

## Iraq and world order: A Russian perspective

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Russia's perspective on the Iraq crisis and its implications has to be put into the broader post-Cold War context. Since the end of the Cold War, perhaps no other major state had undergone changes as deep and profound as those experienced, both internally and externally, by post-Soviet Russia, which itself is partly a product of the end of the Cold War. Although this adaptation was painful, by the turn of the century Russia had by and large adjusted to its reduced global role and influence. It increasingly assumed what appeared to be its more natural role of a major Eurasian regional power, enjoying unique geopolitical and geo-economic conditions, concentrating on domestic development and modernization and acting as a predictable and international law-abiding partner in world affairs.

For much of the 1990s, though, Russia's international security agenda was overwhelmed by the need to manage the consequences of the collapse of the Soviet Union and to limit at least some of the damage caused by the West's consolidation of post-Cold War security gains, such as the eastward expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). It was not until the late 1990s that any coherent Russian foreign policy extending beyond post-Cold War "damage limitation" could be identified at all. For Russia, the completion of its own external adaptation meant the end of the period of post-Cold War damage limitation on its own side – something that, in Moscow's view, was not yet paralleled by adequate changes in the security perceptions, threat assessment, policy priorities and behaviour of its Western counterparts, as demonstrated by the 1999 NATO war against Yugoslavia.

Against this background, much as the 1991 war in the Gulf marked international changes associated with the end of the Cold War, the new US-led intervention in Iraq and its implications were viewed in Russia as one of the two major international developments (the other being the war on terrorism in the wake of the attacks of 11 September 2001) that formally concluded the post-Cold War era. For that reason alone, the 2003 Iraq crisis was bound to be seen as a landmark development by Russia, even if the extent of its broader transformative effect on the state of the “world order” remained questionable.

Indeed, the crisis in Iraq that was aggravated by the United States’ direct military intervention in that country hardly led to any radical transformation of the international system, particularly in the sense of heralding the emergence of a “new world order”. First of all, in the post-bipolar world, the international system may generally fail to meet the strict standards of a structured “order” similar to that associated with the Cold War era, and seems more likely to remain less structured and more susceptible to tension for a significant period of time. Secondly, although the crisis in Iraq had its own logic and a post-Cold War history of more than a decade, the US intervention in Iraq cannot be taken out of the broader post-9/11 context, particularly the global “war on terrorism”.

The effect of the “war on terrorism” on world politics is not necessarily one of radical change either – rather, it can be more accurately described as a pendulum that further radicalized and accelerated some of the conflicting trends in international politics that were already in place. First, the rapid and unhindered US intervention in Afghanistan following the 9/11 attacks encouraged the George W. Bush administration to go to extremes in its unilateralist approach, and this later helped pave the way for its unconstrained intervention in Iraq. But the very same excesses of US unilateralism in turn provoked a swing in the other direction and accelerated a second major trend in world politics. The war in Iraq stimulated an unprecedented backlash worldwide (unparalleled in the post-Cold War years) and, rather than setting the dominant “Concert of Powers”<sup>1</sup> against the rest of the world, it polarized key members of the Concert on the unilateralism/multilateralism dilemma. Whereas the US-led intervention in Iraq served as the peak of the United States’ “unipolar moment”, sharp international disagreements over the war, the UN refusal to mandate it, and the mounting difficulties of occupation and post-war conflict management have all pointed in the opposite direction and challenged US unilateralism. There might have been few doubts about the US ability to win the war – almost any war – unilaterally, but the continuing crisis in Iraq most vividly demonstrates its inability to “win the peace” unilaterally and even the possibility of losing the peace altogether.

Although the Iraq crisis proved to be a serious test for US global secu-

rity dominance, it is not yet clear whether the world's reaction to the US-led intervention and the coalition's failure to "win the peace" in post-war Iraq mean the beginning of the end of the United States' "unipolar moment" or simply drew its objective limits. The answer to that question goes to the heart of the unilateralism/multilateralism dilemma.

On the multilateralism side, in the context of the Iraq crisis the long-standing debate on the role of the United Nations in general and of the UN Security Council in particular acquired a new urgency and an almost metaphysical nature. The handling of the crisis aroused an exceptional level of pessimism, both outside and within the United Nations, and was seen by many as a failure of the UN system to solve the crisis by peaceful means, to reach an agreement among the key members of the Security Council in order to prevent the war and, ultimately, to stop the aggression. The very relevance of the United Nations in its current form had never been so seriously questioned. But the opposite view could also be argued for – namely, that the United Nations did in fact pass one of the most crucial tests in its history and that the UN system, and the Security Council in particular, did work in the sense that they did not approve an aggression and managed not to become associated with it, despite the position of two of the permanent members of the Council.

