

# **Terrorism prevention in Russia: one year after Beslan**

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## 1. Introduction

Reforming a nation's security services is an inevitable consequence of large-scale terrorist incidents. The 11 September terrorist attacks on Washington and New York led to historic reforms of the US intelligence community, just as explosions in Madrid led to the reorganization of the Spanish secret services.

These reforms have changed three key components of terrorism prevention and prosecution:

- Early warning system to detect and prevent acts of terrorism,
- An exchange of this information between the interested services / coordination of actions/,
- Prosecution of terrorists, including liquidation of channels of financing and delivery of weapons

Russia is not exception. An attack by insurgents in Ingushetia in June 2004 and the capture of hostages in Beslan in September the same year coincided with a period of reform in the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Ministerstvo vnutrennikh del: MVD) and Federal Security Service (Federalnaya sluzhba bezopasnosti: FSB). In the immediate aftermath of the Beslan siege, President Vladimir Putin ordered the reform of these departments, signing the Decree 1167, which looked at "urgent measures to increase the efficiency of the fight against terrorism".

By July 2005, the structural reforms to the MVD and FSB were completed. The following changes have been made:

- The Principle of management of counterterrorist operation in the North Caucasus
- The Principle of management of actions of power structures involved in the resolution of subversive and terrorist actions in region
- The Principle of information gathering and analysis on the leaders of insurgents in the territory of the North Caucasus
- Tactics of special divisions in region

**The speed in which these reforms have been implemented is impressive. However, the efficiency in which they are implemented remains a vital unknown question.**

## 2. System up to Beslan

According to a 1998 statute "About fight against terrorism", the FSB, MVD, Service of External Intelligence (Sluzhba vneshney razvedki: SVR), the Federal Protection Service (Federalnaya sluzhba okhrani: FSO) and the Ministry of Defense are all tasked with fighting terrorism.

However, the FSB, which has an anti-terrorism division that inherited from the KGB, had primary role until 2003. So has developed historically: the antiterrorist division of FSB is the successor of KGB division of fight against terrorism (Upravlenie borbi s terrorismom - UBT). This Division has continued to exist within the limits of FSK, and then FSB. After capture of hostages in Budyonnovsk (June, 1995) new director of FSB Michael Barsukov authorized the formation of the FSB's Antiterrorism Center, which UTB served as both a model and integral part. Besides the problem of fight against terrorism has been put in the hands of the Management of perspective programs of FSB created in 1996. In 1997 the Department on struggle against terrorism has been generated on the basis of the Antiterrorist center. In 1999 the Department has been incorporated with the Management of the constitutional safety recreated in 1998 (so have named the division, engaged political investigation). This federal organization has been adopted at the local level across the Russian Federation.

In 2003 of the Ministry of Internal Affairs became more heavily involved. The Ministry of Internal Affairs was given jurisdiction over two aspects of anti-terrorism:

- **In the North Caucasus:** in July, 2003 MVD took over management of the Regional Operations Staff (Regionalny operativny shtab: ROSh) responsible for counterterrorist operations in the North Caucasus.
- **At a federal level:** in August, 2003 the MVD further strengthened its antiterrorism capabilities with the creation of "Centre T", which was integrated into the organized crime division. The center has generated regional divisions which began to use bulk arrests on suspicion in terrorism. For example, in December, 2004 all operations against terrorist grouping Hizb ut-Tahrir were carried out by the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

As a result of the reorganizations, jurisdiction became unclear and overlapping but the coordinating center established to address these problems did not have the authority to clarify the situation and did not even establish a means for information sharing. The statute "About fight against terrorism" allowed for the creation of coordination committees among the Federal and regional establishments as well as between the Federal ministries. While the law allows for their creation it does not develop the authority. The Federal Commission (FATK) was created in 1998 (its head is a chairman of the government) and many

regions also followed the model. . However many regions, critically Chechen, were not formed until much later. The latter case not until July 2004. The legislation allows for the commission to meet at a minimum of every one to three months. This prevents the commission from functioning as a forum for daily information exchange, and undermines the timeliness of any information it does have.

In the North Caucasus the picture was very confused. The FSB had both regional and national officers gathering intelligence, as well as the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Military Intelligence Directorate (Glavnoye razvedovatel'noye upravlenie: GRU) having concurrent and overlapping jurisdiction. Even with the coordination committees, intelligence sharing was practically was absent.

