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Basic Principles of State Policy of the Russian Federation on Nuclear Deterrence

The President of the Russian Federation

Executive Order

**On Basic Principles of State Policy of the Russian Federation
on Nuclear Deterrence**

With a view to provide for the implementation of the State Policy of the Russian Federation on Nuclear Deterrence I hereby resolve:

1. To approve the attached Basic Principles of State Policy of the Russian Federation on Nuclear Deterrence.
2. This Executive Order shall enter into force upon its signing.

President of the Russian Federation

Vladimir Putin

Moscow, Kremlin

June 2nd, 2020

No.355

APPROVED

by Executive Order of the President
of the Russian Federation of June 2, 2020 No.355

BASIC PRINCIPLES

of State Policy of the Russian Federation on Nuclear Deterrence

I. General Provisions

1. These Basic Principles represent a strategic planning document in the area of ensuring defence and reflect the official view on the essence of nuclear deterrence, identify military risks and threats to be neutralized by implementation of nuclear deterrence, the principles of nuclear deterrence, as well as the conditions for the Russian Federation to proceed to the use of nuclear weapons.
2. The guaranteed deterrence of a potential adversary from aggression against the Russian Federation and/or its allies is one of the highest state priorities. Deterrence of aggression is ensured by the entire military strength of the Russian Federation, including its nuclear weapons.
3. The State Policy of the Russian Federation on Nuclear Deterrence (hereinafter – “the State Policy on Nuclear Deterrence”) is a set of political, military, military-technical, diplomatic, economic, information and other measures, coordinated and united by a common design, implemented through reliance on forces and means of nuclear deterrence to prevent aggression against the Russian Federation and/or its allies.
4. State policy on Nuclear Deterrence is defensive by nature, it is aimed at maintaining the nuclear forces potential at the level sufficient for nuclear deterrence, and guarantees protection of national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the State, and deterrence of a potential adversary from aggression against the Russian Federation and/or its allies. In the event of a military conflict, this Policy provides for the prevention of an escalation of military actions and their termination on conditions that are acceptable for the Russian Federation and/or its allies.
5. The Russian Federation considers nuclear weapons exclusively as a means of deterrence, their use being an extreme and compelled measure, and takes all necessary efforts to reduce nuclear threat and prevent aggravation of interstate relations, that could trigger military conflicts, including nuclear ones.
6. The normative and legal foundation of these Basic Principles is formed by the Constitution of the Russian Federation, universally recognized principles and norms of international law, international treaties of the Russian Federation on defence and arms control, federal constitutional laws, federal laws and other normative and legal acts and documents that regulate defence and security issues.
7. The provisions of these Basic Principles are mandatory for implementation by all federal government bodies and other government bodies and organizations that are involved in ensuring nuclear deterrence.
8. These Basic Principles may be further specified depending on the external and internal factors that influence defence implementation.

II. Essence of nuclear deterrence

9. Nuclear deterrence is aimed to provide comprehension by a potential adversary of the inevitability of retaliation in the event of aggression against the Russian Federation and/or its allies.

10. Nuclear deterrence is ensured by the presence in the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation of the combat-ready forces and means that are capable to inflict guaranteed unacceptable damage on a potential adversary through employment of nuclear weapons in any circumstances, as well as by the readiness and resolve of the Russian Federation to use such weapons.

11. Nuclear deterrence is ensured continuously in peacetime, in periods of a direct threat of aggression and also in wartime, up until the actual use of nuclear weapons.

12. The main military risks that might evolve into military threats (threats of aggression) to the Russian Federation due to changes in the military-political and strategic situation, and that are to be neutralized by implementation of nuclear deterrence, are as follows:

- a) build-up by a potential adversary of the general purpose forces groupings that possess nuclear weapons delivery means in the territories of the states contiguous with the Russian Federation and its allies, as well as in adjacent waters;
- b) deployment by states which consider the Russian Federation as a potential adversary, of missile defence systems and means, medium- and shorter-range cruise and ballistic missiles, non-nuclear high-precision and hypersonic weapons, strike unmanned aerial vehicles, and directed energy weapons;
- c) development and deployment of missile defence assets and strike systems in outer space;
- d) possession by states of nuclear weapons and (or) other types of weapons of mass destruction that can be used against the Russian Federation and/or its allies, as well as means of delivery of such weapons;
- e) uncontrolled proliferation of nuclear weapons, their delivery means, technology and equipment for their manufacture;
- f) deployment of nuclear weapons and their delivery means in the territories of non-nuclear weapon states.