It need hardly be mentioned that the war against Iraq was seriously questioned on various grounds by much of the rest of the world outside the United States. The US-led intervention in Iraq drew objective limits to the "flexibility" of international law – limits that, if crossed, could even play against the sole remaining superpower. The main point of resentment was best summarized by Hans Blix, the UN chief weapons inspector, who stressed that even direct violations of the UN Security Council resolutions by Iraq did not provide sufficient grounds to legitimize the use of military force against that state.<sup>2</sup> However, just continuing to stress the illegal nature of the US-led intervention in Iraq scarcely adds anything new to the debate. Rather, it might be more productive to focus on how the crisis in Iraq could be managed in the realities of the present international system and on what the war and its aftermath tell us about the character and potential evolution of this system. This chapter will present Russia's perspective on these issues.

### General framework for Russia's policy on Iraq

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, Moscow's approach to the Iraq crisis provided signs of a growing normalization of Russian foreign policy and reflected Russia's new role and place in the international system. There was nothing unique, for instance, about Russia's preference for solving

the crisis by peaceful means and its strong opposition to US intervention in Iraq, which was undertaken without a UN Security Council mandate – a position that in many ways mirrored that of France and Germany. Having completed its external adjustment, the new Russia was no less interested in long-term cooperation with the United States than were the United States' major European partners and it acknowledged that the United States had certain unique global responsibilities as the world's leading power. At the same time, Russia contested any "excessive" global role and regional involvement for the United States, particularly in areas of special economic and/or political interest to itself. Although Russia joined its European partners France and Germany to form a political UN-centred "axis of peace" in the rift with the US–UK "axis of war", its reaction to the US intervention in Iraq remained reserved and far from hysterical (in some contrast to its reaction to the NATO war against Yugoslavia) and was driven less by anti-Americanism than by the need to bring the process back to the United Nations and the international legal context and to preserve the viability of the United Nations.

Prior to the US intervention in Iraq, the urgent need to adjust the international system to the realities of the twenty-first century had not only stimulated various proposals for UN reform, but also appeared to be at least partly met by supplementing the role of the United Nations with that of regional institutions as well as broader and less formal, but no less critical, arrangements such as the G-8. The United States' handling of the Iraq crisis, which bypassed both formal institutions (the United Nations at the global level, as well as regional security organizations) and informal international political mechanisms (G-8), proved to be not only illegal and illegitimate<sup>3</sup> but also inadequately reflective of the new global balance of powers, mistaking it for the United States' unchallenged "unipolar" moment. It also gave a new momentum to the "limited sovereignty" trend in post-Cold War global politics that emerged in the context of the humanitarian interventions of the 1990s. Russia had its own reservations about "limited sovereignty" as the new emerging principle of international affairs because it was bound to be applied mainly by the dominant Concert of Powers to weaker and more vulnerable states, such as the former Yugoslavia. In Moscow it was implied that, by granting the right to violate sovereignty for such benign purposes as humanitarian assistance and human rights protection, the international community de facto creates more favourable conditions for future violations of state sovereignty, particularly by the most powerful states, for much less benign reasons. In Russia's eyes, the illegal intervention by the United States in Iraq, driven by highly controversial motivations of self-interest, fully confirmed and reinforced these concerns. Moreover, such blatant violations of state sovereignty as this seriously compromised the idea of in-

tervening in a state's internal affairs, even for allegedly benign purposes (for example, the idea of humanitarian intervention).

Both the US refusal to act within the existing international framework and the powerful blow to the concept of sovereignty dealt by the US intervention in Iraq pointed in the direction of change in the international system, which, given Russia's relative weakness, could be pursued only at the expense of its own national interests. In this context, preserving at least a minimum level of integrity and viability of the United Nations as the world's chief multilateral institution for managing international crises became for Moscow an interest in its own right to be pursued vis-à-vis the situation in Iraq. This explains why the UN system, and the Security Council in particular, remained Russia's natural framework of choice in dealing with Iraq and why the Security Council decisions became the minimum common denominator for all Russian policy discussions on Iraq and for all policy scenarios to be considered by Moscow.

