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## AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PARLIAMENTARY COOPERATION

On 25 June 2007, the European Union (EU) came a step closer to becoming an integral part of the wider Black Sea area when the Commission was granted Observer Status of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC). (continued on page 2)

## THE BLACK SEA MONITOR

The ICBSS has identified the need for a special circular on developments in and around the Black Sea region that goes beyond the mere news brief format. Therefore, the Centre has set up a quarterly electronic review focused particularly on the Black Sea region, aiming to provide stakeholders and other interested parties around the globe with an exclusive information service. The Monitor offers brief commentaries and refers key documents, publications and events of interest that impact on the wider Black Sea region.

Since, preparations are underway for the kick-off high-level political event to be held on St. Valentine's Day (14 February) 2008 which aims to "provide political orientation and visibility to" the EU's [Black Sea Synergy](#) initiative. Meanwhile the modalities of concrete interaction in the domains of transport, environment and energy are being debated while a number of other areas of cooperation are waiting to be enhanced.

One of these is inter-parliamentary dialogue as the value of interchanges between parliamentarians should not be underestimated. The EC Communication of 4 December 2006 on "[Strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy](#)" addresses the need for strengthening political cooperation whereby "parliamentary cooperation could also be intensified, whether between the European Parliament and national parliaments, or through the work of European political foundations." More specifically, the "[Black Sea Synergy](#)" Communication of 11 April 2007 suggests that the policy should "also take advantage of the useful contacts already existing between the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly of BSEC."

The interaction between the [Parliamentary Assembly of BSEC \(PABSEC\)](#) and the [European Parliament \(EP\)](#) is not new. It dates all the way back to 2000 when political dialogue between the two bodies and the exchange of information began. Since, delegations of the PABSEC have visited the seat of the European Parliament in Brussels while EP delegations have been taking part in meetings of the PABSEC on a regular basis.

What are some of the benefits of enhanced parliamentary dialogue? First of all, it can generate debate on the key elements and ways of implementing a new relationship between the EU and the BSEC by addressing a number of pertinent questions, including:

- How compatible are the EU's priorities with those of the Black Sea countries?

- How could the Black Sea Synergy be implemented?
- What is the role of the Parliaments in the implementation of the Black Sea Synergy?
- What role can specifically the PABSEC and the European Parliament play?

The parliamentary setting also allows for debate on sensitive issues which might not necessarily be broached at more structured official settings. The 5 December 2007 Communication from the Commission on "[A Strong European Neighbourhood Policy](#)", for example, clearly states that "[c]onflicts should always be a key focus of *political dialogue* with ENP partners." What better forum for discussion of the frozen and other regional conflicts than the inter-parliamentary one?

In fact the best way to proceed would be the formulation of an Action Plan or a set of concrete proposals in order to structure future dialogue at the parliamentary level thereby assuring that it contributes to the growing concrete interaction between the EU and its wider Black Sea area partners.

Given the potential impact of inter-parliamentary cooperation, especially in areas such as legislative reform and good governance, regular exchanges between Members of the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation would add a strong parliamentary pillar to meaningful BSEC-EU interaction. Proposed modalities could include the establishment of compact delegations for parliamentary dialogue, extending Observer status with the European Parliament to the PABSEC, and acceptance by the European Parliament of the standing invitation of the PABSEC to participate in its meetings as an Observer.

The International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) for its part intends to contribute with

the drafting of a policy study, to be made public in Spring 2008, on how the parliamentary dimension of Black Sea regional cooperation may be strengthened and how inter-parliamentary interaction between the EU and the BSEC may be structured. As the relations between the EU and the countries of the wider Black Sea area, both at bilateral and regional levels, are evolving, the input of the parliaments at this stage is of particular importance as it can substantially strengthen the budding relationship. It is high time to provide inter-parliamentary cooperation with the opportunity to reinforce the synergies in place.

**DIMITRIOS TRIANTAPHYLLOU**

**Communication from the Commission  
on a Strong European Neighbourhood  
Policy [COM (2007) 774 final]  
(Brussels, 5 December 2007)**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is substantially deepening the EU's relations with its neighbours<sup>1</sup>, and has become the established vehicle for cooperation with these countries across a wide policy spectrum. The premise of the ENP is that the EU has a vital interest in seeing greater economic development, stability and better governance in its neighbourhood. Spreading peace and prosperity across the borders of the EU prevents artificial divisions and creates benefits for the ENP partners and the EU alike. The ENP is a partnership for reform that offers "more for more": the more deeply a partner engages with the Union, the more fully the Union can respond, politically, economically and through financial and technical cooperation. As the partnerships develop, within the common ENP framework, the policy's operation is becoming increasingly differentiated.

After the first years of experience with the ENP, the Commission concluded in December 2006<sup>2</sup> that the policy had achieved good early results, but proposed further action to make it fully effective. This will require political leadership, a partnership approach and a number of sensitive issues to be tackled. Ultimately, what is at stake is the EU's ability to develop an external policy complementary to enlargement that is effective in promoting transformation and reform. In response to this Communication, following Council deliberations to which the Commission contributed through informal papers,<sup>3</sup> the German EU Presidency

produced a report<sup>4</sup> that was broadly endorsed by the European Council. The Commission also organised an ENP Conference in September 2007 which brought together Ministers and civil society representatives from the EU and its partner countries for the first time. On 15 November the European Parliament adopted a report<sup>5</sup> on the 2006 Communication.

Since the last Communication, progress has been made. For example, allocations have been made under the Governance Facility. The Neighbourhood Investment Facility is being established. A regional dimension for the East, the "Black Sea Synergy" has been launched. Progress has been made towards opening up EC programmes and agencies to ENP partners. However, a great deal remains to be done. In most ENP partner countries the need for political, social and economic reform is huge.

The focus in the coming period must be on *implementation* of existing commitments, both by partner countries, and by the EU. Efforts are required on both sides. The priorities for action will be set out in two communications, which address on one hand the responsibilities of the countries.

The present Communication concentrates on the actions needed and foreseen by the EU in 2008. It focuses on activities that will be necessary by the Member States and by the Commission to make a reality of the proposals discussed in the course of 2007. A separate Communication, accompanied by country-specific progress reports, in spring 2008, will analyse where further action is needed by ENP partner countries.

## 2. CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

### 2.1. Differentiation

The ENP includes very different countries in a single policy. The EU offer of deeper relations is the same for all partners. However, the country-specific approach within the ENP provides for flexibility and

<sup>1</sup> The ENP covers Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Republic of Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine but not the EEA, the candidate and potential candidate countries or Russia.

<sup>2</sup> COM(2006)726 final of 4 December 2006

<sup>3</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/strengthening\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/strengthening_en.htm)

<sup>4</sup> 10874/07of15.6.2007.<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/07/st10/st10874.en07.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> P6\_TA(2007)0538

differentiation, and there are as many possible responses as there are partner countries, according to each partner's political situation, its level of ambition with regard to the EU, its reform agenda and achievements, and its level of socio-economic development.

The enhanced agreement currently being negotiated with Ukraine<sup>6</sup>, the ongoing discussions with Morocco on an "advanced status" and with Israel on an upgrading of relations demonstrate this differentiation. The further the policy evolves, the more pronounced this differentiation will become. Nonetheless, the common ENP framework facilitates an objective and coherent EU approach to these diverse partners and ensures that the whole of the EU is fully committed to deeper relations with all our neighbours.

## **2.2. Ownership**

To attain its ambitious objectives, joint ownership of the ENP is essential and must be further promoted. This will develop as differentiation increases, and as bilateral policy dialogue deepens across a wide range of areas. It is important that both the ENP partner country and the EU can hold each other accountable for living up to their mutual commitments.

The ENP conference in September 2007 underlined the EU's commitment to working with partner countries who co-determine their path in the ENP. A follow-up conference will take place in 2008 and Georgia has offered to host it.

## **2.3. Regional processes**

The ENP is primarily bilateral but interlinks with regional and sub-regional processes. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership remains a cornerstone for the EU's interaction with its southern neighbours. The ENP and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership are mutually reinforcing: the bilateral frameworks of the ENP are better

suited to promoting internal reforms, while the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation framework provides the regional context.

The Commission supports new initiatives to strengthen relations with countries of the Mediterranean region, provided they build on existing processes. Such initiatives could include, among others, action in the fields of the environment, intercultural dialogue, economic growth and security. In this respect, the Commission notes France's invitation to a meeting in June 2008, to give new impetus to relations with the countries of that region.

In response to calls for the establishment of a regional cooperation framework in the East, the Black Sea Synergy has been launched to complement the EU's mainly bilateral policies in the region: the ENP, the Strategic Partnership with the Russian Federation and the accession negotiations with Turkey. A Black Sea Synergy Ministerial meeting will be held in February 2008 in Kyiv with the participation of the EU. Similarly, possible synergies will be explored with the EU Strategy for Central Asia and the Joint EU-Africa Strategy.

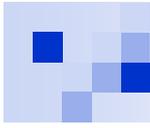
## **3. SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES – KEY IMPROVEMENTS PROPOSED**

### **3.1. Measures towards further economic integration**

Tailor-made deep and comprehensive free trade agreements (DFTAs), including measures to reduce non-tariff barriers through regulatory convergence, are the keys to increased economic integration with ENP partners. A DFTA should cover substantially all trade in goods and services between the EC and the ENP partner as well as strong legally-binding provisions on the implementation of trade and economic regulatory issues.

Important steps have already been taken, but determined efforts will be required from all parties to take this agenda forward. The Union will continue to give active support to the neighbours in their regulatory convergence with financial and technical

<sup>6</sup> See Council conclusions 11016/07 of 19.6.2007.  
<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/07/st11/st11016.en07.pdf>



assistance, but additional incentives are needed.

