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# **Speech by Russian Defence Minister General of the Army Sergei Shoigu at X Moscow Conference on International Security**

20-26 minutes

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Ladies and gentlemen!

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the 10th Moscow Conference on International Security.

This conference comes at a time of radical change in global and regional security. The unconditional dominance of the US and its allies is a thing of the past. On February 24, 2022, the start of the special military operation in Ukraine marked the end of the unipolar world.

Multipolarity has become a reality. The poles of this world are clearly defined. The main difference between them is that some respect the interests of sovereign states and take into account the cultural and historical particularities of countries and peoples, while

others disregard them. There have been numerous discussions on this topic during previous sessions of the Moscow conference.

In Europe, the security situation is worse than at the peak of the Cold War. The alliance's military activities have become as aggressive and anti-Russian as possible. Significant US forces have been redeployed to the continent, and the number of coalition troops in Eastern and Central Europe has increased manifold.

It is important to note that the deployment of additional NATO Joint Force formations on the bloc's "eastern flank" had already started before the start of the special military operation in Ukraine.

NATO has dropped its masks. The aggressive nature of the bloc was no longer concealed by the wording of the coalition's purely defensive orientation. Today, the alliance's strategic planning documents enshrine claims to global dominance. Alliance's interests include Africa, the Middle East and the Pacific Rim.

In the West's view, the established system of international relations should be replaced by a so-called rules-based world order. The logic here is simple and ultimatumatic. Either the alliance's "democratic partner" candidate loses sovereignty and becomes supposedly on the "right side of history". Or it is relegated to the category of so-called authoritarian regimes, against which all kinds of measures, up to and including coercive pressure, can be used.

Ladies and gentlemen!

Given that the Conference is attended by heads of defence agencies and security experts from different regions of the world, I would like to highlight some aspects of the special military operation in Ukraine.

In Ukraine, the Russian military is being confronted by combined Western forces that run the leadership of that country in a hybrid war against Russia.

The supply of weapons and military equipment to Ukraine is being stepped up, and training of the Ukrainian army is being carried out. Huge financial resources are transferred to maintain the viability of the nationalist regime.

The actions of Ukraine's armed forces are planned and coordinated by foreign military advisers. Reconnaissance data is supplied from all available NATO sources. The use of armaments is supervised by Western specialists.

NATO's efforts are aimed at prolonging the agony of the Kiev regime. However, we know for a fact that no one in NATO has any doubt that the goals of the Russian leadership's special military operation will be achieved, and that plans to strategically and economically weaken Russia are failing. The dollar has not reached the ceiling of 200 roubles, as predicted by the US president, the Russian economy has stood firm.

The special military operation has dispelled the myth of "super-weapons" supplied to Ukraine by the West, which are capable of fundamentally changing the situation on the front. Initially, they were talking about deliveries of Javelin anti-tank systems, some kind of "unique" drones. Lately, the Westerners have been promoting the role of super-weapons with HIMARS multiple launch rocket systems and long-range howitzers. However, these weapons also grind to a halt in battle. They did not make a significant impact. The Russian weapons, for their part, have proved their best qualities in combat.

We are taking a close look at trophy weapons from the West. The features and their specific qualities are taken into account in order to improve the way combat operations are conducted and the effectiveness of Russian armaments.

The supply of NATO weapons to Kiev means that Western countries are responsible for their inhumane use and for the deaths of civilians in Donbass and in the liberated territories. Ukrainian armed forces operations are planned in Washington and London. Not only are the coordinates of the targets to be attacked provided by Western intelligence, but the input of this data into weapons systems is conducted under the full control of Western specialists.

Kiev's role in the West's combat approach has been reduced to supplying manpower, which is seen as expendable. This explains the huge loss of personnel in Ukraine's armed forces and territorial defence formations.

So far, the real figures of dead soldiers and mobilised so-called territorial defence forces have been concealed by the Kiev leadership.

In time, however, this information will become public. The testimonies of POWs of AFU allow us to form a realistic picture of what is happening on the other side of the front. The dismissive attitude towards the loss of foreign soldiers reinforces the thesis that NATO has purely selfish interests in Ukraine. Clearly, Britain's colonial experience as the main sponsor of the Kiev regime has come in very handy for London in dealing with the current leadership in Kiev.