More generally, Russia's strong preference for a multilateralist approach to Iraq was a logical progression and an integral part of its newly acquired role as a large regional power, strong enough to defend its sovereignty (owing to the remnants of its global past, such as its nuclear potential) but unable to exercise major influence on global politics or even to push forward its interests if challenged by the dominant concert of more powerful states. Russia's bilateral policy towards the United States at the time of the crisis and in its aftermath fully reflected these realities and was elegantly termed by Russian foreign policy experts a "responsible partnership" strategy.<sup>4</sup> This implied that Russia, acting as a partner of the United States, rather than a client or satellite, took responsibility for disagreeing with the use of force against Iraq in view of its adverse implications for the United States' own security and for global security. The same approach dominated Russia's behaviour in the UN Security Council: it was more important for Russia to warn the United States that it could use its veto power on Iraq (as Russian Foreign Minister Ivanov warned on 26 February 2003 in China) than actually to use that power.

In sum, Russia's foreign policy in general and on Iraq in particular had two dimensions or levels. The essence of the first dimension is that, at the level of the world order, the Iraq problem served for Russia as an indicator of the normative and structural changes in the international system, particularly through the prism of the US unilateralism – UN multilateralism dilemma. Although, internationally, Russia had some voice at this level as a permanent member of the Security Council, there was no way it could push forward its position if challenged by the dominant concert, as demonstrated by Russia's policy on Iraq throughout the 1990s. Russia could hope to make an impact on the decision-making process only if it

acted in concert with at least some of the key members of the dominant Concert of Powers (for example, coordinating its position on the US intervention in Iraq with France at the Security Council).

Although UN-centred multilateralism remained the underlying framework that dominated Russia's public attitudes and foreign policy discourse, it could hardly explain all the nuances of Russia's practical policy and behaviour, in Iraq and elsewhere. This policy was increasingly shaped by the second, more practical dimension – the combination and interplay of at least two pragmatic trends. The first trend was the growing role of geo-economics in Russia's foreign policy. This trend has been further reinforced during President Putin's second term (2004–2008), with an even greater emphasis put on the “oil and gas factor” and on diplomatic support for the transnational projects of Russia's major corporations. The second trend was the emergence of Russia's new security agenda, with its focus shifting from the West to the South as the main source of potential threats and in particular with its new emphasis on anti-terrorism.

A certain gap between the normative and structural dimension of Russia's foreign policy, dominated by UN-centred multilateralism, and its more pragmatic interests and concerns did not necessarily mean, though, that they could not be congruent and even mutually reinforcing.

### Russia's policy scenarios on post-war Iraq: Accommodation or non-association?

For those powers opposed to the US intervention, including Russia, there seemed to be two mainstream policy options or scenarios regarding the situation in post-war Iraq. Each had its own advantages and limitations.

The *accommodation scenario* implied cooperation with the US-led coalition, particularly on economic issues, and moderate concessions on the part of the occupying powers in the distribution of the Iraqi “oil pie” and in the role of the United Nations in post-war Iraq, in exchange for post factum de facto recognition of the US protectorate in post-war Iraq. The *non-association (keeping-the-distance) scenario* implied the need to follow the situation closely and to “wait and see” if, with time, the United States would become increasingly mired in its attempts to install a proxy regime in Iraq and to counter the mounting resistance movement and would become more willing to involve the broader international community in the “consequences management” process in Iraq, on UN terms and within the UN framework. One clear sign of the growing normalization of Russia's foreign policy had been that none of the more “extreme” scenarios – full acquiescence in the US pressure or, conversely, confrontation with

the United States over Iraq – had been seen as an option to be seriously considered.<sup>5</sup>

At first, after the rapid US military victory and the demise of Saddam's regime in Iraq, a modification of the "accommodation" scenario appeared to emerge as a policy option for Russia. This scenario promised accommodation of at least some Russian economic interests in Iraq and thus appeared to be in line with the general primacy of geo-economics in Russia's foreign policy. Needless to say, Russia's economic interests in Iraq (under the Saddam government, contracts had been signed by more than 200 Russian firms,<sup>6</sup> including lucrative oil projects,<sup>7</sup> and repayment of Iraq's debt to Russia) were damaged by the war and occupation. The economic benefits of the lifting of sanctions, which could have improved the prospects of repayment of Iraq's debt to Russia, were completely overshadowed by the terms of the post-war economic game, which strongly favoured the coalition powers. Trade and market liberalization measures imposed on an economy weakened by a decade of sanctions, as well as putting the US-contracted firms in charge of reconstruction and depriving the Interim Government of Iraq of the right to cancel contracts negotiated by the coalition administration, facilitated US control of Iraqi national assets and, at best, left key foreign competitors a marginal economic role to play.

