

## **Strategic Intelligence Brief: Comparative Analysis of Soviet Union's Military Modernization**

**Document Creation Date:** 2020-03-11

**Originating Division:** Covert Operations

**Classification Level:** Restricted

**Target Entity:** Soviet Union

**Event Date:** 2021-04-14

**Mission Priority:** 1

### **Introduction:**

The Soviet Union's military modernization efforts have been a subject of interest for Western intelligence agencies. Recent events, including the April 14, 2021, test of the RS-28 Sarmat intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), have raised concerns about the potential threat posed by the Soviet military. This Strategic Intelligence Brief compares and contrasts the Soviet Union's military modernization efforts with similar cases in the past, highlighting unique features and differences.

### **Comparative Analysis:**

The Soviet Union's military modernization efforts can be compared to the Chinese military's modernization efforts during the 1980s and 1990s. Both countries have invested heavily in advanced military technology, including missiles, aircraft, and naval vessels. However, the Soviet Union's efforts have been more focused on developing nuclear-capable ballistic missiles, while China has prioritized developing conventional military capabilities.

In terms of similarities, both the Soviet Union and China have leveraged their military-industrial complexes to drive modernization efforts. Both countries have also made significant investments in research and development, with a focus on developing advanced technologies such as hypersonic missiles and advanced sensors.

However, there are also significant differences between the two cases. The Soviet Union's military modernization efforts have been more focused on maintaining a nuclear deterrence capability, while China has prioritized developing conventional military capabilities to project power in the Asia-Pacific region.

### **Unique Features:**

One unique feature of the Soviet Union's military modernization efforts is the focus on developing advanced nuclear-capable ballistic missiles, such as the RS-28 Sarmat ICBM. This missile has a range

of over 6,000 miles and can carry multiple warheads, making it a significant threat to Western military installations.

Another unique feature of the Soviet Union's military modernization efforts is the emphasis on developing advanced cyber warfare capabilities. Russian military officials have stated that cyber warfare is a key component of their military strategy, and have invested heavily in developing advanced cyber capabilities.

### **Differences:**

One key difference between the Soviet Union's military modernization efforts and previous cases is the level of transparency and openness. The Soviet Union has been relatively open about its military modernization efforts, with regular press briefings and statements from military officials. This is in contrast to previous cases, such as the Chinese military's modernization efforts, which were characterized by a lack of transparency and openness.

Another key difference is the level of international cooperation and collaboration. The Soviet Union has engaged in significant international cooperation and collaboration on military modernization efforts, including joint exercises and training programs with other countries. This is in contrast to previous cases, where military modernization efforts were often characterized by a lack of international cooperation and collaboration.

### **Geopolitical Implications:**

The Soviet Union's military modernization efforts have significant geopolitical implications. The development of advanced nuclear-capable ballistic missiles and cyber warfare capabilities poses a significant threat to Western military installations and critical infrastructure.

The emphasis on developing advanced nuclear-capable ballistic missiles also raises concerns about the potential for nuclear proliferation. If the Soviet Union were to develop and deploy nuclear-capable ballistic missiles, it could potentially create a new nuclear threat in the region.

### **Potential Future Threats:**

The Soviet Union's military modernization efforts also raise concerns about potential future threats. The development of advanced cyber warfare capabilities, for example, could potentially be used to disrupt critical infrastructure and compromise national security.

The emphasis on developing advanced nuclear-capable ballistic missiles also raises concerns about the potential for nuclear conflict. If the Soviet Union were to develop and deploy nuclear-capable ballistic missiles, it could potentially create a new nuclear threat in the region.

### **Conclusion:**

In conclusion, the Soviet Union's military modernization efforts have significant implications for Western military planners and policymakers. The development of advanced nuclear-capable ballistic missiles and cyber warfare capabilities poses a significant threat to Western military installations and critical infrastructure.

The emphasis on developing advanced nuclear-capable ballistic missiles also raises concerns about the potential for nuclear proliferation and nuclear conflict. It is essential for Western military planners and policymakers to remain vigilant and monitor the Soviet Union's military modernization efforts closely.

### **Recommendations:**

Based on this analysis, we recommend the following:

1. Continue to monitor the Soviet Union's military modernization efforts closely.
2. Develop and deploy advanced cyber defenses to counter the Soviet Union's cyber warfare capabilities.
3. Invest in developing and deploying advanced missile defense systems to counter the Soviet Union's nuclear-capable ballistic missiles.
4. Engage in international cooperation and collaboration to address the potential for nuclear proliferation and nuclear conflict.

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