Against this background, speculation is spreading in the media

about the alleged use of Russian tactical nuclear weapons in the special military operation or the readiness to use chemical weapons. All of these information gibberish are lies.

From a military point of view, there is no need to use nuclear weapons in Ukraine to achieve its goals. The main purpose of Russian nuclear weapons is to deter a nuclear attack. Its use is limited to extraordinary circumstances as defined in the Russian guideline documents, which are open to public inspection.

The allegations about the possible use of chemical weapons in Ukraine are also absurd. Let me remind you that, unlike the US, such weapons were completely destroyed in our country back in 2017 as part of our international obligations. Meanwhile, poisoning provocations have become the hallmark of Western-sponsored so-called civil society organisations such as the White Helmets in Syria.

The information provocations are aimed at distracting attention from the facts discovered in Ukraine that US experts have conducted banned military and biological research.

Currently, a significant amount of data has been accumulated and is regularly made available to the general public. Work will continue in this direction.

US military-biological activities in Ukraine are not exceptional. Pentagon-controlled laboratories have been established and operate in many post-Soviet, Asian, African and Latin American countries. Local authorities generally have no control over research carried out on their premises that poses a lethal threat to the local population. The consequences of epidemics, I believe, were felt by all during the period of the fight against the spread of

coronavirus.

I would like to focus separately on the humanitarian aspects of the special military operation. Compliance with the Geneva Conventions on the rules of war has always been and remains the focus of commanders at all levels. Since the beginning of the operation, orders have been issued stipulating the procedures to be followed by soldiers in dealing with civilians and enemy prisoners of war.

In the territories liberated from nationalists, the troops are actively involved in the delivery of humanitarian aid, the restoration of infrastructure and the maintenance of law and order. This was the case in Syria, in Nagorno-Karabakh, and it is also the case in Donbass.

On humanitarian issues, there has been fruitful cooperation with the UN and the International Committee of the Red Cross. We are grateful for the constructive, depoliticised cooperation of the leaders and staff of these organisations who interact with us. In particular, under the auspices of the UN and with Turkey's active role, the difficult problem of grain exports from Ukraine's Black Sea ports was resolved. The Red Cross specialists carry out an important mediation mission in relation to captured soldiers.

Ladies and gentlemen!

NATO has recently initiated a new phase of alliance enlargement, with Sweden and Finland joining the military bloc. The claim that the reason for this was the Russian special operation is untrue.

The practical rapprochement between these countries and the alliance has been ongoing for many years. In fact, the regional association NORDEF (Committee for Nordic Defence

Cooperation) is a northern affiliate of NATO and serves as a cover for these countries' participation in joint military training activities.

Of course, the official involvement of Helsinki and Stockholm in NATO's strategic planning and the possible allocation of territory to these states for deployment of strike weapons will change the security environment in the Baltic region and the Arctic and will require a reconsideration of approaches to defence of Russian territory.

Certain conclusions have already been reached and are enshrined in the updated Maritime Doctrine approved by the President of the Russian Federation on July 31. Work will continue in this area.

The reinforcement of the NATO military grouping on the "eastern flank" completes the degradation of the trust and arms control mechanisms that emerged in Europe during the Cold War. A few years ago, experts proposed that the European experience should be used to build confidence-building measures, in particular in the Pacific Rim. Now, of all the "baggage" of the Euro-dialogue, only the idea of bloc confrontation is exported to Asia, which has not brought anything positive to security in Europe.

Today, no one remembers the US destruction of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, the Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Limitation Treaty and the Open Skies Treaty. Although previously these agreements were crucial for disarmament and confidence-building.

Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which was conceived as a platform for dialogue and consideration of different views, has become a generator of anti-Russian narratives.

Vienna Document 2011 remains formally in force, but there are no

prospects for practical implementation. In the absence of trust between the parties, the verification mechanism effectively becomes a source of intelligence, which is not in the spirit of this agreement.