Russia hoped to limit the damage to its economic interests in Iraq by participating in some form in post-war reconstruction, oil exploitation and production, and so on. In return, Russia could offer little but accommodation of at least some of the United States' demands and concerns, particularly within the framework of the UN Security Council, such as a commitment not to contest the US leadership of a multinational security force to be mandated by the Council. Even then, Russian companies could hope to play only a marginal role in post-war Iraq. Although some of the secondary projects (reconstruction of electricity power stations, training Iraqi oil production experts, etc.) survived, LUKOIL's efforts to reactivate its US\$3.7 billion project to develop one of the world's largest oil fields (Western Qurna-2) had little chance of succeeding<sup>8</sup> if they were not supported by the United States. In the circumstances, it appeared that one of the few available options for Russian business was to operate through structures affiliated with Western companies.

However, the pace of reconstruction was delayed by destabilization and the deteriorating security conditions in Iraq, which caused the main foreign critics of US policy, including Russia, to shift towards the "non-association" scenario. This scenario was not in conflict with Russia's geo-economic interests either. Russia is second only to Saudi Arabia as a crude oil producer, with daily production of 8.4 million barrels, and oil

and gas account for 30 per cent of its overall exports. At that point, when the long-term nature of the rise in world oil prices was not yet clear, it was believed in Russia that, with sanctions lifted, reconstruction and modernization of the Iraqi oil sector would help bring world oil prices down.<sup>9</sup> This, in turn, could weaken the main basis of Russia's short-term economic stabilization and the Russian government's ambitious economic growth plans.

In fact, it was the deteriorating security situation in post-war Iraq that replaced sanctions as the factor limiting the flow of Iraqi oil to international markets and contributing to high world oil prices. Thus, the broader economic implications of the situation in Iraq might not have been that dramatic, at least for Russia's oil export sector, and some of Russia's economic losses in Iraq could be compensated for by overall financial gains from high oil prices. In the longer term, damage to Russian economic interests in Iraq could also be partly mitigated by granting Russian oil companies permanent access to the US oil market. More generally, it should be noted, though, that Russia's excessive dependence on oil exports has extremely mixed implications and "what is good for LUK-OIL" is not necessarily a priori "good" for the long-term modernization and development needs of the Russian economy, state and society.

Nevertheless, in purely pragmatic geo-economic terms, both political scenarios under consideration appeared to be equally acceptable to Russia. Moreover, Russia's limited political role and influence gave it the advantage of having to make relatively low-risk choices. This partly explains why Russia could never become the main driving force behind a push for one or the other scenario and tried instead to achieve limited political and economic goals, preferably by others' hands. All this demonstrated the extent to which Russia's policy towards post-war Iraq was circumstantial, reactive to developments on the ground, and permeated by a "wait and see" attitude: US success in post-Saddam Iraq would make Russia far more willing to close its eyes to the nature of the occupation regime, whereas a US quagmire would increase the incentives to follow the "non-association" scenario.

Another example of Russia's flexible "wait and see" attitude (which also characterized the policy on Iraq of many other external actors) was its position on the post-war interim political governance arrangements in Iraq. Although Moscow always insisted on the need to restore Iraqi sovereignty as soon as possible, its position on the US-sponsored "proxy" Iraqi Governing Council shifted from initial scepticism (up until the end of 2003) to "conditional" support from early 2004. After the radical Shiite insurgency against the coalition in April 2004, Russia intensified its calls for an international conference on Iraq, with the participation of all local political forces, including the "forces of resistance", representa-



tives of the neighbouring states and the UN Security Council, to be convened as soon as possible (the idea was repeatedly dismissed by the United States).

Certainly, it would be an exaggeration to suggest that Russia's policy on Iraq was driven only by pragmatic concerns and was not guided by any broader strategic vision whatsoever. Rather, my point is to highlight a certain gap between Russia's broader "global order" concerns and its practical policy of pursuing more pragmatic, often purely economic, interests. By late 2004, the "accommodation" and "non-association" scenarios seemed to be reconciled in the form of a compromise policy, allowing accommodation of Russia's economic interests, while keeping a political distance from the coalition.