In 2007 the negotiation of an enhanced agreement with Ukraine was launched, and this will be extended to free-trade issues once Ukraine has joined the WTO. The Commission proposed a draft regulation introducing autonomous trade preferences for the Republic of Moldova. Feasibility studies exploring the possibility of free trade agreements with Georgia and Armenia will be concluded in the coming year. Negotiations on the liberalisation of services and the right of establishment as well as on trade in agricultural products continued with Mediterranean ENP partners. Work at Senior Officials level will be launched in 2008 to draw up a road map of next steps in the trade field to 2010 and beyond with the Mediterranean partners in order to upgrade the existing agreements. Preparatory work to facilitate trade in industrial products through the conclusion of Agreements on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products also progressed.

Further proportionate efforts are required from all parties to conclude negotiations successfully. The EU side needs to show increased political commitment to foster economic integration and to improve market access. The support of Member States for the Commission's effort to expeditiously conclude the on-going agricultural and fisheries negotiations, taking into account the different levels of development between partners, will be crucial, in particular by limiting the number of products excluded from full liberalisation. This should be part of a concerted effort by all sides towards the objective of gradually extending the deep and comprehensive agreements to our partners as a priority in the coming years. Negotiations should be considered after careful assessment and their pace tailored according to the capacity of the countries concerned and the expected outcome. At the same time, the Commission will continue to support improvements and further convergence in areas such as economic integration between the ENP partner

countries themselves. It will encourage cooperation with institutions such as the European Patent Office. Business to business dialogues will be supported, and the Commission will promote improvement of the business and investment climate in the neighbourhood. Among other things, the latter requires attention to governance and sustainability issues.

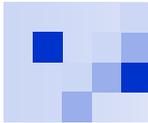
### **3.2. Mobility**

The ability of people to move and interact with each other is of the utmost importance for many aspects of the ENP, from trade and investment to cultural exchanges. Mobility is in itself a key foreign policy priority as this is the prism through which the citizens of partner countries perceive the EU.

The Commission proposes facilitation of legitimate short-term travel as well as more ambitious – longer-term – developments in the area of managed migration, potentially involving the opening of Member States' labour markets where this is to the mutual advantage of the sending and receiving countries.

Obviously, mobility can only develop in a secure environment, and security improvements will help to create the conditions for greater mobility. The promotion of mobility will go hand in hand with the commitment of our partners to increase security and justice and fight illegal migration, with efforts to strengthen our neighbours' capacity to deal with migratory flows to their countries, and with the security of documents.

The Commission urges the Council and the European Parliament to adopt its 2006 "package" on legislative proposals aiming at revising the European Visa policy, ensuring a high level of security within the common area and simplifying the procedures for visa applicants. These proposals will facilitate short-term travel by helping to solve the outstanding problems in the delivery of Schengen visas. It will in particular provide an easier proof that a traveller is *bona fide*, improve access of visa applicants to



consulates, and ensure better consular presence and regional coverage, including the establishment of Common Application Centres where needed.

Existing opportunities to facilitate travel are not being fully used. The *Local Border Traffic Regulation* allows Member States to conclude bilateral agreements with neighbouring third countries to improve people-to-people contacts in border areas and this should be used to full advantage. Better use by Member States of the *flexibilities provided for under the present Schengen acquis* could contribute to smoother arrangements.

The implementation of the 2003 Council Conclusions on *flexibility in issuing visas to participants in Euro-Mediterranean meetings*<sup>7</sup> should be extended to include all ENP partner countries. This extension would mainly concern Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, as visa facilitation agreements for Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova are about to enter into force. Member States are requested to fast-track the processing of visa applications made by persons attending ENP events and, where the applicant has previously complied with visa requirements, to grant multi-entry visas more systematically. The Commission will play a more active role, by providing letters of support and encouraging applicants to start the procedure in due time.

Following its Communication on *Circular Migration and Mobility Partnerships*<sup>8</sup> the Commission has proposed that a limited number of pilot mobility partnerships could be negotiated with selected third countries, in particular ENP countries. Partnerships will require pilot countries to commit themselves to cooperating actively with the EU on the management of migration flows while offering improved opportunities for legal migration, help in developing the capacity to manage intra-regional migration flows, measures to promote circular or return

migration and improvements in the procedures for issuing short-stay visas. Support measures need to be developed to modernise ENP labour market policies.

A coherent mobility policy must address external and internal policy goals: fostering contacts and exchanges, projecting EU values and approaches, promoting economic development, security, responding to gaps in national labour markets. Since these internal and external dimensions tend to fall under the responsibility of different parts of the Member States' and EU administrations it will be important to ensure coherence and consistency in their approaches.

### **3.3. Regional conflicts and political dialogue**

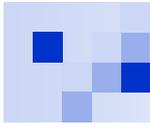
The number of (frozen) *conflicts* in the neighbourhood remains high: Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabakh, the Middle East and Western Sahara. The EU has a direct interest in working with partners to promote their resolution, because they undermine EU efforts to promote political reform and economic development in the neighbourhood and because they could affect the EU's own security, through regional escalation, unmanageable migratory flows, disruption of energy supply and trade routes, or the creation of breeding grounds for terrorist and criminal activity of all kinds.

The EU is already active in preventing and resolving conflicts but more should be done. A number of CFSP and ESDP measures have been launched. EU Special Representatives have been appointed and police, border control and border assistance missions are developing their activities.

These actions need to be planned and coordinated with longer-term EC policies which address the overall institutional and governance context and thus favour stabilisation. The deployment of all available tools, whether first, second or third pillar, would increase EU influence and avoid the limitations of short-term crisis management. The EU can make an important contribution by working around the conflict issues, promoting similar reforms on both sides of

<sup>7</sup> 5784/07 VISA 32 MED 3 COMIX 101 of 31 January 2007

<sup>8</sup> COM(2007)248 final of 16 May 2007.



the boundary lines, to foster convergence between political, economic and legal systems, enabling greater social inclusion and contributing to confidence building. The example of the EU Border Assistance Mission to Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova integrating EC and CFSP instruments in one approach shows how this can work. In other cases, depending on the nature of the conflict, increasing the capacities of ministries dealing with refugees, promoting the integration of minorities through language instruction, supporting post-conflict infrastructure rehabilitation, including cultural heritage, or implementing local income generation projects can constitute appropriate confidence-building measures.

The EU's institutional involvement in conflict settlement mechanisms varies widely. It is a full participant in the Quartet (Middle East Peace Process) and participates as an observer in the 5+2 talks (Transnistria), while the Commission is an observer in the Joint Control Commission (South Ossetia). Only individual Member States participate in the Minsk Group (Nagorno-Karabakh) and the UN Friends of Georgia (Abkhazia). Given the EU's history of peace and stability through regional integration, the EU has added value to bring to the efforts of individual Member States and must be prepared to assume a greater role in the resolution of conflicts in the neighbourhood.

Conflicts should always be a key focus of *political dialogue* with ENP partners. The EU should also ensure that the conflicts remain on the agenda of dialogues with relevant international organisations and third countries.

The Commission stands ready to develop, together with the Council, further proposals in the field of conflict resolution, using both Community and non-Community instruments.

The Commission will also do all it can to ensure that the potential offered by political dialogue is fully exploited for other issues,

such as terrorism, drugs, migratory flows, civil protection, and especially governance.

It will continue to promote stability notably through the sustained promotion of democracy, human rights and the rule of law throughout the neighbourhood.

#### **3.4. Sectoral reform and modernisation**

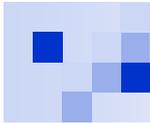
Sectoral policy dialogue, underpinned by assistance, will continue to support reform in ENP partner countries during 2008.

*Energy* security and safety are fields of growing interdependence in the neighbourhood. By adopting an energy package in March, the European Council set the stage for a common external energy policy. The ENP brings together producer, consumer and transit countries, which have much to gain from closer cooperation and integration. The Commission will focus its efforts on implementing the Energy Memoranda of Understanding with Azerbaijan and Ukraine and the Joint Declarations with Morocco and Jordan, and work towards similar agreements with Algeria and Egypt. The Commission will also seek to negotiate binding provisions on trade in energy goods, services and investments.

A feasibility study will be undertaken to examine the potential benefits of putting in place a common legal framework for the neighbourhood in the field of energy.

In 2008, the "Baku Process" (Black Sea/Caspian/Central Asia) Energy Ministerial meeting will further promote cooperation on energy security and market integration in the east. The EU commitment to develop the Nabucco pipeline, including the recent appointment of a coordinator, gives a strong impetus to the EU's efforts to develop networks of key interest. The Republic of Moldova's and Ukraine's accession to the Energy Community is in preparation. Georgia has submitted an application for observer status.

In the south, work continues to develop an integrated Euro-Mediterranean energy



market. The Commission will work with the Maghreb countries to promote regional integration of their electricity markets, and with the Mashreq region to enhance security and infrastructures in the gas sector. The Commission will build on the results of the EuroMed Energy Forum and the recent Sharm-el-Sheik EU-Africa-Middle East energy conference, particularly on development of the Arab Gas Pipeline, and exchange of know-how on clean technologies.

The Commission will work with neighbourhood partners to improve energy efficiency, to examine the scope for developing a green energy market and to expand partners' capacity to produce solar, wind and sustainable biomass energy sources.

The Commission will deepen its *climate change* dialogue, including in relation to adaptation,<sup>9</sup> on the post-2012 climate change regime. The Commission will also provide technical assistance to build capacity on climate change policies. The Commission will promote the Kyoto mechanisms,<sup>10</sup> which have significant potential to attract foreign direct investment and to foster development of cleaner technologies. Experiences with the EU Emission Trading Scheme will be shared. The Commission will step up support for efforts to achieve a *cleaner environment* in the neighbourhood. Under the umbrella of the Black Sea Synergy,<sup>11</sup> the Danube Black Sea Task Force will further intensify its work on water issues and explore extension to other areas, such as waste management. EC accession to the Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution will be pursued, and the Commission's engagement in the Environment for Europe process will emphasise implementation of the UNECE conventions.<sup>12</sup> In the Mediterranean region, the EC will continue to support the Horizon 2020 initiative to

reduce pollution levels. Shared environmental information systems, environmental impact assessments, integrated coastal zone management and sustainable tourism will be promoted throughout the region.

