class corvettes as well 22 ships of a new class of corvette and at least one Project 18280 vessel, a new class of intelligence ships. The Steregushchiy class corvettes will be deployed to protect Russia's coastal waters and maritime energy transportation routes, especially in the Black and the Baltic seas. Each corvette has a displacement of 2,000 metric tons, maximum speed of 27 knots, and a crew of 100. Its main weapons include SS-N-25 Switchblade anti-ship cruise missiles, a 100-mm gun, a Ka-27 Helix ASW helicopter, and a variety of air defense and anti-submarine systems.²⁰⁾ Russia will also acquire five Project 20380 corvettes with stealth technology to reduce the vessel's secondary radar field, as well as its acoustic, infrared, magnetic and visual signatures. The Navy will also receive the smaller Buyan class corvettes, which will augment Russia's naval presence in the Caspian Sea and possibly Black Seas. The Leonov is one of several Vishnya-class reconnaissance ships that were commissioned in the 1980s that are currently operated by the Russian Navy. As Moscow wants to modernize the Navy, it plans to add a new class of intelligence vessels, the Project-18280 intelligence ship.²¹⁾

3. Naval Aviation

The 2011–2020 SAP will also finance the repair and modernization of the Project 11435 Admiral Kuznetsov "heavy aircraft carrying cruiser," a pseudo aircraft carrier whose small number of planes has limited capacity. In the past, the ship has had as few as eight Su-33 aircraft.

20) "Russia floats out 3rd stealth corvette," RIA Novosti, April 15, 2011, http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20110415/163545116.html

21) "Russian Navy gets new-generation intelligence ship," TASS, January 14, 2015, <http://tass.ru/en/russia/771056>; "В Петербурге заложат фрегат и разведкорабль для ВМФ России," Lenta, November 11, 2013, <http://lenta.ru/news/2013/11/11/lay/>.

These can combat other planes and attack surface ships and submarines, but the small number of planes leaves them vulnerable to counterattack. In addition, the Kuznetsov uses diesel-electric power, which limits its time at sea. The Kuznetsov has seen little action. It has repeatedly gone out-of-service since joining the Northern Fleet in January 1991

The Navy has said it is considering designs for possible new aircraft carriers, but none would be built until after 2020.²²⁾ Due to their visibility and versatility, genuine aircraft carriers would help confirm Russia's revival as a great sea power. In early November 2011, the Russian Navy leadership recommended building two aircraft carriers battle groups by 2027; one would serve in the Northern Fleet (for deployment primarily in the Atlantic Ocean) and one with the Pacific Fleet. Navy leaders considered but later rejected the argument that Russia could perhaps get by with a mixture of advanced surface and submarine ships alone.²³⁾ Instead, they endorsed the so-called "American model" of having a carrier task force, which in addition to the carrier itself would include about 15 auxiliary escort ships such as cruisers, destroyers, frigates, corvettes, landing craft, multi-purpose submarines, and icebreakers for deployment on Arctic cruises.²⁴⁾

In early 2015, the Krylov State Research Center in St. Petersburg released a model for a proposed new Russian aircraft carrier, capable of carrying 100 fixed-wing aircraft.²⁵⁾ This would make the proposed aircraft carrier bigger than the US Nimitz class of supercarriers, and at least twice the size of Russia's current and only aircraft carrier the

22) "Russian defense minister denies plans to build aircraft carriers," RIA Novosti, July 2, 2011, http://en.rian.ru/mlitary_news/20110702/164963893.html.

23) Россия расширяет зоны влияния, Pravda.ru, November 2, 2011
<http://www.pravda.ru/video/news/732.html>

24) "Russian Navy to be Decked out with Flattops," RT, November 2, 2011,
<http://rt.com/politics/aircraft-carrier-russia-fleet-369/>.

25) Fred Weir, "Russian navy plans new supercarrier, but will it ever float?," Christian Science Monitor, March 4, 2015,
<http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Europe/2015/0304/Russian-Navy-plans-new-supercarrier-but-will-it-ever-float-video>.

