

The presentation was opened by Deputy Director of IMEMO RAN Academician **Vladimir G. Baranovsky** who stressed the importance of the Russian SIPRI Yearbook Armaments, Disarmament and International Security for a wide range of experts and policy-makers in Russia and, therefore, the pivotal role of the joint IMEMO-SIPRI project that made this publication possible.

The Yearbook has traditionally devoted its first chapters to the most pressing issues of the year in consideration. This time it deals with the “new geopolitics of intervention”, analyzing geopolitical impact of the developments in Libya, and trying to understand the first year of the “Arab Spring” and its politico-military aspect.

The Russian SIPRI Yearbook has a unique feature, a Special Supplement compiled by researchers of renown, mostly the members of IMEMO. The Institute can rightly be proud of this specialty. This year’s Special Supplement analyses issues and possible options of multilateralizing nuclear disarmament process. It has become the first research to offer a comprehensive analysis of the role of nuclear weapons in South Asia, which reflects an emerging tendency towards Moscow and Washington shifting their political and military focus to this region. In addition, the contributors to the Supplement have been the first to deal with the spread of small arms and light weapons. Academician Vladimir Baranovsky expressed gratitude to the many members of IMEMO who had made the Russian SIPRI Yearbook possible. He also thanked the Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport of Switzerland for its traditional support of this work.

Head of the Center for International Security Academician **Alexei G. Arbatov** conveyed deepest appreciation of the project on behalf of Academician Alexander A. Dynkin, Director of the IMEMO RAN, who could not attend the presentation due to a business trip abroad. Academician Arbatov noted the traditionally high level of analytical materials of SIPRI Yearbook due to which it remains relevant both in Russia and around the globe. He also outlined most pressing issues of arms reduction and limitation stressing the need for Russia to restore its long-standing status of a pioneer of the disarmament process.

In conclusion Academician Arbatov thanked both the current sponsors of the project and those who had supported it previous year, Russian Council for International Affairs and the Open Joint Stock Company Rosoboronexport.

Sergey K. Oznobishchev, Science Editor of the Russian SIPRI Yearbook and Head of Sector at IMEMO RAN stressed the importance of the project as a competent source of information for a wide range of experts and the general public in Russia. He also pointed out that the first chapter of the publication dealt with the most pressing issue of the previous year. In 2012 the Yearbook analyzed the developments in Libya and certain aspects of the “Arab Spring”. It should probably be expected that these topics would be further explored in the future, which would be of great interest to Russian policy-makers and experts who find it pivotal to have a precise assessment of the motives and drivers of the processes in the Middle East.

It is the more important to make correct accents in this context, as the issue has become increasingly politicized and is perceived by many exclusively as a manifestation of Washington’s long-term plans to strengthen its dominance in the region. The speaker also stressed a traditionally wide range of topical issues examined in the Yearbook and its analytical consistency over years, which contributes to the Yearbook’s significance for Russian researchers.

Chief Researcher of the Center for International Security **Vladimir Z. Dvorkin** stressed that SIPRI Yearbook had never raised an issue irrelevant in terms of arms reduction and limitation and strengthening international security. As for further nuclear arms control efforts he expressed certainty that it would serve Russia’s long-term interests to bring the limit for strategic nuclear arms as low as to 1,000 warheads, which

would also result in economic benefit. Vladimir Dvorkin also noted that the idea of involving the UK and France in this process under a treaty had no prospects.

Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is another issue traditionally discussed in the Yearbook. It is the nuclear programmes of Iran and North Korea that pose most serious threat to the non-proliferation process. Despite major challenges and differences among the powers directly involved in attempts to curb these programmes, it is evident that “nuclear Iran” — that is, Iran possessing nuclear weapons — and “nuclear North Korea” are a common threat to both regional and global security. In this context, Pyongyang’s actions have taught everybody a lesson, having demonstrated the gaps in the nuclear non-proliferation regime and prompting the ways to strengthen the NPT.

The presentations by the key speakers were followed by a heated expert discussion. The subject of discussion drew exceptional interest – the presentation was attended by around 70 experts, diplomats and media representatives.

The discussion featured **Alexey A. Gromyko**, Deputy Director, Institute of Europe of the Russian Academy of Sciences; **Leonid F. Ryabikhin** Deputy Chairman, Committee of Scientists for International Security; **Evgeny K. Silin**, President, Association for Euro-Atlantic Cooperation; **Georgy D. Toloraya** Director for Regional Programs of Asia and Africa, Head of Regional Projects Department of the Russkiy Mir (Russian World) Foundation; **Efim L. Zhigun**, Director, Institute of the Middle East; **Vladimir I. Sazhin**, senior researcher, Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, as well as several other experts.