The EC will continue to promote responsible and sustainable *fisheries* activities by cooperating closely with partners in relevant fora and through bilateral agreements.

An integrated *transport* system between the EU and its neighbourhood is vital to further integration. Member States and ENP partners will need to cooperate closely to complete the extension of TEN transport axes<sup>13</sup> to neighbouring countries. Both Mediterranean and TRACECA partner countries are adopting regional action plans to develop sustainable transport systems, the implementation of which would benefit from Member States' contributions. The implementation of the Council's decision to develop a wider Common Aviation Area by 2010 should be accelerated. A comprehensive aviation agreement with Morocco is already operational, while negotiations are underway with Ukraine and due to be launched with Jordan. The Commission is requesting negotiating directives from the Council for further comprehensive aviation agreements with the ENP partner countries.

To successfully integrate ENP partners into the European *Research* Area, more account needs to be taken of partners' research priorities (e.g. health and agriculture, complemented by socio-economic and governance issues) and more efforts need to be made to encourage greater participation in the 7th Framework Programme (FP7). The annual work programmes of FP7 should reflect the importance of the ENP and the use of the ENPI budget line should increase scientific capacity of ENP partners.

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<sup>9</sup> In line with the Commission's Green Paper on Adapting to Climate Change in Europe, COM(2007)354 Final.

<sup>10</sup> In particular, the Joint Implementation and Clean Development Mechanism.

<sup>11</sup> Communication of 11 April 2007, COM(2007)160 final

<sup>12</sup> As per COM(2007)262.

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<sup>13</sup> The Communication, COM(2007)32 final, of 31 January 2007 outlines a comprehensive policy for closer integration of the EU transport system with neighbouring countries.

As regards the *information society*, ENP partner countries would benefit not only from highspeed network interconnections but also from closer cooperation between the regulatory authorities in the ENP area and European regulators in this sector.

*Education and human capital:* The Commission will further strengthen its support for the structural development of higher education systems in the ENP partners through TEMPUS, as well as convergence with the Bologna process and the Lisbon Agenda. A new scholarship scheme for the ENP enables more than a thousand students and university lecturers to come to the EU in 2007/08, and several hundred to go to ENP partner countries. To enhance the knowledge of how the EU operates and to advocate for an impartial, accountable and efficient civil service, the Commission will encourage the selection of trainees from ENP partner countries in its own internal schemes, and will examine the possibility of welcoming seconded officials.

Closer cooperation on *employment and social development* will intensify exchanges on strategies regarding job creation, poverty reduction, social inclusion and protection and equal opportunities, to address common challenges in the context of globalisation and promoting decent work.

The EU and its neighbours are stepping up *health* cooperation. The Commission is including ENP partners in meetings such as the Network of competent authorities on health information and knowledge; the EpiSouth Network for Communicable Diseases Control in Southern Europe and the Mediterranean and the HIV/AIDS Think Tank. The recently adopted EU Health Strategy provides for increasing the EU's voice in global health through strengthened cooperation with strategic partners from third countries including from the neighbourhood. The EC and Member States should join forces to tackle health challenges and threats in the neighbourhood, including by promoting the implementation of international health agreements, in

particular the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control,<sup>14</sup> and the International Health Regulations.<sup>15</sup>

The recently adopted Communication on "An Integrated *Maritime Policy* for the European Union"<sup>16</sup> identifies the ENP as a vehicle for dialogue and cooperation on maritime policy issues and the management of shared seas. The objectives of this policy will be included within the EU's regular policy dialogue with ENP partner countries.

The Commission will further promote exchange of experience and bilateral dialogue on methods of formulation and implementation of *regional policy* including multi-level governance and partnership. It will seek to enhance interaction between national, regional and local authorities.

### **3.5. Participation in Community programmes and agencies**

The opportunity to participate in Community programmes and agencies is an important and attractive feature of the partnership under the strengthened ENP.

In 2007, the Commission began negotiations to establish protocols with Israel, Morocco and Ukraine – the three partner countries that the Presidency's report of June 2007 identified as being the most likely to benefit from these measures. The imminent signature of the Protocol with Israel will enable it to become the first ENP partner country to participate in the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme.

During 2008, the Commission will continue its contacts with ENP partners to identify their interests and capacity to take part in these EC activities.

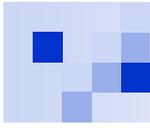
### **3.6. Financial Cooperation**

New financial tools are coming on stream, and cooperation with financial institutions,

<sup>14</sup>WHO,FCTC:[http://www.who.int/tobacco/framework/WHO\\_FCTC\\_english.pdf](http://www.who.int/tobacco/framework/WHO_FCTC_english.pdf)

<sup>15</sup>[http://www.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/WHA58/WH\\_A58\\_3-en.pdf](http://www.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA58/WH_A58_3-en.pdf)

<sup>16</sup>COM(2007)575 final of 10 October 2007 and the Maritime Policy Action Plan SEC(2007)1278



in particular the EIB and EBRD as the EU's privileged partners in the ENP partner countries, other donors and international organisations will be improved. These developments will make it possible for the EU to respond more effectively to ENP partner countries' needs, and to reflect their different relationships with the EU.

An innovation under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument concerns the implementation of cross-border cooperation (CBC) programmes which is getting underway at the end of 2007. The Commission has elaborated the programming framework covering 15 programmes carried on the external border of the EU and adopted specific implementing provisions. Joint task forces bringing together representatives of the Member States, the partner countries and their regions are finalising the programming documents so that implementation of CBC programmes can start at the beginning of 2008. These programmes are jointly managed by local stakeholders and will help to foster genuine ties with the neighbourhood, and to reduce the dividing effects of external borders, leading to increased volumes of economic exchange and avoiding the creation of a development gap between the EU and ENP border regions.

Progress has also been made on the two new facilities introduced by the 2006 Communication:

The new Governance Facility, with an indicative allocation of € 50 million a year for the period 2007-10, provides additional support to partner countries that have made the most progress in implementing the governance priorities agreed in their Action Plans, particularly those related to human rights, democracy and the rule of law. In 2007, the first Governance Facility allocations were made to Morocco and Ukraine. The annual Progress Reports on ENP partner countries will be further refined in 2008 as a basis for an objective assessment of performance of the partner countries, which will increase the transparency of decisions on Governance Facility allocations.

The Neighbourhood Investment Facility (NIF) has been established with the first € 50 million contribution from the Community budget, and will start to support lending to ENP partners in 2008. Overall, the Commission will allocate to the Facility an indicative amount of € 250 million over the next four years and plans to devote a further € 450 million over the period 2011-13 (in total € 700 million over 7 years). Discussions are ongoing with Member States on the establishment of a NIF Trust Fund. Matching the Community contribution with those of Member States would generate a substantial leverage effect. NIF operations, focussing primarily on projects of common interest in the energy, environment and transport sectors, will be fully compatible with a strengthened FEMIP. The Commission will also take steps to allow using the reflows of past FEMIP operations to the benefit of FEMIP, as well as reflows on future operations for the benefit of the NIF and FEMIP respectively.

#### **4. OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

##### **4.1. Roll-over of Action Plans**

The ENP Action Plans for Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Israel will reach the end of their term in early 2008. A roll-over of the current Action Plans for one year, with no change in substance, appears to be the most pragmatic way of continuing work on the Action Plans, pending the outcome of the negotiations of a new agreement with Ukraine, or any possible future arrangements with the Republic of Moldova and Israel. In any event, Action Plans are updated by agreement between the parties when this is required to maintain their operational value.

##### **4.2. Sub-Committee structure**

Since the inception of the ENP, Sub-Committees have become the main institutional venues for conducting policy dialogue with ENP partners. It is therefore essential for the Sub-Committee structure to cover the entire scope of issues addressed by an ENP Action Plan. The Commission intends in particular to encourage partner

countries that have not yet done so to make operational Sub-Committees or other fora where human rights issues can be addressed.

#### 4.3. Involvement of Civil Society

Civil society organisations have a valuable role to play in identifying priorities for action and in promoting and monitoring the implementation of ENP Action Plans. The participation of hundreds of civil society representatives in the ENP Conference was a clear signal of the Commission's intent in this regard. The organisation of a platform for civil society representation on ENP issues would be a welcome development. The Commission will encourage a wide range of stakeholders to engage in monitoring the implementation of the ENP Action Plans, will promote dialogue in the partner countries between governments and local civil society and seek to bring more stakeholders into the reform process.

#### 4.4. Countries without Action Plans

The Commission will continue to work closely with *Algeria* on the implementation of its Association Agreement. While the association agreement with *Syria* has not yet been signed, the Commission is preparing for the future contractual relationship by way of financial cooperation. Exploratory discussions have been initiated on a first framework agreement with *Libya*. Efforts will continue to indicate to *Belarus* what could be on offer to the country under the ENP, were key improvements to be made in the fields of human rights and respect for fundamental freedoms.

### 5. CONCLUSIONS

Sustained effort is required to ensure that the offer made to ENP partner countries comes up to their expectations. This Communication draws attention to some of the main challenges that will need to be addressed by the EU's institutions and governments. In 2008, the Commission, Council, European Parliament and EU Member States must cooperate even more closely to strengthen the ENP. This may sometimes entail difficult decisions, but their costs will be outweighed by the long-term

benefits to EU citizens and neighbours alike. In spring 2008, the Commission will publish its analysis of progress made by ENP partner countries and of where further steps might be taken.

**Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on an Integrated Maritime Policy for the European Union  
[COM (2007) 575 final]  
(Brussels, 10 November 2007)**

#### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The seas are Europe's lifeblood. Europe's maritime spaces and its coasts are central to its wellbeing and prosperity – they are Europe's trade routes, climate regulator, sources of food, energy and resources, and a favoured site for its citizens' residence and recreation.

Our interactions with the sea are more intense, more varied, and create more value for Europe than ever before. Yet the strain is showing. We are at a crossroads in our relationship with the oceans.

On the one hand technology and know-how allow us to extract ever more value from the sea, and more and more people flow to Europe's coasts to benefit from that value. On the other hand, the cumulated effect of all this activity is leading to conflicts of use and to the deterioration of the marine environment that everything else depends on. Europe must respond to this challenge; in a context of rapid globalisation and climate change the urgency is great.