Politically, Russia's position on the nature of political governance in Iraq gradually became more substantive, with Russian officials stressing the fallacy of attempts to build the new state on the basis of ethnic and confessional principles.<sup>10</sup> Later, Russia even openly called for "a significant part of the armed Iraqi resistance to be brought into the process of creating a state", as well as for a timetable for the withdrawal of foreign forces from Iraq (as stated by President Putin in August 2005),<sup>11</sup> and in June 2005 Russian representatives established direct contact with one of the key Shiite opposition leaders, Moqtada al-Sadr.

Economically, in contrast, the Russian government took several accommodating steps towards the coalition powers, particularly the United States. Among other things, it agreed to sell part of its "strategic" asset LUKOIL to an affiliate of the fourth-largest US oil company, ConocoPhillips.<sup>12</sup> This decision was apparently intended to regain access to at least some of the Russian contracts in Iraq, allowing LUKOIL and ConocoPhillips to start joint negotiations with the Interim Government of Iraq to unfreeze LUKOIL oil contracts in Western Qurna.<sup>13</sup> The deal might also have involved or at least was timed with Russia's promise to write off a substantial portion of Iraq's debt. In October 2004, Moscow confirmed to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank that it was ready to support the French initiative to cut Iraq's debt by half,<sup>14</sup> and, in November, Russia joined the United States, Japan, European nations and other Paris Club donors in announcing that they would write off 80 per cent, or more than US\$31 billion (€23.9 billion), of the debts Iraq owed them.<sup>15</sup>

In the end, Russia chose to follow a compromise scenario, aimed at securing at least some of its economic interests in relation to Iraq while avoiding any close or direct political association with the US policy on Iraq. This scenario was also in line with Russia's broader global vision based on the concept of multilateralism, which was still most fully, although imperfectly, embodied in the UN system. The war in Iraq and its

consequences demonstrated Moscow's growing pragmatism, but also served as a litmus test of the limits of Russia's flexibility and highlighted Russia's non-negotiable "sacred cows". Even US success in post-conflict peacebuilding in Iraq would not have led Russia to stop criticizing, let alone to approve, the illegal military intervention. Any association with the United States' political role and military presence in Iraq would have involved serious political, legal and moral dilemmas for the Russian leadership and could have been interpreted, both internationally and, perhaps more importantly, domestically, as acquiescence in US pressure. Political non-association with the United States on Iraq was a popular public policy to follow in Russia, where the pro-Iraq and pro-UN approach enjoyed broad public support. According to a poll conducted in February 2004, most Russians viewed the war negatively as an aggression against the Iraqi people (62 per cent referred to it as "a crime against the Iraqi people"; 23 per cent, while supporting the need to get rid of Saddam Hussein, strongly disagreed with the methods used by the United States to achieve this goal; and only 4 per cent supported the US intervention); 69 per cent of respondents were confident that the United States would completely fail in Iraq. According to a September 2003 poll, most respondents thought that the main goal of the US intervention had been the need to control world oil prices (52 per cent) and the Persian Gulf region (27 per cent); far fewer people supported the view that the primary goal was the fight against international terrorism (12 per cent) and the search for WMD (10 per cent).<sup>16</sup>

In sum, the broader UN-centred multilateralist dimension does make a difference and can play a role in and even direct Russia's policy, particularly when the policy options dictated by more pragmatic interests involve similar or comparable gains and/or losses, as in the case of Russia's policy options vis-à-vis post-Saddam Iraq.

### Iraq and the "war on terrorism": A view from Russia

For Russia, one of the most problematic aspects of the US intervention in Iraq (apart from concerns about the negative implications for the role of the United Nations) was its potential to deal a serious blow to the "international coalition against terror" and to stimulate a new upsurge of international terrorism. The most intriguing connection to be explored in this context is that between the war on terrorism and the crisis in Iraq. Whereas, prior to the US intervention, this connection had remained a virtual product of US official propaganda, it started to materialize in post-war Iraq.

One of the reasons Russia opposed the US intervention in Iraq in the

first place was that it threatened to be counterproductive to anti-terrorist priorities and to provoke more terrorism, rather than lessen it. By turning a rogue state into a failed state, the United States replaced a rigid authoritarian secular nationalist regime that had harshly suppressed any form and manifestation of Islamist extremism with a weak proxy state that was fully dependent on the security support of the foreign forces, whose continuing presence on Iraqi soil remained the main factor stimulating the rise of terrorism in post-war Iraq and the Islamization of the resistance. The US presence in Iraq also strengthened the motivation of forces that were ready to employ terrorist means in the global fight against the United States and its allies and thus reinforced the war on terrorism and gave it a new self-created rationale.

