

New Cold War: Simultaneously, Russia and America Conduct Major War Games

By [Prof Michel Chossudovsky](#)
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There has been a virtual media blackout on the conduct of major military exercises by both Russia and the US.

Reminiscent of the Cold War, Russia and America are conducting major war games simultaneously.

The Russian Air Force will be conducting major military exercises over a large part of its territory from the 16th to the 30th of October.

These Russian exercises coincide chronologically with the conduct of major US sponsored war games under Vigilant Shield 08, which are slated to take place from the 15th to the 20th of October.

VS-08 was preceded by major naval exercises under Pacific Shield 07 hosted by Japan, involving the participation of Australia, France, New Zealand, Singapore, the UK, and the US.

President Vladimir Putin announced in August that Russia would be resuming long-range bomber flights over the Pacific, Atlantic and Arctic oceans for the first time since the breakup of the Soviet Union. (Associated Press, October 1, 2007). Moscow's resolve was in response to US-NATO threats directed against Russia including the militarization of Eastern Europe and the Balkans.

The US exercise code named Vigilant Shield 2008 (VS-08) is casually presented as an "anti-terrorist drill". While under the joint auspices of the Pentagon and the Department of Defense, US Northern Command in liaison with NORAD is in charge of the operation.

VS-08 includes a massive deployment of the US Air Force and Canada's Air Force. It resembles a war-time scenario with the deployment of bombers and fighter jets over the entire North American continent extending into the Arctic.

Meanwhile in the Pacific, military exercises are being held in Guam under the VS-08 initiative. Parallel US-Philippines sponsored war games are slated to commence in the Philippines archipelago on the 16th of October, "involving nearly 3,500 troops from specialized forces from the two countries."

In what visibly appears to be a confrontational scenario, the Russian war games commence one day after the launching of the US sponsored VS-08.

Russian strategic bombers Tu-160, Tu-95 and Tu-22M3, and Il-78 aerial tankers “will conduct flights over the Arctic region, the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans, and the Black Sea, with simulated bombing raids and firing of cruise missiles at testing grounds in northern and southern Russia,” Colonel Alexander Drobyshvsky said.” (RIA Novosti).

Part of these Russian war games will be conducted in the Arctic, within proximity of US and Canadian territory (Alaska and Canada’s Arctic).

“Moscow announced in mid-August that regular patrol flights by strategic bombers had been resumed, and would continue on a permanent basis, with patrol areas including commercial shipping and economic production zones.

The U.S. administration expressed concern about the resumption of patrol flights by Russian strategic bombers.

“I think the rapid growth in Russian military spending definitely bears watching,” U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said in an interview with ABC News on October 14.

“And frankly, some of the efforts – for instance, Bear flights in areas that we haven’t seen for a while – are really not helpful to security.” ([RIA Novosti](#))

Over the last several months, Russia has been conducting warplane exercises around Alaska. In the course of last Summer, Russian bombers staged a number of exercises in what is described as “a buffer zone outside U.S. air space”, within proximity of Alaska. According to a NORAd spokesman,

“U.S. and Canadian fighter jets, including F-15s, were dispatched each time to escort the Russian planes in the exercises, which ranged from two to six aircraft,...

VS-8 is based on a scenario of confrontation with Russia and China.

In August, under the auspices of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Russia and China joined hands in the conduct of major war games. Code-named “Peace-Mission 2007”, the exercises were held in the Volga region of Russia as well as in the Urumqi region of Western China.

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About the author:

Michel Chossudovsky is an award-winning author, Professor of Economics (emeritus) at the University of Ottawa, Founder and Director of the Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG), Montreal, Editor of Global Research. He has taught as visiting professor in Western Europe, Southeast Asia, the Pacific and Latin America. He has served as economic adviser to governments of developing countries and has acted as a consultant for several international organizations. He is the author of 13 books. He is a contributor to the Encyclopaedia Britannica. His writings have been published in more than twenty languages. In 2014, he was awarded the Gold Medal for Merit of the Republic of Serbia for his writings on NATO's war of aggression against Yugoslavia. He can be reached at crgeditor@yahoo.com

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