The European Commission has recognised this, and launched a comprehensive consultation and analysis of how Europe relates to the sea<sup>17</sup>. It has triggered a massive

<sup>17</sup> See Report on the Consultation process - COM(2007) 574. See also: Green Paper on *A Future Maritime Policy for the Union: a European Vision of the Oceans and Seas* - COM(2006) 275.

response from stakeholders that reveals clearly the enormous potential of the seas, and the scale of the challenge if we are to realise that potential sustainably. It has also provided a wealth of ideas as to how Europe can rise to meet this challenge.

**Building on this valuable input the Commission proposes an Integrated Maritime Policy for the European Union, based on the clear recognition that all matters relating to Europe's oceans and seas are interlinked, and that sea-related policies must develop in a joined-up way if we are to reap the desired results.**

This integrated, inter-sectoral approach was strongly endorsed by all stakeholders. Applying it will require reinforced cooperation and effective coordination of all sea-related policies at the different decision-making levels.

An Integrated Maritime Policy will enhance Europe's capacity to face the challenges of globalisation and competitiveness, climate change, degradation of the marine environment, maritime safety and security, and energy security and sustainability. It must be based on excellence in marine research, technology and innovation, and will be anchored in the Lisbon agenda for jobs and growth, and the Gothenburg agenda for sustainability.

An EU Integrated Maritime Policy will:

- **Change the way we make policy and take decisions** – at every level compartmentalised policy development and decision-making are no longer adequate. Interactions must be understood and taken into account; common tools developed; synergies identified and exploited; and conflicts avoided or resolved.
- **Develop and deliver a programme of work** – action under the different sectoral policies must develop in a coherent policy framework. The Action Plan accompanying this communication gives a clear idea of the variety and magnitude of

the work ahead. The following projects are of particular importance :

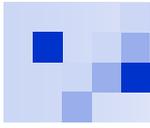
- A European Maritime Transport Space without barriers
- A European Strategy for Marine Research
- National integrated maritime policies to be developed by Member States
- An European network for maritime surveillance
- A Roadmap towards maritime spatial planning by Member States
- A Strategy to mitigate the effects of Climate Change on coastal regions
- Reduction of CO2 emissions and pollution by shipping
- Elimination of pirate fishing and destructive high seas bottom trawling
- An European network of maritime clusters
- A review of EU labour law exemptions for the shipping and fishing sectors

This Communication lays the foundation for the governance framework and cross-sectoral tools necessary for an EU Integrated Maritime Policy and sets out the main actions that the Commission will pursue during the course of this mandate. These actions will be guided by the principles of subsidiarity and competitiveness, the ecosystem approach, and stakeholder participation.

## 2. CONTEXT

Europe has a 70 000 km coastline along two oceans and four seas: the Atlantic and Arctic Oceans, the Baltic, the North Sea, the Mediterranean, and the Black Sea. The EU's maritime regions account for some 40% of its GDP and population.

Europe's well-being is therefore inextricably linked with the sea. Shipbuilding and shipping, ports and fisheries remain key maritime activities, but offshore energy (including oil, gas and renewables), and coastal and maritime tourism also generate massive revenues. Sea-ports and shipping allow Europe to benefit from the rapid growth of international trade and to play a leading role in the global economy, while the exploitation of mineral resources, aquaculture, blue biotech and emerging sub-



sea technologies represent increasingly important business opportunities. Equally significant are the recreational, aesthetic and cultural uses we make of the seas and the ecosystem services they provide.

Ensuring that use of the marine environment is genuinely sustainable is a prerequisite for these industries to be competitive. The growing vulnerability of coastal areas, increasingly crowded coastal waters, the key role of the oceans in the climate system and the continuous deterioration of the marine environment all call for a stronger focus on our oceans and seas.

Ocean sustainability is today widely recognised as a major global challenge, intimately connected with climate change. Increasing competition for marine space and the cumulative impact of human activities on marine ecosystems render the current fragmented decision-making in maritime affairs inadequate, and demand a more collaborative and integrated approach. For too long policies on, for instance, maritime transport, fisheries, energy, surveillance and policing of the seas, tourism, the marine environment, and marine research have developed on separate tracks, at times leading to inefficiencies, incoherencies and conflicts of use.

Based on this recognition, the Commission's vision is for an integrated maritime policy that covers all aspects of our relationship with the oceans and seas. This innovative and holistic approach will provide a coherent policy framework that will allow for the optimal development of all sea-related activities in a sustainable manner.

### **3. A GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK AND TOOLS FOR A MARITIME POLICY**

An Integrated Maritime Policy requires a governance framework that applies the integrated approach at every level, as well as horizontal and cross-cutting policy tools. It will also require a sound financial basis, taking into account the results of preparatory actions.

#### **3.1. Applying the Integrated Approach to Maritime Governance**

The Commission has set up a maritime policy function, with the task of analysing maritime affairs and the policies affecting them, coordinating between sectoral policies, ensuring that interactions between them are taken into account, and piloting the development of crosscutting policy tools. It has also started bringing together EU agencies with maritime-related functions, with a view to ensuring their collective contribution to the development of the maritime policy.

Better regulation principles will guide the Commission policy-making on maritime issues from an early stage: identification of major maritime-related initiatives in the annual planning and programming instruments, consultation of civil society and interested parties, impact assessments and inter-service working groups will help to ensure that the Commission is able to design and deliver genuinely integrated proposals.

Other EU institutions and actors are invited to examine how best to apply the integrated approach to maritime policy affairs in a systematic way. Certain Member States have started developing co-ordination mechanisms in their maritime policy-making. All stakeholders should participate in the governance process and are invited to continue to bring to the Commission's attention any EU legislation that in their view is counterproductive in achieving the aims of an Integrated Maritime Policy.

#### **The Commission will:**

- **invite Member States to draw up national integrated maritime policies, working closely with stakeholders, in particular the coastal regions;**
- **propose in 2008 a set of guidelines for these national integrated maritime policies and report annually on EU and Member States' actions in this regard from 2009;**
- **organise a stakeholder consultation structure, feeding into further development of the maritime policy and allowing exchange of best practices.**

### 3.2. Tools for Integrated policy-making

An integrated governance framework for maritime affairs requires horizontal planning tools that cut across sea-related sectoral policies and support joined up policy making. The following three are of major importance: maritime surveillance which is critical for the safe and secure use of marine space; maritime spatial planning which is a key planning tool for sustainable decision-making; and a comprehensive and accessible source of data and information.

#### 3.2.1. A European network for maritime surveillance

Maritime surveillance is of the highest importance in ensuring the safe use of the sea and in securing Europe's maritime borders. The improvement and optimisation of maritime surveillance activities, and interoperability at the European level, are important for Europe to meet the challenges and threats relating to safety of navigation, marine pollution, law enforcement, and overall security.

Surveillance activities are carried out by Member States but most of the activities and threats that they address are transnational in nature. Within most Member States surveillance activities concerning fisheries, the environment, policing of the seas or immigration fall under the responsibility of several different enforcement agencies operating independently from each other. This often results in sub-optimal use of scarce resources.

The Commission, therefore, advocates the need for a higher degree of coordination on maritime surveillance through deeper cooperation within and among the Member States' coastguards and other appropriate agencies.

The gradual achievement of an integrated network of vessel tracking and e-navigation systems for European coastal waters and the high seas, including satellite monitoring and long range identification and tracking

(LRIT), would also provide an invaluable tool to public agencies.

#### The Commission will:

- **promote improved cooperation between Member States' Coastguards and appropriate agencies;**
- **take steps towards a more interoperable surveillance system to bring together existing monitoring and tracking systems used for maritime safety and security, protection of the marine environment, fisheries control, control of external borders and other law enforcement activities.**

#### 3.2.2. Maritime Spatial Planning and Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)

Existing planning frameworks have a largely terrestrial focus and often do not address how coastal development may affect the sea and vice-versa. We must address the challenges that emerge from the growing competing uses of the sea, ranging from maritime transport, fishing, aquaculture, leisure activities, off-shore energy production and other forms of sea bed exploitation.

Maritime spatial planning is therefore a fundamental tool for the sustainable development of marine areas and coastal regions, and for the restoration of Europe's seas to environmental health.

Following an EU Recommendation<sup>18</sup>, Member States have begun to use ICZM to regulate the spatial deployment of economic activities and to set up spatial planning systems for Europe's coastal waters. Both these instruments contribute to meeting the commitments deriving from the Thematic Strategy for the Protection of the Marine Environment<sup>19</sup> and provide operators with

<sup>18</sup> Recommendation 2002/413/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2002 concerning the implementation of Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Europe.

<sup>19</sup> See Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a Framework for Community Action in the field of Marine

improved predictability for their planning of future investments. A system for exchange of best practice among authorities engaged in maritime spatial planning and ICZM will be set up.

Decision-making competence in this area lies with the Member States. What is needed at European level is a commitment to common principles and guidelines to facilitate the process in a flexible manner and to ensure that regional marine ecosystems that transcend national maritime boundaries are respected.

**The Commission will:**

- **develop a roadmap in 2008 to facilitate the development of maritime spatial planning by Member States.**

### *3.2.3. Data and Information*

Availability and easy access to a wide range of natural and human-activity data on the oceans is the basis for strategic decision-making on maritime policy. Given the vast quantity of data collected and stored all over Europe for a wide variety of purposes, the establishment of an appropriate marine data and information infrastructure is of utmost importance.

This data should be compiled in a comprehensive and compatible system, and made accessible as a tool for better governance, expansion of value-added services and sustainable maritime development. This is a considerable undertaking with many dimensions, and will need to be developed according to a clear and coherent plan over a period of years.

**The Commission will:**

- **take steps in 2008 towards a European Marine Observation and Data Network<sup>20</sup>, and promote the multi-dimensional mapping of Member States' waters, in order to improve access to high quality data.**

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Environmental Policy (Marine Strategy Directive)-COM(2005) 505.