Terrorism generated by the conflict in Iraq accounted for only part of the resistance activities (which also involved guerrilla attacks against coalition military targets) and the US intervention and post-war presence in Iraq initially stimulated mainly the import, rather than the export, of terrorism. But, as the conflict became protracted, terrorism increasingly served as a self-perpetuating mechanism for the re-escalation of violence, and the use of terrorist means by Iraqi groups appeared to become increasingly intertwined with transnational terrorist networks' activities.

The prospect of Iraq becoming a major rallying point for terrorists has been of deep concern to Russia, in terms of the country's broader security agenda as well as its anti-terrorism strategy and experience. For a decade, Russia was confronted with the challenge of terrorism generated by an armed conflict on its own territory and expressed growing concerns about terrorist threats to its neighbours in the Commonwealth of Independent States, particularly the Central Asian states. In this context, Moscow was alarmed that Iraq might become a hotbed of Islamist terrorism, located not far from Russia's own southern borders and emerging as a new potential trigger that could at any time reactivate the "southern arc of instability". Moscow was also worried about the damage dealt by the US intervention in Iraq to the integrity of the "coalition against terror" and to the new momentum of the post-9/11 cooperation between the United States and Russia on anti-terrorism, which was highly valued by Moscow (most obviously by providing a more favourable international context for its own operations in the North Caucasus). A combination of anti-terrorism priorities and broader security and political concerns provided an additional argument for Russia to support efforts to build a functioning and legitimate Iraqi state (as the most effective long-term anti-terrorist strategy for a semi-failed state), but also made Moscow more willing to accept the reality of the US-dominated security presence in Iraq.

The problem of terrorism generated by the US-led intervention in and

occupation of Iraq was likely to become long term, and there was a growing need to think about potential ways of combining anti-terrorism with post-war reconstruction that might be utilized in future attempts to find a way out of the continuing Iraqi crisis. Russia's own hard and often flawed experience with anti-terrorism, particularly in dealing with a complex mix of domestic, conflict-generated resistance and international influences and connections, could provide some operational and strategic lessons for coping with terrorism in post-war Iraq.

As demonstrated by Russia's own experience of combining counter-insurgency and counter-terrorist operations, in a shaky post-war environment that might easily degenerate into a full-scale armed conflict, the range of the threats and of the security measures that need to be undertaken to meet these threats always goes beyond the terrorism/anti-terrorism dichotomy. From fighting an asymmetric war on its own territory, Russia knew the difficulty of reconciling tasks that are more specifically focused on and tailored to counter-terrorism needs (intelligence collection and analysis, carefully targeted and highly selective special and covert operations aimed, first and foremost, at the prevention and pre-emptive disruption of terrorist activities and networks) with more regular enforcement and policing measures, let alone with military/counter-insurgency operations emphasizing coercion and post hoc retaliation, often in the form of "collective punishment".

Because the US-led occupation of Iraq was to a large extent handled as a military affair, with elements of a massive counter-insurgency campaign, many, if not most, of the problems it raised, the operational tasks it posed and the methods that were employed (including high-altitude bombing of certain areas and long-range missile strikes, on the one hand, and massive "cordon and search" actions on the ground, on the other hand) had little to do with counter-terrorism in a more narrow sense. Coercive measures in general and "collective impact" measures in particular (such as closures and mopping-up *zachistka*-style operations, which have been increasingly employed by the US forces in Iraq) hardly serve and may even interfere with counter-terrorist goals when they are used as essentially punitive or retaliatory measures or as a substitute for other security activities, rather than as a highly selective tool, employed for a pre-defined period of time, in a limited area, based on very solid intelligence and for specific operational purposes.

There is little doubt that conflict-generated terrorism cannot be successfully countered at just the operational level. More fundamentally, the most effective long-term anti-terrorism strategy would appear to be restoring and strengthening state control or, in failed states, (re)building national state institutions and authority.<sup>17</sup> Russia's own experience with

the process of building a functioning local administration in a chaotic war-torn area demonstrates that it involves many dilemmas, such as that between the more rigid security-oriented approach to institution-building, focused on centralization of power, strict hierarchies and formal institutional mechanisms, or a more flexible approach that might involve more informal and less centralized political arrangements. Other crucial dilemmas include the constant trade-off between the functionality and legitimacy of the administrative authority and an uneasy compromise among various institution-building agendas, which are often in conflict.