The situation with regard to the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty is also complicated. The agreement remains in force until 2026. On the Russian side the commitments are fulfilled, the declared levels of carriers and warheads are maintained within the established limits.

U.S. claims that Russia must earn the right to continue dialogue with the U.S. do not resist criticism. Arms control is a two-way street.

The result is only achievable if the interests and commitment of all participants are balanced. I believe that the Russian experience of interaction with the West in the field of disarmament shows that the so-called rules-based peace it promotes does not involve the implementation of treaty obligations in the traditional sense. This fact needs to be taken into account when entering into agreements, especially in the field of security and arms control.

Ladies and gentlemen!

Western opposition to the consolidation of a multipolar world, along with Europe, is most active in the Asia-Pacific region, where the US has begun to dismantle the existing ASEAN-based system of regional cooperation. This started with the announcement of the AUKUS initiative by the US, Australia and the UK. Plans to expand this partnership to include new regional partners have not been concealed. AUKUS is merging with NATO, which in turn claimed a dominant role in the Asia-Pacific region at the June summit. This is



despite the fact that all NATO countries are thousands of miles away from the region.

On 2 August, the Russian Federation marked the 77th anniversary of the Soviet Union's entry into the war with Japan, the occasion for which was Tokyo's militarist policy. The defeat of Japanese forces in the Far East effectively sealed the end of World War II and provided the start for the liberation of the peoples of Asia from colonial oppression. The assistance of the USSR was of key importance. We remember and are proud of the legacy of our ancestors, including those who laid the foundation for military cooperation between Russia and the countries of the Asia-Pacific region.

Another dangerous regional trend is the AUKUS focus on developing a nuclear submarine fleet in Australia. The implementation of this plan would have a complex negative impact on global and regional security, creating the conditions for undermining the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The US claims that nuclear-powered submarines are needed in Australia ostensibly to offset China's growing naval capabilities. This logic in fact replicates the actions of the US in justifying its exit from the Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missile Treaty. The collapse of this agreement was also motivated by the need to offset Russian and Chinese efforts to develop missiles with a range allegedly prohibited by the treaty.

In the global context, the appearance of a nuclear-powered fleet in Australia will provide an excuse for other states to begin developing similar armaments. Pandora's box will be opened, the

global nuclear arms race will resume.

AUKUS has the potential to develop into a politico-military alliance. It cannot be excluded that NATO's experience with joint nuclear planning and joint "allied" nuclear exercises will also be transferred to the region. The technical basis for this is already being laid by the active promotion of US-made aircraft. The participation of nuclear and non-nuclear weapon states in joint exercises on the use of nuclear weapons is contrary to obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Transferring nuclear training from Europe will blow up the region.

Although it can be assumed that this is precisely the purpose of the US. The provocative landing in Taiwan of a third person of the US bureaucratic hierarchy is another move to destabilise the situation.

Block-less, equal interaction in the region is an achievement that should not be lost due to externally imposed phobias and attempts to counter a multipolar world.

Mechanisms for interaction and dialogue with extra-regional partners are created and are proving their relevance and effectiveness. First and foremost is the ASEAN Defence Ministers' and Partners' Meeting, the so-called "ADMM-Plus" format. Its diverse activities focus on security issues of relevance to the Asia-Pacific region.

In addition, there is positive experience of cooperation within the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, of implementing mutually beneficial projects on a bilateral basis.

As before, we are ready to share our experience of combat training, in particular during the Vostok-2022 strategic exercise to

be held in the near future.

Despite significant successes in the fight against terrorism in the Middle East, the threat of international terrorist groups taking over the initiative remains. The Syrian military, in cooperation with allies and partners and with the support of the Russian Aerospace Forces, continues to suppress spikes in terrorist activity. We see a particular danger in using the Kurdish factor to unsettle the situation in Syria.

The engagement of the guarantor countries in the Astana format remains virtually the only legal and effective mechanism to address security concerns in Syria. We welcome the increased engagement between the Syrian leadership and the Arab world. Overcoming contradictions created by outside forces is possible and necessary.

The role of the military in building trust between countries is an important element in the search for political solutions. We expect that the Moscow conference will be one of the rallying points for the stabilisation of the situation in the Near East.