<sup>20</sup> Building *inter alia* on the GMES initiative.

## **4. ACTION AREAS FOR AN EU INTEGRATED MARITIME POLICY**

An EU Integrated Maritime Policy will focus its action primarily in the following five areas:

### **4.1. Maximising the Sustainable Use of the Oceans and Seas**

The first goal of an EU Integrated Maritime Policy is to create optimal conditions for the sustainable use of the oceans and seas, enabling the growth of maritime sectors and coastal regions.

In many Member States, the recent growth of the maritime economy has been higher than that of the overall economy, in particular in regions active in maritime logistics. Container movement has grown considerably since 2000 and is expected to triple by 2020. Regions active in other strong growth markets, such as marine equipment, off-shore wind energy, recreational boating and cruise shipping, will also continue to benefit from this growth. The potential for European industries to develop cutting-edge maritime products that can lead in world markets is also considerable, given Europe's considerable expertise in marine technology.

But much potential remains untapped. An updated strategic vision for the development of competitive, safe and secure shipping, ports and related sectors is essential if we are to achieve sustainable growth of sea-related activities while ensuring that maritime activities develop in a way that does not threaten marine ecosystem health.

*Shipping* is vital for Europe's international and domestic trade and remains the backbone of the maritime cluster. However, this industry will only continue to prosper if the Union keeps working to establish a high level of maritime safety and security, helping to safeguard human lives and the environment while promoting an international level playing field.

Although shipping is a preoccupying source of air pollution and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, it remains considerably more energy efficient

than road transport. For this reason, and because of the need to reduce trucks from Europe's congested roads, an Integrated Maritime Policy strongly favours the promotion of safe and secure shipping. Current EU programmes (TEN-T and MARCO POLO) will continue to support the creation of the Motorways of the Sea/Short Sea Shipping Networks. The future development of TEN should also take full account of the increasing uses of the seas in the energy field.

Nevertheless, shipping remains at a disadvantage compared to other means of transport. Other transport modes benefit from more public investment. Furthermore, a vessel travelling between two EU ports is subject to more complex and time-consuming procedures than a truck would be, because a real internal market for maritime transport in Europe does not yet exist. In order to unlock the full potential of Europe's shipping industry this disadvantage of maritime transport compared with the other modes must be eliminated through the simplification of administrative and customs formalities for intra-EU maritime services.

- **With a view to improving the efficiency of maritime transport in Europe and ensuring its long term competitiveness, the Commission will:**
- **propose a European Maritime Transport Space without barriers;**
- **prepare a comprehensive maritime transport strategy for 2008-2018.**

*European seaports* are another essential link in the logistics chain that the European economy depends on. They are centres of economic activity that play a key role in determining the quality of their surrounding urban and natural environments.

Globalisation means that we are witnessing an unprecedented growth of international trade. Given that 90% of Europe's external trade and close to 40% of its internal trade passes through its ports, it is not difficult to understand the great challenge that Europe's ports face if they are to deal with increasing

demand. Their capacity development must mirror the growth of Europe's domestic and international trade and occur in a way that is compatible with related EU policy objectives, in particular its environmental and competitiveness goals.

**The Commission will:**

- **propose a new ports policy, taking account of the multiple roles of ports and the wider context of European logistics;**
- **make proposals to reduce the levels of air pollution from ships in ports, namely by removing tax disadvantages for shore side electricity;**
- **issue guidelines on the application of the relevant Community environmental legislation to port development.**

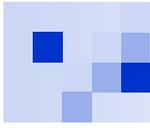
Europe's maritime logistics chain also requires cutting edge *shipbuilding, repair and marine equipment industries* and the European Union will build on successful initiatives<sup>21</sup> to promote the development of these industries and in particular the small and medium companies.

More investment in marine research and technology will be instrumental to pursue economic growth without further aggravating environmental degradation. This investment will also create new opportunities. Environmental-led technologies which allow maritime activities to prosper while preserving the marine environment will keep European business ahead of the curve as global standards rise and new and promising industries develop, such as blue biotech, offshore-renewable energies, underwater technology and equipment and marine aquaculture.

Technology also allows Europe to benefit from the full potential of the sea as a source of oil and gas<sup>22</sup> as well as renewable energies, and as an enabler of energy transportation, diversifying energy transport routes and thus reinforcing security of supply. Europe's

<sup>21</sup> Such as the Waterborne Platform and LeaderShip 2015.

<sup>22</sup> According to OGP 40% of the oil and 60% of the gas currently consumed in Europe are drilled offshore.



energy situation indicates that the scope for synergy between its energy and maritime policies will increase<sup>23</sup>. In this regard, the Commission's Communication of January 2007<sup>24</sup> on an Energy Strategy for Europe acknowledged the need to develop further the use of the oceans and seas to promote EU energy goals.

Business integration and competitiveness in the maritime sector are greatly enhanced by the formation of *multi-sectoral clusters*<sup>25</sup>. These clusters are instrumental to maintain the maritime know-how of Europe and will occupy therefore a central position in the Maritime Policy. Public/private cooperation on centres of maritime excellence also provides a good framework for the interactions between different industries and sectors to be fully understood and planned for.

- **The Commission will encourage the formation of multi-sectoral clusters and regional centres of maritime excellence, and promote a European network of maritime clusters.**

The Commission's aim is also to increase the number and quality of *maritime jobs* for European citizens. The decline in seagoing employment is worrying and needs to be reversed, as seafarers' experience is key also for shore-based jobs.

Improved staffing policies and working conditions (including health and safety), supported by a concerted effort by all maritime stakeholders and an efficient regulatory framework taking into account its global context, are necessary if Europeans are to be attracted to the sector. The Commission fully supports the social dialogue on the integration of the ILO Convention on maritime labour standards into Community

law. The Commission will also promote the design of a system providing Europeans with better and wider career prospects in the maritime cluster. This will include broadening the scope of maritime studies and enhancing the skills and qualifications for the maritime professions.

**The Commission will:**

- **reassess, in close cooperation with social partners, the exclusions affecting maritime sectors in EU labour legislation<sup>26</sup>;**
- **promote a Certificate of Maritime Excellence.**

Despite past efforts, increased economic activity on Europe's coasts and seas has been associated with deterioration of the *quality of the marine environment*. The Commission has already proposed an EU Marine Strategy including a proposed Directive<sup>27</sup> to halt and reverse this trend and to provide a framework for Community action to achieve good environmental status of the marine environment in a context of sustainable development.

The challenge is compounded by the severe impact that climate change is likely to have in coastal regions. Carbon storage under the seabed is an innovative activity which has great potential for mitigating climate change. The EU must remain at the cutting edge of this technology, providing a coherent policy framework to fully realise this potential.

To this end the objectives of EU environmental legislation, in particular the Habitats Directive<sup>28</sup> and the proposed Marine Strategy Directive, must be reached. The Community acquis on maritime safety and prevention of pollution caused by ships is also relevant in this respect. The swift adoption of the proposals contained in the

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<sup>23</sup> See Commission Staff Working Document entitled "Energy policy and maritime policy: ensuring a better fit".

<sup>24</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Council and the European Parliament: an Energy Policy for Europe - COM(2007)1.

<sup>25</sup> See Staff Working Document annexed to this Communication.

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<sup>26</sup> Communication on Reassessing the regulatory social framework for more and better seafaring jobs in the EU - COM(2007)591.

<sup>27</sup> COM(2005)504 and COM(2005)505.

<sup>28</sup> Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.

3rd Maritime Package will make a major contribution to this acquis.

**The Commission will:**

- **launch pilot actions to reduce the impact of and adapt to climate change in coastal zones;**
- **support actively international efforts to diminish air pollution caused by ships and make proposals at European level in the absence of progress in such efforts;**
- **support actively international efforts to diminish greenhouse gas emissions from ships, and, in the absence of progress in such efforts, consider possible options for EU measures in this regard;**
- **taking duly into account the ongoing work at international level, make proposals for dismantling obsolete ships in an efficient, safe and environmentally sustainable manner.**

*Fisheries management* must take more into account the welfare of coastal communities, the marine environment and the interaction of fishing with other activities. The recovery of fish stocks will be energetically pursued, requiring sound scientific information and reinforcement of the shift to multi-annual planning. The Commission will take action to ensure that the Common Fisheries Policy reflects the ecosystem-based approach of the Strategy for the Marine Environment, and will work to eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing in its waters and on the high seas.

Managing fish stocks at Maximum Sustainable Yields will provide a better future for the European fishing community and ensure its contribution to Europe's food security; this should be achieved by 2015 in line with international commitments.

The improvement of on-the-job safety of fishermen must also be addressed in the wider context of maritime working conditions and social policy, and fishermen's experience and knowledge of the sea should be harnessed on behalf of society as a whole. The growth of aquaculture to satisfy increasing global seafood demand should be

achieved within a regulatory framework that encourages entrepreneurship and innovation and ensures compliance with high environmental and public health standards.

**The Commission will:**

- **take firm action towards the elimination of discards<sup>29</sup> and of destructive fishing practices such as high seas bottom trawling in sensitive habitats<sup>30</sup>;**
- **take firm action to eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fisheries<sup>31</sup>;**
- **promote the development of an environmentally safe aquaculture industry in Europe.**

#### **4.2. Building a knowledge and innovation base for the maritime policy**

Marine science, technology and research are crucial for the sustainable development of seabased activities.

By helping us to develop a more sophisticated understanding of the impact of human activities on marine systems, scientific research and technology provide the key to decoupling the development of sea based activities from environmental degradation.

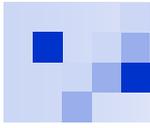
Strengthening the interdisciplinary approach to marine science can help us better understand the interactions between maritime activities, and will therefore be an indispensable component of an integrated maritime policy. It is also crucial if we are to predict and mitigate as far as possible the effects of climate change.

Marine and maritime research is expensive: inefficiencies cannot be afforded. For the best use to be made of Europe's resources a clear strategy needs to be drawn up that will link political and research priorities, address cross-sectoral challenges, maximise synergies

<sup>29</sup> Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: A policy to reduce unwanted by-catches and eliminate discards in European fisheries - COM(2007)136.