In this sense, post-Saddam Iraq is no exception. The threat of terrorism generated by the situation in Iraq cannot be written off until post-war Iraq fully overcomes regime collapse and ceases to be an externally imposed embryonic state, dependent on the presence of foreign forces for its security and lacking both functionality and legitimacy. In other words, the key to preventing Iraq from becoming a major source of international terrorism and extremism lies in the formation of functioning state institutions that enjoy not only formal UN recognition but also sufficient public legitimacy among the core political and regional ethno-confessional constituencies. Such a state is unlikely to emerge, let alone become consolidated, in the context of the United States' "divide and rule" policy, which implies a primary reliance on the relatively moderate Shiite political/religious forces and the Kurds, while alienating the Sunnis and the more radical Shiites and extending the coalition presence in Iraq indefinitely.

If any "post-post-Cold War" world order is on the horizon, its security contours are likely to be shaped by the dialectical interaction of two trends in international politics that both highlight the changing nature of global security threats but may point in different, if not entirely opposite, directions.

The first trend, most vividly exemplified by the situation in post-war Iraq, is represented by the growing demand for national, international and subnational actors capable of "winning the peace", in contrast to those best suited to the more traditional business of "winning the war". The crisis in Iraq has not merely defined the objective limits of US unilateralism but, perhaps more importantly, demonstrated the apparent failure of unprecedented military might unconstrained by international legal norms and of technological and economic superiority to achieve a just and durable peace after the war – a challenge no less ambitious and complex than, for instance, effectively countering international terrorism. The much-needed capacity to "win the peace" can be provided only by a combination of substantial economic resources and a spotless international reputation, including full respect for the basic tenets of interna-

tional law (which does not preclude the further development and improvement of the existing international legal system). It is this capacity that may increasingly determine the ranking and clout of a particular state or an international organization in global politics.

The second trend manifested itself, above all, in the post-9/11 war on terrorism. Although this global campaign launched and led by the United States was based on a broad international consensus about the gravity of the new mega-threat to international security, it also reaffirmed the central role of the United States in the world system. Moreover, the excessive reliance on enforcement in general and on military force in particular appeared to be seen by the US leadership as the key to successfully winning the war against terrorism. Among other things, this trend was revealed in the way Iraq became forcibly intertwined with the war on terrorism as a direct consequence of the US-led intervention and occupation. That link is highly controversial. The dismantling of Saddam Hussein's "rogue" regime might have had a certain demonstration effect on other "rogue states", but on most other counts it appeared irrelevant, if not damaging, to anti-terrorism priorities. As demonstrated by the situation in post-war Iraq, turning rogue states into failed states leads to more rather than to less terrorism. Moreover, an upsurge in terrorist activity generated by the conflict in Iraq had every chance to be employed as an additional rationale for reinforcing the war on terrorism in its most militant form.

Against this background, how does Russia see itself in the world after 11 September and the intervention in and occupation of Iraq? More specifically, which of the two main new trends in global politics is likely to become a leitmotif of Russia's own strategic thinking and policy and decisively affect its behaviour on the world stage? It might well seem that the crisis in Iraq has pushed Russia in the "winning the peace" direction. However, even with its permanent seat at the UN Security Council and its traditionally strong opposition to the use of force to settle international disputes, Russia is unlikely to assume one of the leading roles in "winning the peace", for a number of reasons. Russia has only limited political leverage and interest in managing conflicts that do not directly affect its own national security, and it is still struggling with the task of solving a long-standing conflict on its own territory. It also lacks significant financial resources that could be directed to global conflict resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding purposes. Russia's limited capacity to gain high scores on the "winning the peace" scale may provide an additional rationale for the Russian leadership to seek a higher profile in the international arena through a closer association with the harsher forms of the US-led war on terrorism.