13. The Russian Federation implements its nuclear deterrence with regard to individual states and military coalitions (blocs, alliances) that consider the Russian Federation as a potential adversary and that possess nuclear weapons and/or other types of weapons of mass destruction, or significant combat potential of general purpose forces.

14. While implementing nuclear deterrence, the Russian Federation takes into account the deployment by a potential adversary, in the territories of other countries, of offensive weapons (cruise and ballistic missiles, hypersonic aerial vehicles, strike unmanned aerial vehicles), directed energy weapons, missile defence assets, early warning systems, nuclear weapons and/or other weapons of mass destruction that may be used against the Russian Federation and/or its allies.

15. The principles of nuclear deterrence are as follows:

- a) compliance with international arms control commitments;

- b) continuity of activities ensuring nuclear deterrence;
- c) adaptability of nuclear deterrence to military threats;
- d) unpredictability for a potential adversary in terms of scale, time and place for possible employment of forces and means of nuclear deterrence;
- e) centralization of governmental control over the activities of federal executive bodies and organizations involved in ensuring nuclear deterrence;
- f) rationality of structure and composition of nuclear deterrence forces and means and their maintaining at the minimal level sufficient for implementing the tasks assigned;
- g) maintaining permanent readiness of a designated fraction of nuclear deterrence forces and means for combat use.

16. The nuclear deterrence forces of the Russian Federation include land-, sea- and air-based nuclear forces.

III. Conditions for the transition of the Russian Federation to the use of nuclear weapons

17. The Russian Federation reserves the right to use nuclear weapons in response to the use of nuclear and other types of weapons of mass destruction against it and/or its allies, as well as in the event of aggression against the Russian Federation with the use of conventional weapons when the very existence of the state is in jeopardy.

18. The decision to use nuclear weapons is taken by the President of the Russian Federation.

19. The conditions specifying the possibility of nuclear weapons use by the Russian Federation are as follows:

- a) arrival of reliable data on a launch of ballistic missiles attacking the territory of the Russian Federation and/or its allies;
- b) use of nuclear weapons or other types of weapons of mass destruction by an adversary against the Russian Federation and/or its allies;
- c) attack by adversary against critical governmental or military sites of the Russian Federation, disruption of which would undermine nuclear forces response actions;
- d) aggression against the Russian Federation with the use of conventional weapons when the very existence of the state is in jeopardy.

20. The President of the Russian Federation might, if necessary, inform the military-political leadership of other states and/or international organizations about the Russian Federation's readiness to use nuclear weapons or about the decision taken to use nuclear weapons, as well as about the fact that nuclear weapons have been used.

IV. Tasks and functions of federal government authorities, other government bodies and organizations for implementing state policy on nuclear deterrence

21. Overall direction of state policy in the area of nuclear deterrence is carried out by the President of the Russian Federation.
22. The Government of the Russian Federation implements measures to carry out the economic policy aimed at maintaining and developing nuclear deterrence assets shapes and exercises the foreign and information policy in the area of nuclear deterrence.
23. The Security Council of the Russian Federation shapes the basic principles of military policy in the area of nuclear deterrence, coordinates the activities of federal executive bodies and organizations involved in implementation of the decisions adopted by the President of the Russian Federation and related to ensuring nuclear deterrence.
24. The Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation, acting through the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, directly plans and carries out organizational and military measures in the area of nuclear deterrence.
25. Other federal executive bodies and organizations participate in the implementation of decisions adopted by the President of the Russian Federation and related to ensuring nuclear deterrence in accordance with their authority.