<sup>30</sup> Communication and proposal for Regulation due 17 October.

<sup>31</sup> Communication and proposal for Regulation due 17 October.



between Member State and Community efforts, avoid duplication and improve dialogue between interested actors. Europe also needs to explore how research can better contribute to innovation and how to transform more efficiently knowledge and skills into industrial products and services.

The development of the Marine Observation and Data Network<sup>32</sup> will be an important tool for this strategy.

**The Commission will:**

- **present a comprehensive European Strategy for Marine and Maritime Research in 2008;**
- **launch joint cross-cutting calls under the 7th Research Framework Programme to promote an integrated approach and improve understanding of maritime affairs;**
- **support research to predict, mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change on maritime activities, the marine environment, coastal zones and islands;**
- **support the creation of a European marine science partnership for a concerted dialogue between the scientific community, the industry and policy makers.**

#### **4.3. Delivering the Highest Quality of Life in Coastal Regions**

Population growth in *coastal regions and islands* has been double the EU average over the last decade. Coastal communities are also the destination of the majority of tourists in Europe, making the need to reconcile economic development, environmental sustainability and quality of life particularly acute in these regions.

Regional authorities and coastal communities have an important role to play in the regulation of coastal and maritime activities. The Committee of the Regions, coastal regions and their networks are thus key partners in the development of an EU Integrated Maritime Policy.

Due to their ports and their maritime industries, these regions have strategic importance for Europe as a whole. They produce important services to the hinterland and act as a base for the policing of sea borders and coastal waters. The resulting demands on infrastructure are considerable and need to be taken into account in the allocation of Community resources. Coastal regions are also particularly affected by climate change, and risk management may have dramatic impact on their budgets and economies.

The sea is determinant for coastal and maritime tourism, which has been a major catalyst for economic development in coastal areas of Europe. The Commission will work more actively with stakeholders in developing a sustainable tourism policy that takes coastal and maritime tourism into account.

Sources of funding are available, but stakeholders feel that they have insufficient access to information. The Commission will work to optimise support for maritime projects in coastal regions and islands, under the range of Community financing instruments available.

The need for improved socioeconomic data on the maritime sectors and coastal regions is also clear as difficulties in obtaining this information are limiting the ability of regional stakeholders to develop rational, long-term plans and investments.

Interregional collaboration is also essential to the development of Europe's coastal regions, taking into account their diversity and specificities. The Commission accordingly, will make full use of the Territorial Cooperation Programme to support inter-regional maritime development.

*Outermost regions* and islands suffer from considerable economic disadvantages but have a high potential in maritime activities and marine research. Their large maritime areas provide ecosystem services of considerable interest to the Union. The

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<sup>32</sup> See Section 3.2.3.

Commission will promote, within the framework of the recent Communication on the EU's Outermost Regions, both the development of their maritime potential and their cooperation with regional neighbours.

**The Commission will:**

- **promote, within the forthcoming tourism initiative,, coastal and maritime tourism;**
- **prepare a data-base on Community funding available for maritime projects and coastal regions, and will develop by 2009 a database on socioeconomic data for maritime sectors and coastal regions;**
- **propose a Community Disaster Prevention Strategy highlighting the risks to which coastal regions are exposed;**
- **promote the development of the maritime potential of Outermost regions and islands.**

#### **4.4. Promoting Europe's Leadership in International Maritime Affairs**

The EU will work towards more efficient international governance of maritime affairs and effective enforcement of international maritime law, urging Member states to ratify the relevant instruments. It will promote coordination of European interests in key international fora.

Access to international markets for Europe's maritime industries and services, sustainable scientific and commercial exploitation of the deep seas, protection of global marine biodiversity, improvement of maritime safety and security, working conditions, reduced ship pollution and the fight against illegal activities in international waters will be the external priorities for the Union's Integrated Maritime Policy.

Attention will also be given to the geopolitical implications of climate change. In this context, the Commission will present in 2008 a report on strategic issues relating to the Arctic Ocean.

Maritime affairs will be a regular topic in discussions with the EU's partners that have already taken steps towards an integrated maritime approach, such as Australia,

Canada, Japan, Norway and the US, as well as with other partners such as Brazil, China, India and Russia.

The EU will also develop shared responsibility over the seas it shares with its closest neighbours. In particular, it will make proposals for increased co-operation in managing the Mediterranean and the Black Seas. It will promote cooperation on maritime affairs under the Northern Dimension of its external relations' policy and will bring maritime affairs into the EU's agenda of cooperation with developing states, including small island developing states. In this context it will support maritime policy and law of the sea capacity building in developing countries.

The Commission will propose an Implementing Agreement of UNCLOS<sup>33</sup> on marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction and work towards successful conclusion of international negotiations on Marine Protected Areas on the high seas.

**The Commission will:**

- **promote cooperation under the Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policies, and the Northern Dimension to cover maritime policy issues and management of shared seas;**
- **propose a strategy for the external projection of the Union's Maritime Policy through a structured dialogue with major partners.**

#### **4.5. Raising the Visibility of Maritime Europe**

Stakeholders have clearly expressed the view that the process of developing an EU Maritime Policy has been useful in raising public awareness of the value of the maritime economy and heritage, and is creating a sense of common purpose and identity between stakeholders.

An Integrated Maritime Policy should seek to raise the visibility of Maritime Europe,

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<sup>33</sup> United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

and improve the image of maritime activities and the seafaring professions.

It should also promote Europe's maritime heritage, supporting maritime communities, including port-cities and traditional fisheries communities, their artefacts and traditional skills, and promoting links between them that enhance their knowledge and visibility.

**The Commission will:**

- **launch a European Atlas of the Seas as an educational tool and as a means of highlighting our common maritime heritage;**
- **propose the celebration of an annual European Maritime Day as from 2008, raising the visibility of maritime affairs and promoting links between maritime heritage organisations, museums and aquaria.**

## 5. CONCLUSION

The European Council of June 2007 has welcomed the wide debate that has taken place in Europe on the future Maritime Policy. Heads of State and Governments invited the Commission to come forward with a European Action Plan to be presented in October. Taking into account the principle of subsidiarity, this Action Plan aims at exploring the full potential of sea-based economic activity in an environmentally sustainable manner.

Through this Communication and the attached Action Plan the Commission responds to this request by the European Council, taking account of the opinions expressed by the other European Institutions, Member States' governments, Parliaments and a large number of stakeholders<sup>34</sup>.

The Commission invites the European Council, the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament, as well the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, national and regional authorities and other stakeholders to

respond proactively to this policy.

**Statement of the Ministers Responsible  
for Science and Technology of the BSEC  
Member States  
(Istanbul, 31 October 2007)**

We, the Ministers responsible for Science and Technology of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) Member States met in Istanbul on 31 October 2007 in accordance with the provisions of the Athens' Declaration (28 September 2005) to review the progress in the implementation of the *BSEC Action Plan on Cooperation in Science and Technology* adopted in Athens on 28 September 2005 and approved by the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Chisinau on 28 October 2005;

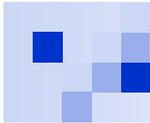
*Recognising* the significance of the BSEC *Action Plan* and of the *Athens Declaration* as key policy documents for the enhancement of the competitive performance of every BSEC Member State and of the Organization as a whole in the fields of scientific research and technological development, since they provide the guidelines and clearly define the priorities that need to be addressed for improved regional cooperation;

*Guided by* BSEC 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Summit Declaration, which called upon the Member States to deepen cooperation in Science and Technology as one of the priority areas of common interest;

*Taking account of* the increasing dynamic of the Scientific and Technological activity in BSEC highlighted by the *Mid-term Report* on the implementation of the BSEC Action Plan as prepared by the International Centre for Black Sea Studies on the basis of the contributions from the BSEC Member States;

*Reiterating* our commitment to the targets set in the BSEC *Economic Agenda for the Future* for sustainable and equitable development among the BSEC Member States, and having in mind the Millennium

<sup>34</sup> See for details Conclusions from the Consultation on a European Maritime Policy - COM(2007)574, 10.10.2007.



Development Goals as well as specific agreements and programmes in the field of science and technology developed under the aegis of the EU, UN and OSCE;

*Acknowledging* the recently published communication by the European Commission on a *Black Sea Synergy – A new regional cooperation initiative* [COM(2007) 160 final] where Science and Technology is identified as a key area for enhancing cooperation between the BSEC and the EU;

*Reemphasising* the ever increasing potential that the national authorities and research communities of the BSEC Member States are called upon to turn to good account for the further advancement of science and technology in our region;

*Bearing in mind* the resolutions of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States (Moscow, 1 November 2006; Belgrade, 19 April 2007) concerning the monitoring of the implementation of policy documents agreed upon at Ministerial level; state the following:

*We approve* the *Mid-term Report* on the implementation of the BSEC Action Plan;

*We reconfirm* the importance of the Athens Declaration and of the objectives and content of the BSEC Action Plan on Cooperation in Science and Technology;

*We pledge* all best efforts towards the enhancement of the regional dimension of the cooperation among the BSEC Member States in the agreed areas of action and specific activities, i.e.:

- human resources;
- capacity building;
- research infrastructure;
- innovation, and
- priority domains for research.

*We welcome and support* the efforts of the Council of Presidents of National Academies of Sciences of the BSEC Member States (CoPNAS) to enhance its role and the contribution of the National Academies to

the development of Science and Technology cooperation within the BSEC framework; in the same spirit, we welcome and encourage the activity of the Black Sea Universities Network (BSUN).

*We recognize* the importance and benefits that may arise for the scientific communities of our countries from a closer cooperation and participation in the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7) of the European Community. In this context, we encourage the participation of our countries in policy dialogue activities aiming at an increasing participation of our research communities in FP7 and improving interregional research cooperation. We support initiatives such as the project *S&T International Cooperation Network for Eastern European and Central Asian Countries* (IncoNet EECA) submitted by the ICBSS and accepted by the European Commission and the ERA-NET proposal under preparation *Networking on Science and Technology in the Black Sea region*.