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The Kremlin was regularly stating that there was a linkage between Chechen and international Islamic terrorists. Despite the clear implications for international cooperation these charges made, the intelligence cooperation was non-existent. Any information exchange was supposed pass through The Common Wealth of Independent States (CIS), but the system was dysfunctional. The CIS Antiterrorism Center was established in 2000 to handle information exchange, but has yet to develop the capacity to conduct its mission. Thus by the summer of 2004 the Russian intelligence response to terrorism was in complete disarray.

Partially reforms have mentioned all components of this system:

### **3. Changes in system of coordination and information sharing**

#### ***Information exchange inside the Russian security and law enforcement system***

The 2004 reforms to the security services resulted in the following structural changes:

**In the Ministry of Internal Affairs.** The central administrative board on fight against organized crime (GUBOP) was transformed into the Department on fight against organized crime and terrorism of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia (DBOPiT). In structure of DBOPiT was created the management of the analysis and development of strategic decisions in the field of fight against terrorism. In operative submission DBOPiT are translated, except for the Center "T", the Center of special maintenance (the Center "C") and spetsnaz group "Rys". Functions on maintenance of activity of a staff on management of counterterrorist operations in territories of the North-Caucasian region were assigned to the Center of operative management of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

**In Federal Security Service.** The Department for the Protection of the Constitutional System and the Fight against Terrorism was renamed into Service. Alexander Bragin was appointed as the new head of Service. His entire experience in combating terrorism is limited to his brief stint in Moscow. He was appointed to the FSB central office in June 2003, as deputy head of the Counterterrorism Department. Prior to that he led the FSB Chelyabinsk Directorate and displayed unshakable loyalty to the President.

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This reforming of antiterrorist divisions was mostly cosmetic (in FSB all department were renamed into services, in the Ministry of Internal Affairs all main directorates – into departments). Substantive changes at a level of coordination have not followed.

Every country that suffered large-scale attack in recent years has faced problems in co-ordinating the way the secret services and law-enforcement agencies gathered and analysed information about the preparation of attacks. Solving this problem is nearly impossible without the creation of a dedicated co-ordination structure.

As a result in some countries new special services were formed which have included independent structures (such as the Ministry of Homeland Security in USA). And in all these countries were created special coordinating centers. In United Kingdom - Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre, In the USA - Terrorist Threat Integration Center which later was replaced by National Counterterrorism Center, in Spain - Centro Nacional de Coordinacion Antiterrorista. These small structures included officers of all law enforcement and security structures of country responsible for combating terrorism and these centers are responsible for information exchange between departments, and also for preparing forecasts on terrorist threat for the country leaders. The same centers are responsible for information exchange with special services of other countries.

Such structure has not been created in Russia. In October 2004, Nikolay Patrushev, FSB director, told the Duma that a new co-ordinated centre should be created to help bring together the different departments for the war on terrorism. This plan has yet to be realised. As result, the problem of coordination and an exchange of the information between FSB, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, SVR, FSO and MO (direct participants according to the law "About fight against terrorism") are not solved.

#### ***Information exchange with special services of other countries***

As a result of structural reform of FSB's Service for the Protection of the Constitutional System and the Fight against Terrorism was formed new division: Directorate on fight against international terrorism (UBMT FSB). Probably, this Directorate also should be responsible "for destruction of insurgents abroad" that President Vladimir Putin has declared right after Beslan. Besides on October, 12th, 2004 the former first deputy director of FSB Anatoly Safonov has been appointed as the special envoy - the special

representative of the President of the Russian Federation concerning the international cooperation in fight against terrorism and transnational organized crime.

On December, 6th, 2004 director of FSB Nikolay Patrushev and director of FBI Robert Muller have signed the memorandum of cooperation between the two services. After signing the document Patrushev has declared: "the memorandum which particularly stipulates our cooperation on a lot of directions is signed. First of all, this cooperation in struggle against the international terrorism, in struggle against the crimes connected with the weapon of mass destruction, and in other directions".

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Creation of Directorate on fight against international terrorism of FSB and making the deputy director of FSB as the special representative of the president on these questions is a positive step, but is not a solution of the essential problem of how to manage the constant daily exchange of the operative information with special services of other countries. The post of the special representative is primarily a point for applying diplomatic pressure on countries that are not cooperating with Russia in extraditing suspected terrorists, such as UK's reluctance to extradite Zakaev.

The UBMT FSB maintains its own contacts with foreign special services (such as FBI), but only in limited tactical areas and without information exchange.

