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Nuclear weapons deterrence status is changing

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Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoygu said on Thursday that nuclear weapons may no longer serve for the purpose of strategic deterrence in the future. Another type of weapon will come to replace it, the minister added.

According to the Defense Minister, it will be high-precision weapons. The move will reduce international tensions and strengthen trust between countries, the minister said during a lecture for the leadership of the Defense Ministry and members of the public.

According to Shoygu, high-precision guided weapons will be mostly based on ships and submarines by 2021, RIA Novosti reports.

"By 2021, we plan to increase combat capabilities of Russian strategic non-nuclear forces four times, which will give us an opportunity to fully solve problems of non-nuclear deterrence," said Shoygu.

The commander of Strategic Missile Forces, Colonel-General Sergei Karakayev also spoke about a possibility for nuclear weapons to lose their deterrence role. However, this is not a matter of near future, the official said.

"The Strategic Missile Forces will continue to play their key role to ensure the country's security until nuclear weapons lose their deterrent role a result of either technological progress or changing nature of international relations, he said in December of 2016.

At the same time, he added, "the reliance on nuclear deterrence should provide necessary time and balance of power to create new systems and means of warfare."

One may assume that several strategic deterrence factors may emerge as a symbiosis - high-precision nuclear weapons, for example.

"The first man who spoke about it publicly was Vladimir Putin. He said that in February 2012 in his pre-election article devoted to defense issues. In the article, he wrote that the purpose of nuclear high-precision weapons was changing and the traditional role of strategic nuclear weapons was decreasing," chief editor of Arms Exports Magazine, Andrey Frolov told Pravda.Ru.

The expert believes that no country will refuse from nuclear weapons completely in the foreseeable future. Engineers will continue their work to make nuclear-capable weapons smaller in size. The work to create weapons with a controlled explosion capacity will also be a priority.