*We agree* to convene a meeting of the Ministers responsible for Science and Technology of the BSEC Member States at the end of the four years duration of the BSEC Action Plan, in order to assess its impact, reassess the state of affairs and chart the way forward;

*We commend* the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology, the Country-Coordinator, the BSEC PERMIS and the ICBSS for their efficient work and dedication towards the implementation of the priorities set out in the BSEC Action Plan;

*We express* our appreciation and gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Turkey, and in particular the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Scientific and Technological Research Council (TUBITAK), for the successful organisation of this meeting and for their warm hospitality in Istanbul.

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**20<sup>th</sup> EU-Russia Summit  
Press Release  
(Mafra, 26 October 2007)**

The twentieth EU-Russia Summit took place today in Mafra. It was a friendly and open meeting during which the leaders welcomed the ongoing work on the practical implementation of the Road Maps for the Four Common Spaces and discussed future perspectives for our relations.

Notwithstanding all the progress achieved in EU-Russia relations in the last ten years (the current Partnership and Cooperation Agreement has been in force since 1997) it is clear for both Parties that further deepening of our strategic partnership would be mutually beneficial.

The EU noted that this was the first Summit taking place after agreement on the Reform Treaty was reached in the Intergovernmental Conference that recently took place in Lisbon.

In the Common Economic Space, the EU and Russia noted the wide range of areas where progress has been made and the areas where greater efforts are needed. In particular, they stressed the importance of the investment dialogue and of the energy early warning mechanism for strengthening mutual cooperation and increasing understanding between both Parties.

The EU encouraged Russia to undertake the necessary steps to solve the remaining obstacles to WTO accession.

The EU stressed the importance of climate change and the need to give continuity to cooperation in this area.

In the Common Space of Freedom, Security and Justice, the leaders welcomed the entry into force of the visa facilitation and readmission agreements and underlined the importance of their full implementation. In this regard, they also welcomed the recent start of the visa dialogue. The Permanent

Partnership Council on Justice and Home Affairs, in November, will be an occasion for further discussion of the issues covered by this Common Space.

The EU also noted the results of the sixth round of EU-Russia Human Rights consultations, held in Brussels on 3 October, and looked forward to further regular rounds of consultations in the future.

In the Common Space on External Security, the leaders stressed the cooperation in the common neighbourhood. They reiterated the importance both the EU and the Russian Federation attach to effective multilateralism.

The leaders took note of progress in the Common Space on Research, Education and Culture, and welcomed in particular the holding of the first Permanent Partnership Council on Culture on the eve the Summit.

They also discussed a wide range of international issues of strategic importance: the situation in Burma, Kosovo, Iran, Afghanistan and the Middle East Peace Process.

The leaders witnessed the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the European Monitoring Centre of Drugs and Drugs Addiction and Russia as well as the signing of an Agreement on Trade in certain Steel Products.

The leaders noted the outcome of the Industrialists' Round Table held on the eve of the summit.

**Ankara Declaration of the Ministers of  
Foreign Affairs of the Member States of  
the Organization of the Black Sea  
Economic Cooperation  
(Ankara, 25 October 2007)**

We, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) – the Republic of Albania, the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Bulgaria, Georgia, the Hellenic Republic, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Serbia, the Republic of Turkey and Ukraine – met in Ankara, on 25 October 2007, at the conclusion of the Turkish Chairmanship-in-Office of the BSEC.

**Taking guidance** from the political assessments and executive dispositions of the Declaration adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the BSEC Member States on the occasion of the BSEC Fifteenth Anniversary Summit held in Istanbul, on 25 June 2007,

**Being fully aware** of the increased responsibility incumbent upon the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs for implementing the policy guidelines set at the highest political level and developing new initiatives aimed at enhancing the effective performance of the Organization of the BSEC in accordance with its Charter and other basic documents,

We:

1. **Renew** our commitment to undertake further steps toward consolidating the BSEC's character as a project-based, result-oriented organization and, to that end, to implement the agreed measures and projects and initiate new ones with a view to strengthening the operational capacity of all BSEC institutions in a continuing reform process.

2. **Instruct** the Committee of Senior Officials, with the assistance of the Country Coordinators of the Working Groups, the

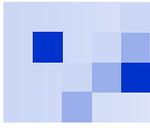
BSEC Related Bodies and BSEC PERMIS, to explore areas where it is desirable and realistic to develop new legally binding instruments for multilateral cooperation in a regional format, especially in the areas of cooperation of particular prominence – namely, energy, trade and transport – which were addressed in the Declaration of the BSEC Fifteenth Anniversary Summit, and to present concrete proposals for consideration and decision at the next Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

3. **Commend** the intensified cooperation among the BSEC Member States, which made it possible, during the Turkish Chairmanship-in-Office from 1 May 2007 to 31 October 2007, through effective interaction with the BSEC PERMIS, to hold the Fifteenth Anniversary Summit of the BSEC and other important events.

4. **Appreciate** the significance of the Meetings of the Ministers of the BSEC Member States in charge of Culture, Transport, Science and Technology, as well as of the Meeting of the Undersecretaries of the Ministers of Education during the Turkish Chairmanship-in-Office, and note with satisfaction that the deliberations and results of such meetings, including the agreed Action Plans, have become more practical, with clear responsibilities and deadlines for execution and follow-up action.

5. **Note** the need to identify and eliminate trade barriers and business/investment disincentives, which are obstacles to creating a more favourable business environment in the BSEC region, inter alia through their activities in the framework of other international organizations and at the bilateral level.

6. **Request** the Committee of Senior Officials, with the assistance of the Country Coordinator of the Working Group on Trade and Economic Development, keeping in mind the rules and practices of the WTO, to explore possibilities for feasible and practical approach to further facilitate trade, eventually through concluding legal



instruments that would lead to the gradual harmonization of trade legislation and customs procedures in the BSEC Region.

**7. *Stress*** the significance of developing inter-modal transport systems in the BSEC Region and beyond, which will provide a solid foundation for the Member States to compete in the global economy through effective, reliable and efficient transport solutions.

**8. *Highlight*** the importance of developing stronger maritime transport links among the ports of the BSEC Region, with a view to contributing to the development of transport infrastructure and to creating favorable conditions for the business cooperation. In this regard, we call on the States Signatories of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Development of the Motorways of the Sea in the BSEC Region to speed up the relevant internal procedures necessary for its entering into force and implementation.

**9.** Moreover, we ***call*** on the States Signatories of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Coordinated Development of the Black Sea Ring Highway to speed up the relevant internal procedures necessary for its entering into force and implementation. At the same time, we welcome the work being done so far by the relevant experts for the implementation of the said Memorandum of Understanding, thus contributing to the achievement of the BSEC goals.

**10. *Ask*** the Committee of Senior Officials to further discuss and short list, with the assistance of the Working Group on Energy and the relevant Country Coordinator, specific areas where cooperation in the area of energy can be deepened.

**11. *Call upon*** the Committee of Senior Officials to discuss and consider the preparation of a paper on the possible means of strengthening the cooperation with international organizations dealing with

issues on the protection and rehabilitation of the Black Sea marine environment, including those on preventing and reducing the pollution of the rivers flowing into the sea and the hydrographical basins of the rivers flowing into the sea.

**12.** Recognizing the challenges posed by global warming and taking into account the concerted efforts of the international community to combat climate change, including under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process, ***request*** the competent BSEC bodies to address the issue at the regional level, and to this end, consider appropriate steps and develop cooperation with relevant international organizations.

**13. *Highlight*** the relevance of the UN Millennium Development Goals for the BSEC Member States and request the Committee of Senior Officials in cooperation with the UNDP, with the assistance of the BSEC PERMIS, to assess the progress made by the BSEC Member States to implement these internationally agreed goals, together with recommendations for specific actions at the regional level, for submission to the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

**14. *Reaffirm*** that the existing protracted conflicts in the region impede cooperation and emphasize the need for their earliest peaceful settlement on the basis of the norms and principles of international law.

**15. *Welcome*** the positive developments in the relations between the BSEC and the European Union following the BSEC official document titled “*BSEC-EU Interaction: The BSEC Approach*” of January 2007, the European Commission Communication titled “*Black Sea Synergy – A New Regional Cooperation Initiative*” of April 2007 and the acquisition by the Commission of the European Communities of Observer Status in BSEC at the BSEC Fifteenth Anniversary Summit in Istanbul, in June 2007, and to that effect decide to:

- (a) Call on the Republic of Bulgaria, the Hellenic Republic and Romania, as EU Member States to follow up the issue together in a concerted manner with the EU institutions, so as to achieve the objectives of BSEC-EU interaction; in this process, the continued efforts of the Republic of Turkey as a negotiating Country will be highly appreciated;
- (b) Charge the BSEC Ad Hoc Group of Experts on BSEC-EU Interaction, coordinated by the ICBSS, to draft an outline of future steps (strategy paper) and working documents after the envisaged high-level BSEC-EU event for the launching of the synergy process.

16. **Welcome** the intention of Ukraine to host the aforementioned high-level event in early 2008 during its BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office.

We, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States, express our gratitude to the Government, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the people of the Republic of Turkey for the warm hospitality extended to the participants and the excellent organization of the BSEC Council Meeting in Ankara.

**EU-Azerbaijan Cooperation council  
8<sup>th</sup> meeting  
(Luxembourg, 16 October 2007)**

The Cooperation Council between the European Union (EU) and the Republic of Azerbaijan held its eighth meeting on Tuesday 16 October 2007. The meeting was chaired by Mr Makhmud Mammad-Quliyev, Deputy Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan. The EU delegation was led by Mr Manuel Lobo Antunes, Secretary of State for European Affairs of Portugal. Mr Gunnar Wiegand, acting Director for Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus and the Central Asian Republics, represented the Commission. The EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus,

Ambassador Peter Semneby also took part in the meeting.

The Cooperation Council was the first meeting at this level between the EU and Azerbaijan since the EU-Azerbaijan European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan was adopted on 14 November 2006.