These limited connections are in contrast to the rest of the developed world where cooperation is far more extensive. In the Europe in 2001 practice of the common European arrest warrant has been introduced, and after acts of terrorism on March, 14th in Madrid the post of the coordinator of EU on terrorism was formed. Within the limits of Commonwealth axis of the USA - the Great Britain - Canada - Australia - New Zealand have a long established intelligence coordination system that now includes terrorism databases created system of the incorporated databases on terrorists and an exchange of the operative information. Developed countries all have longstanding diplomatic, legal, and even technical cooperation. The Russian special services are not entered in these systems. The only daily international contacts are through the CIS and its Joint Databank CIS (OBD).

### ***Coordination and information exchange in the North Caucasus***

Now in this region two coordination centers operate:

- The Regional operations staff on carrying out of counterterrorist operation in territory of the North Caucasus (ROSH)
- And subordinated ROSH the Combined Group of Forces in the North Caucasus (OGV)

**The Regional operations staff (ROSH)** has been created in January, 2001 by the decree of the President of the Russian Federation "for a direct management of special forces and means on detection and suppression of activity of the terrorist organizations and groups, their leaders and the persons participating in the organization and realization of acts of terrorism in territory of the North-Caucasian region". Originally ROSH management has been assigned to the deputy director of FSB - the head of antiterrorism department. However on July, 4th, 2003 president Putin has transferred responsibility on a management of the Regional operations staff to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. However actually ROSH has remained under the control of FSB: to a post of ROSH head appointed exclusively generals of FSB, but before it translated them in the Ministry of Internal Affairs. As example, admiral Jury Maltsev, up to that FSB supervised Operative management on coordination of carrying out of counterterrorist operations, has been translated in the Ministry of Internal Affairs on a post of the deputy minister of internal affairs and this very day is appointed by head ROSH.

On September, 12th, 2004, later ten days after events in Beslan, at ROSH there was a new head, and again from FSB - Arcady Edelev, the FSB general, headed Operatively-coordination division FSB in the North Caucasus. However before he has been translated in the Ministry of Internal Affairs where he has received the rank of the general-lieutenant of militia and a post of the deputy minister. Thus the responsibility for activity ROSH remains on the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and this principle has not been changed after Beslan. November 2004, Dmitry Kozak, the presidential envoy in the North Caucasus, declared: ' Within four years of functioning as a regional operations staff, its right and the responsibility have been regulated by nothing'.

**The Combined Group of Forces (Objedinennaya gruppirovka voysk: OGV)** in the North Caucasus was granted the authority to clear the Chechen Republic at the end of September, 1999, by Presidential decree, and became operational on December 26, 1999. The last large-scale OGV operation was liquidation of the Gelaev band in March, 2000. After that insurgents changed tactics, moving from guerrilla to terrorist operations.

From the beginning generals of Armed forces were appointed to a post of commander OGV: Victor Kazantsev, Vladimir Moltenskoj, Sergey Makarov, Valery Baranov are examples.

On July, 27th, 2005 Evgeny Lazebin has been appointed as new chief of the the Combined Group of Forces (OGV). Evgeny Lazebin is the assistant to commander-in-chief of Internal troupes (Vnutrennie Voiska – VV - the armed part of Ministry of Internal Affairs). As result, the second structure on coordination of actions of law enforcement agencies, secret services and army in fight against terrorists on the North Caucasus also has passed under the control of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

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Transfer of the responsibility for situation in North Caucasus to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and to its army divisions is a positive step in the fight against the illegal armed groups, but not in the prevention of terrorist attacks. The use of conventional forces, military or para-military, against terrorist cells is problematic. The small, clandestine nature of terrorist's cells, with their ability to blend into the surrounding population negates the conventional force advantages of overwhelming numbers and firepower. There is also question in the capabilities of the Ministry of Internal Affairs to deal with the issue, it should be noted the counter-terrorism responsibilities only came to the ministry in 2003, so its intelligence and investigative resources are still evolving. For example, Intelligence division of Internal troops (VV) operate only as a tactical intelligence arm, but one without the ability to penetrate terrorist cells, let alone providing strategic analysis.

Similar problems plagued the United Kingdom in its dealings with the IRA. Through the end of 70s the primary responsibility for combating terrorism rested with the military and the local police, the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC).

Counterintelligence service such as MI5 practically did not operate in region, considering this territory as a colony which should be in MI6 jurisdiction. MI6 thought it was a domestic problem and in the preview of MI5. Thus neither had any significant presence until the end of the conflict. MI5 deployed a single communications officer. The quantity of acts of terrorism in the Great Britain began to decrease only after in 1992 then MI5 began the main service, responsible for combating terrorism.