Soviet-era Admiral Kuznetsov.²⁶⁾ But Russian shipbuilders would need to improve their skills considerably to see the project to completion.²⁷⁾ Russia tried to refresh its ability to construct an aircraft carrier when it made a deal with India in 2004 to refashion the Soviet-era Admiral Gorshkov into a carrier, but in the end, construction was years behind schedule and more than one billion dollars over budget, which does not bode well for Russia's ability to construct a new and even larger aircraft carrier in the near term.

IV. Activities

Perhaps the most visible sign of the revival of the Russian Navy has been its heightened activity, which contrasts with the general absence of Russian warships from the high seas as recently as a decade ago. The fleet has been noticeably active since the August 2008 war with Georgia. During that conflict, ships from Russia's Black Sea Fleet, based at the Ukrainian port of Sevastopol, deployed along the coast of Georgia's breakaway province of Abkhazia to support Russian ground and air operations in Georgia. Since October 2008, the Russian Navy has been increasing its number of port visits and time on deployments compared with previous years.²⁸⁾ For example, it has sent a rotating

26) Fred Weir, "Russian navy plans new supercarrier, but will it ever float?," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 4, 2015,

<http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Europe/2015/0304/Russian-Navy-plans-new-supercarrier-but-will-it-ever-float-video>.

27) Matthew Bodner, "Russia Wants an Aircraft Supercarrier, But Can It Build One?," *The Moscow Times*, March 24, 2015,

<http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/russia-says-iran-nuclear-program-deal-good-for-middle-east/business/article/russia-wants-an-aircraft-supercarrier-but-can-it-build-one/517990.html>.

28) Thomas Fedyszyn, "Russia's Navy Rising," *The National Interest*, December 28, 2013,

<http://nationalinterest.org/commentary/russias-navy-new-red-storm-rising-9616?page=2>.

fleet of ships off the Somali coast to fight the pirates operating there, which occasionally have preyed on Russian shipping. Like China, Russia has always kept its ships off Somalia independent from the larger fleets operated by NATO and the EU. In November of 2008, at the same time that then Russian President Dmitry Medvedev became the first Russian leader to make an official visit to Venezuela, Russian warships docked at the port of La Guaira, near Caracas, and engaged in the first Navy surface operations in the Western Hemisphere since the Cold War.²⁹⁾ In December 2012, Russian Defense Minister Shoygu, responding to the war in Syria, announced the creation of a permanent Russian naval task force assigned to the Mediterranean Sea.³⁰⁾ The Soviet Navy had a limited flotilla in the Mediterranean, but Russian Federation warships have rarely deployed there.³¹⁾ Russia's renewed displays of naval power have been evident in how Sweden, Latvia, and other countries have concluded that that Russian submarines have been encroaching on their territorial waters.³²⁾ In addition to low-visibility submarine patrols, the surface fleet has made a show of its power by moving warships through the English Channel en route to drills in the Atlantic.³³⁾

Although Russia's emphasis has been on adversaries close to home, the Navy has also recently engaged in several long-range intelligence,

29) "Chavez Secures Nuclear, Arms Promises During Russia Visit," RFE/RL, September 26, 2008, http://www.rferl.org/content/Chavez_Secures_Nuclear_Arms_Promises_During_Russia_Visit/1291778.html.

30) Thomas Fedyszyn, "Russia's Navy Rising," *The National Interest*, December 28, 2013, <http://nationalinterest.org/commentary/russias-navy-new-red-storm-rising-9616?page=2>.

31) Ilya Kramnik, "Outside View: Russia flexes Med sea power," UPI, October 10, 2008, http://www.spacewar.com/reports/Outside_View_Russia_flexes_Med_sea_power_999.html.

32) Elisabeth Braw, "The 'Russian Submarine' in Swedish Waters Isn't the Only Unwelcome Visitor in the Baltic Sea," *Newsweek*, October 21, 2014, <http://www.newsweek.com/2014/10/31/damaged-submarine-spotted-swedish-waters-russia-turns-baltics-278694.html>.