## Notes

1. For more detail on the “Concert of Powers” concept, see Chapter 3 by Ayoob and Zierler in this volume.
2. Cited in *The Independent*, 5 March 2004.
3. See Chapter 23 by Krieger in this volume.
4. For a detailed discussion of the “responsible partnership” strategy, see records of a series of expert round tables on the subject held in Moscow in 2003: *Irakski krizis i stanovljenje novogo mirovogo poryadka: sbornik materialov* [The Iraq Crisis and the Making of the New World Order: A Collection of Materials] (Moscow: “Orbita-M” Publ. for Foreign Policy Planning Committee & Institute of Strategic Assessments and Analysis, 2004), pp. 174–293.
5. In public discussions, there certainly were some exceptions and a few opinions calling for more extreme policy choices were voiced. See, for example, a statement by the Yukos Oil Co. Institute for Applied Political Studies, calling for Russia’s full acquiescence in US pressure and for it to join the anti-Iraq coalition: “Russia Has Already Lost the War in Iraq – It Has to Become Reconciled with the U.S.”, Moscow, 31 March 2003.
6. According to the deputy chairperson of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Russian upper chamber of parliament (the Council of Federation), V. Iver, the losses of the Kama Automobile Plant (KAMAZ) alone exceeded €200 million (see *Irakski krizis i stanovljenje novogo mirovogo poryadka*, p. 234).
7. Russian companies (including Zarubezhneft, Alfa Eco, Machinoimport, and ACTEC) received about 30 per cent of oil sales under the UN humanitarian Oil-for-Food programme (1996–2002), worth some US\$19.3 billion (see the Independent Inquiry Committee into the UN Oil-for-Food Programme, *Report on Programme Manipulation*, 27 October 2005, p. 22). Russian officials (as well as politicians and business leaders) deny the claims made by the authors of the report that Russian companies paid millions of dollars in illicit surcharges to Saddam Hussein’s government on “Oil-for-Food” oil sales. See C. Bigg, “Russia: Oil-For-Food Corruption Report Leaves Russians Cold”, *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL)*, 28 October 2005; A. Nicholson, “Russians Say Volcker Report Based on Forgeries”, *Moscow Times*, 31 October 2005.
8. In March 1997, LUKOIL signed an agreement with the Iraqi Ministry of Oil and Gas to develop Western Qurna-2 oil field on production-sharing terms. The agreement could not come into force, however, because Iraq remained subject to UN sanctions. Later, Saddam Hussein’s government unilaterally denounced the agreement, claiming that the Russian side (constrained by UN sanctions) had refused to fulfil its obligations, whereas LUKOIL considered the agreement still to be in force.
9. With only one-third of its territory explored, Iraq already has known oil resources exceeding those of Russia and all other former Soviet republics, Mexico, the United States and Canada combined. At the same time, the costs of oil extraction in pre-war Iraq were 8–10 times lower than in Russia.
10. See an interview with First Deputy Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Trubnikov: “Yest’ predel ustupkam Moskvu” [“There is a Limit to Moscow’s Concessions”], *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 12 May 2004.
11. Quoted in “Putin Calls for Withdrawal Timetable for Iraq”, *RFE/RL*, 19 August 2005.
12. In September 2004, Spring Time Holding Ltd, which was affiliated with ConocoPhillips, bought the former state-owned 7.59 per cent stake in LUKOIL for almost US\$2 billion.
13. According to a preliminary arrangement, LUKOIL was to keep 51 per cent of the contract share and ConocoPhillips acquired another 17.5 per cent.

14. Cited in *Rosbusinessconsulting*, 2 October 2004. In addition to Iraq debt cuts, under the Paris Club terms, Russia had already agreed to write off 80 per cent of Afghanistan's US\$10.5 billion debt (which would reduce the debt to US\$2 billion), and in early 2006 expressed its willingness to go even further in helping settle Afghanistan's debt.
15. In April 2005, Russia went even further by announcing that it would sign an intergovernmental agreement with Iraq writing off 90 per cent of the nation's US\$10.5 billion (€8.1 billion) debt to Moscow by the end of 2005.
16. Polls were conducted by the All-Russia Public Opinion Research Center (VTSIOM). Interestingly, a relatively high percentage of respondents (29 per cent) agreed that the United States had fought the war to defend democratic values. "VTSIOM: 62% rossiyan schitayut operatsiyu SShA v Irake prestupleniyem" [VTSIOM: 62 per cent of Russians Consider the US Operation in Iraq a Crime], *Rosbusinessconsulting*, 18 March 2004.
17. For more detail, see Ekaterina Stepanova, *Anti-terrorism and Peace-building during and after Conflict* (Stockholm: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, June 2003), <<http://editors.sipri.se/pubs/Stepanova.pdf>>.