### ***Coordination in the case of a hostage crisis and subversive and terrorist attacks***

Prior to August, 2004 it was the responsibility of the regional/republic FSB to deal with a hostage situation or terrorist attack. The practice was very different:

- During hostage crisis in Budyonovsk (June, 1995) the operations staff was headed originally by Minister of Internal Affairs Victor Erin, director of FSB Sergey Stepashin acted as the assistant, and a little bit later the staff was headed by the deputy minister of internal affairs general-colonel Michael Egorov. Besides vice-premier of the Russian Federation Nikolay Egorov, the assistant to General public prosecutor Oleg Gaidanov took part in meetings in the place of act of terrorism.
- During hostage crisis in Kizlyar and Pervomaisk (January, 1996) deputy minister of internal affairs general-lieutenant Paul Golubets supervised the operations staff.
- During hostage crisis in settlement Lazarevskoe under Sochi (September, 2000) the operations staff was headed by the deputy director of FSB, the chief of department in fight against terrorism German Ugryumov and by the deputy minister of Internal Affairs Vladimir Kozlov.
- During the Moscow theater hostage crisis (October, 2002) the operations staff was headed by Vladimir Pronichev, the deputy director of FSB, and the deputy minister of Internal Affairs Vladimir Vasilev.

In all cases the responsibility for the operations staff was held by officials at least deputy head of the power department, representing the federal authority.

This chaotic situation was changed after intrusion of insurgents into Ingushetia (on 21-22 June 2004).

On August, 16th, 2004 12 new divisions – operational management groups (Grupy operativnogo upravleniya: GrOU), were created in the North Caucasus. Each is headed by a colonel from the MVD and act as direct management of military forces for the suppression of subversive and terrorist actions. Each GrOU includes conventional and special operations troops from the MVD and the ministries of defence and emergency. Each GrOU head has the rank of deputy head of the regional anti-terrorist forces, thereby making them the second highest ranking official in the region after the governor in terms of combating terrorism. In the event of hostages being taken or insurgents making intrusions into Russian-held territory, the GrOU commander will automatically assume control and has the right to make decisions, independent of control from Moscow. Names of GrOU commanders are coded. As result, for the first time in the history of the Russian hostage crises, the responsibility for addressing the crisis rested with the regional rather than central authorities.

This new structure was in place in Northern Ossetia during Beslan and the director was already in place. The chaos at Beslan clearly demonstrated the GrOUs effectiveness was equal to zero. In Beslan the chief of local FSB Division Valery Andreev supervised the operations staff, as did the two deputy directors of FSB - Anisimov and Pronichev, and also the chief of "Center T" of the Ministry of Internal Affairs Demidov. So the situation had three national figures as well as the local FSB official all direction the situation. In addition, for the first time in history of the Russian hostage crises, the responsibility for addressing the crisis rested with the regional authorities, even though they didn't seem to have de facto power.

One of the lessons of Beslan was the need for better local control, which lead to the strengthening of the principle of GrOU domination. There has been tremendous doctrinal development, - both in Northern Ossetia, and in other regions of Southern federal district-in 2004 GrOU had 12 special doctrines. In addition, by the end of 2004, the Southern District had 19 thousand military men of various power ministries at its disposal.

Despite the reforms and additional resources, the system is still weak. In February, 2005 Dmitry Kozak sharply criticised the GrOUs, as recent experience demonstrated the inability of local commanders to deal with these hostage takings. According to the newspaper "Kommersant", Kozak during a session with counterterrorism officials, wanted the regional FSB to be in control. According to one of participants of session, "nobody bears any responsibility for failures of operations neither in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, nor in Ministry of Defense". The decree designed to solve this situation remains unsigned.

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The current response structure in Russia has no analogies in the developed world.

In the USA "regular" hostage barricade it would be up to local law enforcement (State, county, or municipal) depending on rules and capabilities of the forces. Terrorist related hostage situations are in the FBI's domain (in particular, FBI Hostage Rescue Team - HRT). Delta and Seal Team are currently prohibited by law from operating in the US, and thus are used only for foreign response.

In the United Kingdom it's a Metropolitan police's domain. The Police would be responsible for negotiations and for everything before any attack to liberate hostages. The decision to start storming belongs to the Prime Minister – advised by COBRA (Cabinet Office Briefing Room A) - where upon Metropolitan Police chief signs a paper giving the SAS order to act.

Using of GrOU as a center on decision-making during crises similar to Beslan will only lead to shifting responsibility from the federal to the local authorities, but with out corresponding shifts of resources it is an exercise in preemptive blame shifting if and when a failure occurs.