33) Adam Withnall, "Russian Warships in English Channel 'to conduct anti-aircraft and anti-submarine military drills,'" *The Independent*, April 14, 2015, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/russian-warships-in-english-channel-to-conduct-antiaircraft-and-antisubmarine-military-drills-10174838.html>.

surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) activities. In April 2014, the Pentagon revealed that a Russian intelligence ship Vishnya-class Viktor Leonov and another vessel were operating near the Gulf of Mexico close to the U.S. East Coast. It was reported that both ships operated from Havana, Cuba were the Leonov docked in the previous month.³⁴⁾ The vessel was again spotted in Havana in January 2015, a day before a U.S. delegation arrived in Cuba for a series of consultations attempting to restore U.S.-Cuban diplomatic ties. The media periodically reports that Moscow has been trying to reopen the old Soviet surveillance facilities in Lourdes, Havana.³⁵⁾ The Syrian conflict inspired Russia to create the Mediterranean Task Force, which has been bolstered recently by the addition of a spy boat, four warships, and a repair ship to the Russian operating base in Tartus, Syria. The Swedish Navy is also investigating secret underwater activity in its own waters that suggests possible Russian involvement. As further evidence of Russia's use of its Navy to bolster its diplomacy, the Navy deployed a flotilla off the coast of Australia during the November 2014 G20 Summit in Brisbane, comprised of a destroyer, a refueling vessel, a tug boat, and a guided missile cruiser.³⁶⁾

Moscow seems sees naval deployments and engagements as especially important for strengthening its political and military presence in Asia.³⁷⁾ The Pacific Fleet has become more active in recent

34) Bill Gertz, "Russian intelligence ship operating off U.S. East Coast: Pentagon," *The Washington Free Beacon*, April 25, 2014, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2014/apr/25/russian-intelligence-ship-operating-us-east-coast-/?page=all>.

35) "Russian spy ship in Havana ahead of US delegation's historic visit," *Russia Today*, January 21, 2015, <http://rt.com/news/224627-russian-spy-ship-havana/>; "Putin denies reopening of US-targeting listening post in Cuba," *Russia Today*, July 17, 2014, <http://rt.com/news/173092-russia-sigint-facility-cuba/>; Michael B. Kelley, "Russia Is Reportedly Reopening Its Spy Base In Cuba," *Business Insider*, July 16, 2014, <http://www.businessinsider.com/russia-is-reportedly-reopening-its-spy-base-in-cuba-2014-7>.

36) "Russian navy ships steam off after G20 in Australia", *Channel NewsAsia*, November 20, 2014, <http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asiapacific/russian-navy-ships-steam/1482786.html>

37) John C.K. Daly, "Russia's Pacific Fleet Receives New Ships, Missions," *Jamestown*

years.³⁸⁾ It is also receiving new ships.³⁹⁾ Despite Tokyo's territorial dispute with Moscow and Japan's sanctions on Russia for its involvement in the Ukraine conflict, the Russian Navy and the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force have conducted 14 joint exercises since they first began in 1998.⁴⁰⁾ A recent Russian-Japanese naval drill took place in October 2014 in the Sea of Japan. It was the first military drill between the two countries since Tokyo imposed sanctions on Moscow in March 2014.⁴¹⁾

China is emerging as a special partner of Russia in this as in other areas. The naval cooperation between the two states includes joint military exercises and limited weapons and arms trade. In May-June 2014, both navies participated in Maritime Cooperation (Joint Sea Exercise 2014) drills on the East China Sea; this was their third bilateral exercise since 2012.⁴²⁾ Moscow and Beijing plan to conduct joint naval exercise in the Mediterranean sometime in the spring of 2015 and another drill is planned later this year in the Pacific. When announcing these plans for 2015, Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu stated that the main goal of the naval cooperation is to “shape a collective regional security system” and to challenge the U.S. military dominance

Foundation, Eurasia Daily Monitor 47, vol. 11, March 12, 2014,

http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=42082&no_cache=1#.VTWH8iHBzGc.