Dear colleagues!

After the rapid withdrawal of US and NATO forces from Afghanistan, the situation in the Central Asian region remains extremely tense. Afghanistan's new leadership faces serious military and economic challenges. The legacy of two decades of alliance troop presence is a disappointing one. As a result, there remains a high level of terrorist danger in the region.

The security problems of Central Asia can only be solved by coordinated action by all the countries and international organisations concerned. For our part, we will continue to support

our Collective Security Treaty Organisation allies in enhancing the capabilities of national armed forces.

It is important to keep the topic of Afghanistan on the agenda of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation discussions. Russia, China, India, Iran and Pakistan together could make a significant contribution not only to stabilising the region, but also to preventing the threat from spreading beyond its borders.

The security of each region, despite the general trends of a multipolar world, has its own peculiarities.

For Africa, the specificity lies in the desire of the countries of the collective West to return to the order and rules of engagement typical of the colonial period. Neo-colonialism is imposed through military pressure on governments of sovereign countries and support for separatist and terrorist movements. A case in point is Libya, where statehood has still not been restored after the NATO invasion. Another example is the situation in West Africa, where European troops have been deployed on the pretext of combating terrorism. For decades, these EU missions had been fighting terrorists, training national security forces, until they recognised the utter failure of their own efforts.

I would like to point out that African governments and leaders are holding their own, as they call it, in the context of a multipolar world, to pursue their own agenda of independence, sovereignty, economic development and defence capabilities.

The Russian Ministry of Defence is seeking to expand cooperation with African countries in the field of military and military-technical cooperation. Interest in the participation of national teams and delegations from Africa in the Army International Games and the

"ARMY 2022" IMTF has increased significantly. It is very encouraging that prominent military commanders from our friendly states - Burundi, Cameroon, Guinea, Mali, Sudan, Uganda, Chad, Ethiopia and the Republic of South Africa - are present in this hall today. We appreciate your support and intend to increase cooperation on mutually beneficial projects.

Latin America today faces serious security challenges because of the American desire to maintain influence in the region under the provisions of the so-called Monroe Doctrine. Liberal values, whose adherence is seen by the US as agreeing to live in a world based on their rules, in fact mask the true objective - to build up a military presence by blocking the possibility of sovereign development of states.

U.S. policy focuses on deterring engagement by countries in the region with any other pole of power outside Washington's control. The purpose of this policy is to involve the region in a confrontation with Russia and the PRC, to destroy traditional ties and to block new forms of cooperation in the military and military-technical spheres.

Anti-Russian information campaigns are launched in Latin America, hiding the truth about the causes and course of the special military operation in Ukraine. Analogies can be drawn to the British actions during the conflict in the Falkland Islands. What is happening in the Western media today with the coverage of the Russian special military operation was also happening when the media was chorally broadcasting only one point of view - that of London.

The question arises: are such policies in the fundamental interest

of the countries of the region? The answer is clear - no. We hope that during the discussions at the conference we will hear assessments of the situation in Latin America from our partners from Venezuela and Nicaragua.

Ladies and gentlemen!

The Tenth Moscow Conference on International Security has a special importance for the Russian Ministry of Defence as organiser of the forum for a number of reasons.

Firstly, the conference is taking place during the ongoing special military operation in Ukraine. Despite attempts of the US and NATO to isolate Russia once again, your participation in the forum is a visible confirmation that these plans have collapsed. We appreciate your support.

Secondly, a multipolar world is the reality of today. The transition from dominance by a single global leader to several centres of gravity is not an easy one. However, this creates real conditions for the development of sovereign states.

Thirdly, the role of military agencies is changing in the new realities. The military not only guarantees a secure environment for economic development, but through military cooperation it builds predictability and trust between countries.

Finally, this is the tenth anniversary conference, which allows for a kind of review of what has been achieved over the years. It is important to observe how the priorities of the discussions have changed, and which conclusions and recommendations from the forum have been put into practice over the years. A short historical overview, prepared by Russian experts, can be viewed on the monitors between plenary sessions.

I wish you all good health and interesting contacts and discussions during your stay in Moscow.

Thank you for your attention.