#### **4. Changes in system of information sharing on preparing terrorist attacks**

On June, 23rd, 2005 Jury Sapunov, the head of FSB department on fight against the international terrorism, declared that in the first quarter 2005 FSB had prevented more than 70 acts of terrorism and exposed cells operating in 50 Russian regions. However, due to the lack of concrete data about the prevented acts of terrorism it is not possible to verify his information. Meanwhile, it's widely known that the structural changes required of the FSB for combating terrorism have not been implemented. The only exception is the North Caucasus.

By summer of 2004 the Northern Caucasus regional committees operated some divisions of the national FSB, such as those responsible for gathering information on terrorist groups. Heads of these structures are a part of the Regional operations staff on carrying out of counterterrorist operation (ROSH). These are following structures:

- FSB Operative division on coordination of carrying out of counterterrorist operations. Ramzan Kadyrov's troops submit to this management.
- FSB Operatively-coordination division in the North Caucasus (OKU). It conducts special actions assistance to employees to the OKU FSB on the North Caucasus. It supplies in FSB Ingushetia, and a mobile group of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.
- Provisional operative group of Directorate of military counterintelligence of FSB in the North-Caucasian region (VOG UVKR FSB in SKR). Primary goals VOG are: a filtration of refugees, counter prospecting work, the prevention of acts of terrorism and clearing captured and hostages.
- Besides in territory of the North Caucasus territorial bodies of FSB, and also division of Main intelligence directorate (military intelligence) and the Ministry of Internal Affairs operate. Coordination of these structures had fragmentary character.

In addition to the above, it also supports division of Main intelligence directorate and the Ministry of Internal Affairs Prior to the coordination authority, the various services cooperated on a fragmentary basis.

The above system was altered post Beslan. On November, 25th, 2004 the member of the parliamentary commission on investigation of attack on school in Beslan, the deputy of the State Duma Valery Dyatlenko declared that at joint meeting of chiefs of regional divisions of FSB, MVD and Ministry of Defense "have decided to unite efforts of operative employees of power structures". "Inside of a counterterrorist grouping - has emphasized Dyatlenko, - the special prospecting service which unites efforts of all subjects of operatively-search activity - FSB, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Military Intelligence Directorate (Glavnoye razvedovatel'noye upravlenie: GRU)".

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Dyatlenko's remarks miss the point. The difficulty is not in gathering information for a terrorism prosecution, but a question of coordination information to prevent terrorism in the first place. The new structure is responsible for tactical (army) intelligence not prosecutorial intelligence. This thesis is confirmed by the fact, that the commander of new intelligence body became one of deputy chief of the Combined Group of Forces (OGV), the officer of Internal troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

## 5. Terrorism prosecution reform and reflections on subversive and terrorist attacks

### *Tactics of special operations groups*

The FSB, MVD and GRU were making use of liquidations of suspected insurgents in the Chechen republic by summer of 2004.

**The Main intelligence directorate (GRU)** in the beginning of the second Chechen campaign has generated with in one of spetsnaz brigades two special groups, which are comprised of ethnic Chechens: "East" and "West". Officially they named as battalions of special purpose of 42-d division of Ministry of Defense. The HQ of group "East" (commanded by colonel Sulim Yamadaev, former chief of Chechen national guards) is in Gudermes. HQ of group "West" (commanded by lieutenant colonel Said-Magomed Kakiev, a Hero of Russia) is in Grozny. Both of a battalion are manned ethnic Chechens.

The primary role of both brigades is the liquidations of suspected insurgents and their work is held in high esteem by Moscow. In August 2004 Sergey Ivanov, Russian minister of defence, had met with the Spetsnaz commanders to declare his support and supply them with more advanced arms.

**Federal Security Service (FSB)** has two different structures engaged in this arena. First, the so-called Summary special groups (SSG), which consist of operatives of regional FSB divisions and soldiers from Spetsnaz troupes from the MVD. Ten such groups were created in April 2002 to carry out special duties in the Chechen Republic. They are engaged in the liquidations of insurgents, operating independently from local FSB units.

The FSB also deploys to the Chechen conflict territorial divisions consisting of "Alpha" groups, so-called "heavy faces". During their month long deployments they are tasked with liquidations, and report to FSB divisional command in Chechnya.

**The Ministry of Internal Affairs** also deploys liquidation groups from other central Russian regions to gain combat experience. These so-called mobile groups operate in the Chechen Republic, but also in Dagestan and Ingushetia.

