

Mr. [Burhanuddin] Rabbani, and shall provide additional assistance to his armed forces in the form of supplies of weapons and military equipment.

Other, deeper forms of cooperation between Russia and the participants in the counter-terror operation are also possible. The extent and nature of this cooperation will directly depend upon the overall level and quality of our relations with these countries, and our mutual understanding in the area of the struggle against international terrorism.

I have created a group to coordinate the work on all of the matters outlined above, headed by Minister of Defense S.B. Ivanov. This group will collect and analyze information received, as well as carry out the practical interactions with participants in the operation.

### Events In Chechnya

We also believe that the events in Chechnya cannot be viewed outside the context of the struggle with international terrorism. At the same time, we understand that these events also have their own pre-history. I believe it is possible that there are people in Chechnya to this day, who took up arms under the influence of false and distorted values. Today, when the civilized world has defined its position towards the struggle with terrorism, every person must define his position. This opportunity should also be extended to those, who have not yet laid down their arms in Chechnya.

Therefore, I propose to all participants in illegal armed units, and those who call themselves political leaders, to immediately cease all contacts with the international terrorists and their organizations. They have 72 hours to make contact with official representatives of the Federal agencies of power, to discuss the following questions: the procedure for disarming these illegal armed units and groups, and the procedure for their inclusion in the peacetime life of Chechnya. V.G. Kazantsev, Representative of the President of the Russian Federation in the Southern Federal District, which includes Chechnya, will be authorized to conduct these contacts on behalf of the Federal authorities.

### 'Islam Against Terror'

I should also like to take this opportunity to say a few words about my meeting today with the Muslim religious leaders of Russia. This meeting took place on their initiative. They have proposed to convene in Moscow an International Islamic Conference under the slogan "Islam Against Terror." I share their concerns, which arise in connection with the current world situation. And without any doubt, the convocation of this conference will be supported. I believe that it is only possible effectively to combat religious extremism and fanaticism, and not only Islamic, but any other brand, with the active participation of the religious communities themselves.

Thank you for your attention.

## German-Russian Trade, Cooperation Growing

by Rainer Apel

The statements and interviews made by Russian President Vladimir Putin in connection with his three-day visit to Germany, were remarkable even from the narrower standpoint of bilateral German-Russian relations. In an interview with the daily *Bild Zeitung* appearing just prior to his arrival in Berlin, Putin called upon Germans to step out from the shadow of the post-World War II era, and to recognize their own sovereign national interests in the international arena. He delivered most of his speech before the Bundestag (parliament) in German, and in his introduction in Russian, he expressed joy over being a state guest in Berlin, the city where, over 200 years ago, Wilhelm von Humboldt and Gotthold Lessing lived and worked.

Putin described Germany as not only a leading world economic power, but also a leading nation of culture, with Classicists such as Goethe and Schiller, poets who for centuries have enjoyed great respect among Russians—despite two world wars in which Russia and Germany were enemies.

In his address at the H $\ddot{u}$ gel Villa in Essen, Putin also praised Chancellor Gerhard Schr $\ddot{o}$ der for his personal interventions on behalf of expanding German-Russian economic relations—"indeed, doing so during a period of general economic decline." The spectacular growth of German-Russian trade—25% over the first two quarters of this year, and now almost equalling the level of Soviet trade with both parts of Germany a decade ago—would not have been possible without Schr $\ddot{o}$ der's personal involvement, Putin said, though he was also quick to add that the potential for cooperation, especially in the high-technology sector, has only just begun to be exploited.

### Relations Are At Best Level

The German government's interest in establishing closer relations with Russia was also evident in Schr $\ddot{o}$ der's second meeting with Putin on Sept. 27, held in Dresden. Indeed, German-Russian relations have never been better over the past 56 years, and they can keep on improving, so long as no one acts to sabotage the intense diplomacy and economic contacts going on now between Berlin and Moscow.

Putin's remarks to the Bundestag and at the H $\ddot{u}$ gel Villa are especially remarkable, because of the broad perspective



*In the midst of the Russian intervention in the global crisis, Russian-German relations and trade are at their best level since the Berlin Wall fell. President Putin here lays a wreath at the Neue Wache (Place of Remembrance) for war victims, on Berlin's Unter den Linden.*

within which he situated the future development of German-Russian relations. He surprised not a few Bundestag members with the term “Greater Europe,” at the point when he spoke about how Europeans could play a more important international role, if they united their economic potential with that of the Russians. In Essen, on Sept. 26, he not only held out to the German and the European economy, the prospect of increased energy supplies from Russia during shortages caused by international conflicts, but he also invited German and European industry to invest in Russia, because Russia is a springboard for their entry into the markets of its neighbors.

At his joint press conference with Schröder, Putin had emphasized the significance of the six-nation Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and more generally, of Russia’s relations with China. Putin deliberately framed these statements so as to highlight the Eurasian dimension of his recent diplomatic efforts, and we can probably expect additional insights and progress at the European Union-Russian summit meeting which is scheduled to take place on Oct. 2-3.

### **Other Russian Officials Intervene**

Two other interventions by Russian diplomats, taking place in parallel to Putin’s visit, should also be mentioned. First was a Sept. 26 address by Russian Railroad Ministry official Vyacheslav Petrenko at a conference in Vienna. Using a series of maps, he presented the future Eurasian Land-Bridge railway from Europe to China, and discussed the

planned expansion of the north-south corridor from the Baltic to India. One project that is of special interest to Europeans, according to Petrenko, is the plan for a direct freight-rail connection with Asia, which would run over Russian-gauge track via Ukraine to the Czech Republic.

Concurrently with Petrenko’s lecture, in Moscow, former Russian Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov gave a speech in which, like Putin’s the day before, he criticized the fact that so many people still fail to realize how much the world has changed over the past ten years. In China and in Western Europe, he said, new, global economic centers have sprung up, centers whose economic strength exceeds that of the United States, and—even if many don’t want to admit it—this has great bearing on the future shape of the multipolar world order.

In coming weeks, German-Russian relations will be intensified at three important events: In mid-October, the German-Russian Forum will devote two parallel seminars in Baden-Baden and Potsdam, to discussing the future role of German and European economic cooperation with Russia. This will be attended by high-ranking Russian diplomats and economic decision-makers. At the end of November, there will be a meeting in St. Petersburg of the “Petersburg Dialogue,” which was founded this past April. This will be in preparation for a large German-Russian conference scheduled for April 2002 in Weimar, which will likewise focus on economic cooperation.