38) ‘More Russian nuclear submarines deployed in the Pacific’, Russia Behind The Headlines, April 2, 2015:

http://in.rbth.com/economics/2015/04/02/more_russian_nuclear_submarines_deployed_in_the_pacific_42335.html

39) Franz-Stefan Gady, ‘What to Expect From Russia's Pacific Fleet in 2015’, The Diplomat, March 2, 2015:

<http://thediplomat.com/2015/03/what-to-expect-from-russias-pacific-fleet-in-2015/>

40) “Japan to conduct maritime drills with Russian Navy”, *The Japan Times*, October 22, 2014, <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2014/10/22/national/japan-conduct-maritime-drills-russian-navy/#.VG5WkvTF-yM>

41) “Japan to conduct maritime drills with Russian Navy,” *The Japan Times*, October 22, 2014, <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2014/10/22/national/japan-conduct-maritime-drills-russian-navy/#.VTZoUyFVikp>.

42) Sam LaGrone, ‘China and Russia Kick Off Joint Naval Drills’, USNI News, May 21, 2014: <http://news.usni.org/2014/05/21/china-russia-kick-joint-naval-drills>

in the Pacific.⁴³⁾ In late 2014, Russia agreed to sell to Chinese Navy its sophisticated submarine Amur 1650, which has advanced stealth, weaponry, and propulsion systems.⁴⁴⁾ The sale of this new equipment follows a trend of newest pieces of Russian armament to China, some of which (like sophisticated S-400 surface to air missiles, and Su-35 jets) were previously denied to the Chinese in the view of a variety of reverse-engineering and other concerns. However, in 2014 this changed following Russia's deteriorating relations with the West.

V. Storm Seas Ahead

Russia's shipbuilding industry, which depends heavily on military contracts, has never recovered from the collapse of the integrated Soviet economy, which prioritized its military-industrial complex with lavish financial, human, and other resources. For the past two decades, Russia's shipbuilding industry, which depends heavily on Russian government military contracts, has been able to produce only a few small-sized warships each year. The lack of production has denied employment opportunities for an entire generation of potential skilled builders, while the Soviet-trained generations have been dwindling in number due to death, infirmity, and retirement.⁴⁵⁾ The shipbuilding sector's problems of having obsolescent technology, aging equipment, and a declining pool of skilled workers are hard to overcome. For now,

43) Sam LaGrone, "Russia and China to Hold 2015 Naval Exercises in Mediterranean, Pacific," USNI News, November 20, 2014, <http://news.usni.org/2014/11/20/russia-china-hold-2015-naval-exercises-mediterranean-pacific>.

44) 'Russian Submarine The Amur 1650 To Be Given To China, India's Nuclear Energy Welcomed By Russia,' the Inquisitr, October 18, 2014, <http://www.inquisitr.com/1547790/russian-submarine-the-amur-1650-to-be-given-to-china-indias-nuclear-energy-welcomed-by-russia/#SxorjcejxYRw8meu.99>.

45) Gorenburg, "Hi-tech Imports Could Revive Defence Sector."

Russia's naval shipyard capacity remains insufficient to support a large naval expansion, especially for a fleet of nuclear-powered ships. It remains unclear if Russia's defense industry could soon construct such a large and complex weapons system as a modern aircraft carrier and its associated warplanes.⁴⁶⁾ Russia does not presently have a dry dock large enough to build aircraft carriers; the Kuznetsov and earlier Soviet aircraft carriers were constructed in Ukraine during the 1980s, when that republic's defense industries were embedded in the integrated Soviet military-industrial complex.⁴⁷⁾ The Russian Navy considers it too expensive to build a new shipyard designed specifically to assemble aircraft carriers. Instead, the most recent proposal is to construct a carrier in pieces at different shipyards and then combine the modules at a single assembly point, the Sevmash shipyard in the northern Russian city of Severodvinsk.⁴⁸⁾

Although Russian designers may finally have gotten the Borey-Bulava combination to work, this success may prove exceptional. The Russian government devoted enormous sums to this one very important project, and cannot undertake a comparable effort with all its desired military systems. To overcome domestic bottlenecks as well as help modernize Russian shipbuilding so that it can manufacture large and complex vessels such as cruisers and aircraft carriers, the government had negotiated with France to buy two large amphibious Mistral-class warships from France while co-producing several other in Russia, but international pressure has compelled the French government to suspend this contract for delivery of the intended RFS

46) Adrian Blomfield, "Russia to Build Eight Nuclear Submarines, The Telegraph, October 2, 2008,

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/russia/3124166/Russia-to-build-eight-nuclear-submarines.html>.

