

## Relations between Japan and Russia in the Context of Russian Foreign Policy

Lecture by His Excellency Mikhail M. Bely

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to Japan

*Hotel New Otani, Tokyo*

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On May 31, 2007, the Institute for International Policy Studies (IIPS), with the support of the Nippon Foundation, hosted a lecture entitled "Relations between Japan and Russia in the Context of Russian Foreign Policy," delivered by His Excellency Mikhail M. Bely, Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Japan. The venue for this event was the Hotel New Otani in Tokyo.

Ambassador Bely commenced his lecture by stating that presently the international order is undergoing rapid change, that the long-standing myth of a unipolar world, which has constricted many of the world's nations, is beginning to collapse, that the Western world is now relinquishing its monopoly position due to globalization, and that the world's major nations are proceeding to exercise collective leadership of international organizations such as the United Nations. He then continued as follows.



A progressively more integrated Asia has been a crucial element in Russian foreign policy over recent years, and Russia's strategy for the future is to build wide-ranging cooperative regional relationships.

Russia is currently expanding bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. In particular, there is major global interest in the most important matter of all—the bilateral relationship between Russia and China. The two nations are certainly continuing to engage in highly intensified activity in what is referred to as a strategic partnership, and Russia is also promoting and developing a comprehensive strategic partnership with India.

As regards Russia's relationship with Japan, the two nations share a profound understanding of the importance of bilateral relationships within the Asia-Pacific region, for example, as well as working to build mechanisms for peace and security in the region in their capacity as participants in the Six-Party Talks, Japan and Russia are together responding to the new threats of terrorism and organized crime, and taking on the issue of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.



As Japan's closest neighbor, Russia treats Japan as a top foreign-policy priority in the Asia-Pacific region. In 2003 the two nations adopted an action plan which laid out a path to a constructive partnership between them, and since then relations have improved further.

After drawing attention to these various concrete examples of cooperative relations between the two nations, Ambassador Bely wound up his lecture by stating that the two nations will continue to strive to create a strong bond between them in the future. The ambassador then responded to questions from the floor on a wide range of subjects.