In May 2004, President Putin ordered the creation of a special unit to serve the Chechen President. The so-called "Kadyrov guards" as they were former bodyguards of former Chechen President Akhmad Kadyrov, are assigned to the Chechen Ministry of Internal Affairs, and serve a role similar to the SSG. Thus Ramzan Kadyrov who continues to supervise activity of the regiment. In March, 2005 he declared that this regiment is under control of the FSB Operative directorate in Hankala.

Following the attack by Chechen rebels on the city of Nazran, in June 2004, the strategy of using force was expanded. Rashid Nurgaliev, Minister of Internal Affairs, also expanded the area of operations of the Kadyrov regiment: He said: "The regiment of special purpose of the MVD will actively counteract extremists outside the Chechen Republic, taking part in operations on destruction of terrorists in any Russian region". Kadyrov's regiment has taken full advantage of this broader authority, operating in Dagestan during the 2004 and 2005.

Special divisions have also been employing new tactics, including the controversial "countercapture" operations against families of accused terrorists. This term was publicly used for the first time by public prosecutor Vladimir Ustinov before the State Duma on 29 October 2004. He, in particular, has declared: "There should be a simplified procedure of legal proceedings, "counter-capture" of hostages, institutes of agents, protection of witnesses and the persons introduced in terrorist structures. As to counter capture: if people have gone - if it is possible to name them people - on such certificate, as terrorist detention of relatives and display to the same terrorists that can occur to these relatives, can rescue people. Therefore here it is not necessary to close eyes and to do such "diplomatic mines".

Legislatures have not approved the policy of counter-capture, but it is being used. The first capture has occurred in the spring of 2004 when more than 40 relatives of Chechen field commander Magomed Hambiev were taken into custody. As a result Hambiev has surrendered to the federal authorities. The second capture of relatives has occurred during the siege in Beslan: on September, 3rd in area Nadterechnaya of the Chechen Republic, where relatives of wife Aslan Maskhadov's Kusama, including her aged father have been detained. In December, 2004 there were messages on new capture of relatives of Aslan Maskhadov. On August, 12th, 2005 Natasha Humadova, the sister of the field commander Doku Umarov was taken by the authorities.

As operations become more urban focused, the burden of response falls increasingly on SOBR (special operations unit of Ministry of Internal Affairs, they are Russian analog of SWAT in USA) and special units of regional FSB divisions. In the summer of 2004 important reforms have been made in these divisions.

In FSB there are two regional systems of special troops. The first is a legacy of the "Alpha" and "Vympel" groups, now the Special purpose center of FSB. During Soviet times regional divisions of "Alpha" were created in Khabarovsk and Krasnodar, and in 90-s regional groups of "Vympel" were deployed in cities with especially important nuclear objects. In all other regional FSB divisions, instead of "Alpha" and "Vympel", Groups of Support of Operative actions (OSOM) were created. It's not special troops in the strictest sense, but members of the division who are physically strong and draw their resources from within their existing divisions. They will not compete with existing FSB special forces.



In Southern federal district there were only two divisions of the level of Special purpose center of FSB: Krasnodar's "Alpha" and the former seventh department of "Vypel", which had been withdrawn from the Chechen Republic after the first Chechen war and deployed in Stavropol area. During the summer of 2005 in Dagestan a regional division on of the Special purpose center of FSB of the Southern federal district was created. During a trip to Dagestan, President Putin noted, that similar structures will appear and in other regions of Russia.

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The practice of "countercapture" not only contradicts Russian legislation, but is also useless in terms of preventing acts of terrorism, and resolving hostage crises. Countercapture is an act of intimidation and not a counter strategy. There is an implied threat to the people being held, and if it is not carried out, then the tactics will be ineffective in the future. If harm is inflicted on a largely "innocent" group of "hostages" taken by the government, the political implications will be disastrous.

There is a mixed history of using this tactics in different countries - from Germany during the Second world war up to France during the Algerian campaign. But this method in all cases was a tactical success led to a strategic failure.

With the changing operational environment, shifting from a rural insurgency to an urban campaign, calls into question the value of the organizations and lessons of the Northern Caucasus region. The current special units of the GRU, FSB, and others, are not counter-insurgent or even counter-terrorist units, but are the instrument of punishment and intimidation.

All they have achieved is to escalate the extreme violence ,and shift it from the region to the wider Russian Federation. The ability of these units to operate outside of any strategic concept, let alone the law, and with open acknowledgment undermines the Russian state, and does nothing to reduce the conflict they were established to address. In fact these units have succeeded in widening the conflict.. For example, Kadrov's operations in Dagestan during April, 2005 hardly has led to the interethnic conflict.