47) Andrei Kislyakov, "Why Russia Lacks Aircraft Carriers," RIA Novosti, July 16, 2008, <http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20080716/114109195.html>.

48) "Россия решила построить авианосец," *Izvestia*, November 1, 2011, <http://www.izvestia.ru/news/505655>; see also Oleg Nekhai, "Russia to Build Modern Aircraft Carriers," November 3, 2011, <http://english.ruvr.ru/2011/11/03/59826755.html>.

Vladivostok and RFS Sevastopol pending resolution of the Ukraine crisis. Even though new naval construction has resumed during the last few years, the fleet is still declining in size due to the need to decommission many vessels that have reached the end of their operational lifespan.⁴⁹⁾

Nonetheless, as the conflict over Crimea began to heat up in early March 2014, pro-Russian forces made a move for which Ukrainian forces were unprepared. In the early morning of March 6, they intentionally sank a decommissioned Russian cruiser in the navigation channel separating Ukraine's Southern Naval Base from the Black Sea, and the next day, they sank another smaller ship. As a result, six Ukrainian naval vessels became trapped in the Donuzlav Bay; Russian soldiers eventually seized them.⁵⁰⁾ This tactic did not require considerable skill but had a significant effect on the security situation in the Crimean peninsula and should serve to remind Western experts that technological superiority is not always a guarantor of success in conflict. Even after Russia's naval rearmament and modernization program is completed in full, it is doubtful that Russia's naval forces will be a match for U.S. Navy warships, either in quantity or technological advancement, but these qualities are not always reflective of limited capability.

49) Ilya Kramnik, "What is the Future for Russia's Submarine Fleet?," RIA Novosti, October 1, 2008, <http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20081001/117370532.html>.

50) Luke Tarbi and David L. Knoll, "Could Asymmetric Warfare 'Sink' the U.S. Navy?," The National Interest, May 27, 2014, <http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/could-asymmetric-warfare-sink%E2%80%9D-the-us-navy-10540>.

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요 약

러시아 해군의 부활

리차드 위츠 *

최근 몇 년 동안 나타난 러시아 해군의 부활(resurgence)은 우크라이나 사태로 본 러시아 군사력 증강을 대표하는 상징이다. 전통적으로 러시아 해양전략(Sea power)은 러시아 경제 및 안보 목표를 달성하는데 있어 핵심이었다. 러시아 해군은 주로 전략적 억제, 연안방어, 해상교통로 보호, 해외전개 그리고 군사력 투사 등의 임무를 수행한다. 특히 최근 들어 러시아 해군력이 양적 질적으로 증강되는 양상을 보이고 있으며, 이는 최근 잠수함, 수상함 그리고 해군항공 전력이 크게 증강되고 있는 현상에서 증명되고 있다. 이는 불과 몇 년 전까지 러시아 해군력에 대한 정비 및 작전 운용에 있어 많은 문제점을 보이던 부정적 사례와 현격히 다른 모습이다. 특히 푸틴 정부에 들어서 러시아 해군은 양적이며 질적인 증강뿐만이 아닌, 세계 해양에서의 원해 해군작전을 비록 지금은 간헐적이기는 하지만 활발히 실시하고 있으며, 러시아 주변국 해군과의 다양한 해군협력도 추진하고 있다. 궁극적으로 러시아 해군은 단기적으로 연안방어를 기본 임무로 수행할 것이나, 장기적으로는 과거 구소련 해군력 위상과 영향력을 부활시키기 위해 세계 무대에서의 군사적 영향력을 증진시키는 대양해군(Blue Water Navy)을 지향할 것이다.

키워드: 러시아 해군, 우크라이나 사태, 중국-러시아 해군협력, 해양전략

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