Despite the negative assessment above, it is necessary to recognize some of the unique positive result of reform and the creation of regional division of the Special purpose center of FSB in the Southern federal district.

### *Expansion of new divisions*

#### **Internal troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (VV).**

The expansion of the Internal Ministry troops began during the autumn of 2004. It was decided to expand 49-th separate brigade would be expanded and deployed in three separate areas: Nalchik, Nazran and Kartsy (near Vladikavkaz).

In June, 2005 commander-in-chief of Internal troops general-colonel Nikolay Rogozhkin said that the transfer of operational command to Internal Ministry troops will not be completed until 2006. In addition, the current operational formations, brigade-battalion, will be replaced with divisional-regimental formations.

Battalions, which have 600 members, will be placed into 2,000 member regiments. Two new regiments, located in Sochi and Nalchik, will be created from existing special battalions. Additional forces of internal troops will be deployed to Krasnodar territory, Dagestan, Karachaevo-Circassia, Kabardino-Balkaria and Kalmykia, and groups of operative management (GrOU) will be created. All military commandant's offices (MO) operating in mountain areas will be transferred to Internal troops.

The entire command structure of the Internal troops also has been changed. In June, 2005 President Vladimir Putin signed the decree that has created a more regionally oriented command structure.

Depending on the mission requirements there will be three types of regional structures: district, regional command and regional management.

The First commands will be based on existing regional formations in the Northern Caucasus, except Adygea and Kalmykia. The regional staff will have the power to deploy all forces (Internal Affairs and Military) operating with in the region as operations require. They can do this without Ministry of Defense.

**The Ministry of Defense.** The Ministry of Defense will also increase its strength in the North-Caucasian region. The 42<sup>nd</sup> Division's army special troops will operate in Barmut, Vedeno, and Shatoi.

In Botlih on border with the Chechen Republic and Georgia, , a mountain brigade will be deployed by 2006. An additional mountain brigade will be assigned to Karachaevo-Circassia.

The accelerated transfer of divisions into North Caucasus proceeds. By the end of 2007 the military will have 45 701 personal in the district as fully contract force, a total of 4 fully staffed divisions. Also 2006-2007 there will be a brigade of sea infantry in Dagestan (Kaspijsk), a some regiments of 19-th division (Vladikavkaz), and also 135-th regiment (Prohladny, Kabardino-Balkariya) deployed.

Most critically, in 2005 the State Duma approved an amendment to the law "About defense", providing for a legal basis for the application of armed forces inside the country - against terrorists.

**Federal security service.** FSB strength is also increasing in the North Caucasus, but not from increasing divisional strengths, but from the reorganizing and redeploying of Border Service troops.

In July, 2004 the Border service moved from a linear principle of state border protection to more regional orientation. Instead of ten regional border divisions covering the entire Federation, there are now only seven, organized among the federal districts.

August-2004 reform created a Regional Border Division for the Southern federal district (RPU FSB of the Russian Federation on JUFO) with a staff in Rostov.

There are 5 geographic divisions in this region (in the structure of RPU of FSB on JUFO): the North-Caucasian border division (SKPU) with a HQ in Stavropol, the Chernomorsko-Azovskoye border division of a coast guard (CHAPUBO) with a HQ in Krasnodar, the Caspian border division (KPU) with a HQ in Makhachkala, border division on the Volgograd area with a HQ in Volgograd, border division on the Rostov area with a HQ in Rostov-on-Don. Border division on the Chechen republic was created on the basis of Argun border command. This will be the most active region in Russia.

In December, 2004 President Putin matched the troop commitments with the necessary infrastructure, signing the decree "About measures on maintenance of border safety in the North Caucasian region". The document provides construction of more than 70 bordered facilities, several HQ facilities, and the center of a professional training, and some roads and development of an infrastructure on places of residing of frontier guards. JUFO accepted all of the decrees in June of 2005.

Then In July, 2005, after a visit to Dagestan, Vladimir Putin instructed the Minister of Economic Development and Trade German Gref, to find money for strengthening of the North Caucasus border. Gref was able to increasing spending from the original 1,445 billion rbl. up to 6,03 billion rbl. Much of the spending will to the erection of border facilities, but funds will also provide for technical control, and also over construction of habitation for frontier guards.

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Commenting on all recent changes, commander-in-chief of Internal troop's general-colonel Nikolay Rogozhkin declared that former organizational-regular changes have forced to refuse heavy combat material that not always was justified. Thus, use of tanks at storm of buildings in city conditions as it occurred in the winter 2004-2005, probably, will be continued.

The Russians seem to be following the Spanish model, where the Spanish Parliament passed legislation increasing the Army operational scope, four days after the March 12<sup>th</sup> Madrid bombings. But unlike Spain, where the Army only supports civil authority, the Russian military has operational authority. This is a critical difference with profound implications.

All of the aforementioned changes seem to leave the FSB republican (regional) divisions in Southern federal district on periphery of federal attention.

While the focus has been on the Internal Affairs and Military the FSB has produced unique divisions in power structures which in a condition to conduct secret-service work in region.

### ***Changes in the punishment system***

There are not significant changes in this area during the year after Beslan tragedy. Last changes have been made in June 2004, then Federation Council approved amendments to the Criminal code that established the maximum sentence for terrorism crimes would be life imprisonment.

There was only one unsuccessful attempt to change the punishment system after Beslan: In January 2005 the State Duma has rejected amendments providing punishments of terrorists relatives.

## **6. Conclusion**

The Beslan hostage crisis has had only a limited impact on the security services reform. The chaos of the response can be partially explained by the confusion over who had authority during the on going reform process. The tragedy of the September 1-3<sup>rd</sup> siege only served to highlight the soundness of the principles being incorporated in the on going reforms. Some of those are highlighted below.

- **Coordination and information interchange**

While recognizing the critical importance in coordinating information, the joint coordination center is still not created. The problem of coordination and an exchange of the information between FSB, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, SVR, FSO and MO is not solved, the sharing of information with and between international partners is even worse. Despite the role, the Special Envoy still has not exercised any authority in these matters. The strategic issues remain open, the daily sharing of tactical information is no better. Despite all the changes the new bodies and authorities missions remain vaguely conceived and poorly defined.

In the North Caucasus while it appears positive to have both of the coordination centers of carrying out of counterterrorist operations under the control of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and its army divisions (Internal troops - VV) rather than scattered across any ministries, Internal affairs do not possess the experience or intelligence capacity to deal with terrorism. Again, the creation of new structures - Groups of operative management (GrOU) for actions during captures of hostages, is a good first step, it remains unclear who has tactical responsibility, which is one of the key failings of Beslan.

- **Gathering and the analysis of the information on preparing terrorist attacks**

According open sources, the tactical intelligence picture has improved with the establishment of OGV. However there is still no strategic collection and analysis center focusing on the Northern Caucasus. The rest of the intelligence community has escaped necessary reorganization. Thus the most critical do not tool in combating terrorism, intelligence, in not being, nor is it currently capable of being fully exploited.

- **Prosecution of terrorists and reflection of subversive and terrorist attacks**

After Beslan the practice of "countercaptures" had been expanded and legalized. This act of intimidation is largely ineffective and contradicts fundamental Russian legislation. The recruitment and deployment of some of these units actually exacerbates the crisis and can widen the potential of interethnic conflict. The lack of control of these units also raises worrying questions. The key concern is the lessons being learned in the region are being misapplied. Indiscriminant application of force rarely works in a rural environment but is especially counter-productive in an urban setting. As terrorism moves to a more urban domain a new set of skills and tactics will have to be developed. Russia is preparing to fight a conflict that is already over.

Despite the largely negative lessons of the past, Russia is developing appropriate measures. The growth of quantity divisions of Internal troops of MVD, army and Border service, and of FSB in region is growing. The coordination structures are in place but need to be utilized. The security services seem to recognize the application of force has been counterproductive and are exploring more appropriate uses of their resources.

The very transfer of capabilities from FSB to Internal Affairs is significant. Traditionally the three main activities of state security agencies were: revealing, prevention, and suppression of crime. Counter-terrorism, and most particularly counter-insurgency, requires a different set of skills. The Ministry of Internal Affairs has more capabilities, but it needs to utilize the resources of the FSB to maximize its advantages.

The most glaring gap in capabilities involves countering terrorist financing. Despite the actions taken by the US after the 9/11 attacks, Russia have still not developed a national strategy for combating terrorism or criminal financing. This would seem to be an area that the FSB can be most effective if only bill in the Duma "About Counteraction to Terrorism" was stronger.

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The Beslan hostage crisis has had only a limited impact on the reform of the security services. While the system for fighting terrorism has evolved in positive directions between 2004 and 2005 the system to prevent terrorism remains non-existent.

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