During the meeting, the parties discussed a wide range of issues. One of the main topics was the European Neighbourhood Policy, particularly the implementation of the ENP Action Plan. The Cooperation Council also provided a timely opportunity to take stock of developments in the South Caucasus, as well as political and economic reforms in Azerbaijan. The Cooperation Council also discussed energy and transport issues.

The EU underlined the importance of the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as further steps to strengthen democracy and media freedom in the country as essential elements in the bilateral dialogue. The EU stressed that it is very important that the next Presidential elections in Azerbaijan in the Autumn 2008 are held in full compliance with the commitments taken by the country with the EU, OSCE/ODIHR and Council of Europe and should correspond to international standards for democratic elections.

On the occasion of the Cooperation Council, the two Parties also signed the "Protocol to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Azerbaijan, of the other part, extending the provisions of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement to bilateral trade in textiles, taking account of the expiry of the bilateral textiles agreement".

The plenary meeting of the Cooperation Council was preceded by a joint ministerial working breakfast between the EU and Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia to discuss matters of common interest, such as conflicts and regional cooperation in the South Caucasus. Mr Manuel Lobo Antunes,

Secretary of State for European Affairs of Portugal represented the EU Presidency. He was accompanied by Ms Helga Schmid, Director of Policy Unit, and Ms Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy.

**EU-Armenia Cooperation council  
8<sup>th</sup> meeting  
(Luxembourg, 16 October 2007)**

The Cooperation Council between the European Union (EU) and the Republic of Armenia held its eighth meeting on Tuesday 16 October 2007. The meeting was chaired by Mr Vartan Oskanian, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia. The EU delegation was led by Mr Manuel Lobo Antunes, Secretary of State for European Affairs of Portugal. Mr. Gunnar Wiegand, Acting Director for Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus and the Central Asian Republics represented the Commission. The EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus, Ambassador Peter Semneby also took part in the meeting.

President Kocharian's recent visit to Brussels (9-11 October 2007) marked the continuing good political dialogue between the EU and Armenia.

The Cooperation Council was the first meeting at this level between the EU and Armenia since the EU-Armenia Action Plan was endorsed by the last EU-Armenia Cooperation Council on 14 November 2006.

During the meeting, the parties discussed a wide range of issues. One of the main topics was the European Neighbourhood Policy, particularly the implementation of the ENP Action Plan. The Cooperation Council also provided a timely opportunity to take stock of developments in the South Caucasus, as well as of political and economic reforms in Armenia and progress made so far with efforts towards decommissioning the Medzamor Nuclear Power Plant. The EU side noted substantial progress achieved in a number of areas and encouraged Armenia to

continue its efforts aimed at reaching common European values and principles on which ENP is built.

The EU underlined the importance of the respect of the rule of law, democratic principles, protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms as essential elements in the bilateral dialogue. The EU stressed that in this respect it is very important that the next Presidential elections in Armenia in spring 2008 are held in full compliance with OSCE/ODIHR and Council of Europe commitments and should correspond to international standards for democratic elections.

The plenary meeting of the Cooperation Council was preceded by a joint ministerial working breakfast between the EU and Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia to discuss matters of regional interest, as well as conflicts in the Southern Caucasus. Mr Manuel Lobo Antunes, Secretary of State for European Affairs of Portugal represented the EU Presidency. He was accompanied by Ms Helga Schmid, Director of Policy Unit, and Ms Ferrero Waldner, Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy.

**EU-Georgia Cooperation council  
8<sup>th</sup> meeting  
(Luxembourg, 16 October 2007)**

The Cooperation Council between the European Union (EU) and the Georgia held its eighth meeting on Tuesday 16 October 2007. The meeting was chaired by Mr Gela Bezhuashvili, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia. The EU delegation was led by Mr Manuel Lobo Antunes, Secretary of State for European Affairs of Portugal, and Mr Gunnar Wiegand, Acting Director for Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus and the Central Asian Republics, represented the Commission. The EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus, Ambassador Peter Semneby also took part in the meeting. Mr Giorgi Baramidze, State Minister of Georgia on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration

Issues and Vice Prime Minister of Georgia, also participated in the meeting.

The Cooperation Council was the first meeting at this level between the EU and Georgia since the EU-Georgia Action Plan was endorsed by the EU-Georgia Cooperation Council on 14 November 2006.

During the meeting, the parties discussed a wide range of issues. One of the main topics was the European Neighbourhood Policy, particularly the implementation of the ENP Action Plan. The Cooperation Council also provided a timely opportunity to take stock of political developments as well as economic reforms in Georgia. The EU side noted substantial progress achieved in a number of areas and encouraged Georgia to continue its efforts aimed at a strengthened economic integration with the EU.

The EU underlined the importance of respect of the rule of law, democratic principles, protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms as essential elements in the EU-Georgia bilateral dialogue. The EU stressed that in this respect the next legislative and Presidential elections planned to take place in the Autumn 2008 are expected to be held in full compliance with Georgia's OSCE/ODIHR and Council of Europe commitments.

The EU stressed its expectation that Georgia's judiciary system and democratic institutions need to function according to the rule of law and to their respective institutional competences. The Cooperation Council also discussed the bilateral cooperation in the field of Justice, Freedom and Security.

The plenary meeting of the Cooperation Council was preceded by a joint ministerial working breakfast between the EU and Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia to discuss matters of regional interest, as well as conflicts in the South Caucasus. Mr Manuel Lobo Antunes, Secretary of State for European Affairs of Portugal represented the EU Presidency. He was accompanied by Ms Helga Schmid, Director of Policy Unit, and

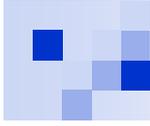
Ms Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy.

**EU-Ukraine Summit  
Joint Statement  
(Kyiv, 14 September 2007)**

The leaders of the European Union and Ukraine have met in Kiev today, at the annual EU-Ukraine Summit. The Summit was hosted by Mr Viktor Yushchenko, President of Ukraine, accompanied by Mr Arseniy Yatsenyuk, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.

The EU was represented by Mr José Socrates, Prime Minister of Portugal, in his capacity as the President of the European Council, assisted by Secretary-General/High Representative Javier Solana, and by President of the European Commission Jose Manuel Durão Barroso. The President of the European Council was accompanied by Foreign Minister Luis Amado. The President of the Commission was accompanied by Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy Benita Ferrero-Waldner.

The leaders of the EU and Ukraine reaffirmed strong and sustained ties between the Parties. Further movement of Ukraine towards consolidation of democracy, strengthening of the rule of law and respect for human rights will reinforce these ties and will contribute to a new, advanced level of relations with the EU, based upon principles of close and privileged political links, and deeper economic integration. The EU leaders emphasised that the holding of free and fair early parliamentary elections in Ukraine in September and the formation of an effective and stable Government would be the best evidence of the country's ability to accomplish this goal. The Ukrainian side reaffirmed its resolve to ensure the democratic character of the election process and abide by its results.



The Parties welcomed the important progress achieved in the implementation of the EU-Ukraine Action Plan. They noted the launch of negotiations on a new enhanced agreement, the finalisation and signature of agreements on visa facilitation and readmission and positive co-operation with the EU Border Assistance Mission at the Ukrainian-Moldovan border (EUBAM). The EU leaders emphasised that Ukraine's success in stabilising her political system would be a major factor determining her capacity to move forward with political and economic reforms.

The leaders welcomed the progress report on the negotiations on the new enhanced agreement. They reiterated their vision of the agreement as an innovative and ambitious document which goes beyond the established framework of co-operation and opens a new stage in EU-Ukraine relations. They reaffirmed their intention to launch negotiations on a deep and comprehensive Free Trade Area as a core element of the agreement following finalisation of Ukraine's accession to the WTO. In this context, the EU leaders confirmed their full support for Ukraine's progress towards WTO membership and underlined the importance of solving outstanding issues as a matter of priority.

The Summit welcomed continued close co-operation in the area of foreign and security policy, in particular on regional stability and crisis management. It noted the increasing convergence of the Parties' positions on regional and international issues through mechanisms of regular policy consultations, alignment of Ukraine with EU foreign policy positions and participation of Ukraine in EU crisis management efforts. EU leaders expressed their high appreciation of Ukraine's role in EU-led crisis management operations.

The leaders of the EU and Ukraine confirmed their intentions for further development of co-operation on the settlement of regional conflicts, non-proliferation of WMD, namely in the

framework of the G8 Initiative on Global Partnership against proliferation of materials and weapons of mass destruction, fight against terrorism, prevention of emergency situations, and destruction of outdated and excessive SALW and ammunition.

The leaders of Ukraine and the EU reaffirmed their commitment to constructive cooperation to achieve a sustainable, comprehensive and just settlement to the Transnistrian conflict. Both sides emphasised the importance of the existing customs regime at the Transnistrian segment of the Ukrainian-Moldovan state border according to the Joint Statement of 30 December 2005. The Parties noted the effective work of the EUBAM as an example of mutually beneficial and successful EU-Ukraine co-operation and welcomed its prolongation for another two year period. The EU leaders encouraged Ukraine to ensure proper implementation of the Protocols of 21 November 2006 on exchange of customs and border information between Ukraine and Moldova.

The leaders also discussed the situation in Belarus and relations with Russia.

The Parties expressed satisfaction with the deepening of co-operation in the trade and economic sphere. This includes the conclusion of agreements on trade in steel products and textiles, enhanced co-operation regarding trade defence instruments and a new regular dialogue in the area of agriculture and rural development. They referred to the need for further improving the business and investment climate in Ukraine, specifically through progress on the rule of law, the reform of the judiciary and the fight against corruption. The Parties welcomed the substantial increase of trade between the EU and Ukraine in 2006. At the same time, they agreed that trade trends which include a growing trade deficit on the Ukrainian side would be subject to further discussions at expert level. They confirmed the intention to continue working closely together on the resolution of outstanding bilateral issues.

The leaders of Ukraine and the EU reaffirmed their joint strategic interest in energy cooperation.

They welcomed the significant progress achieved in implementing the priorities of the EU-Ukraine Memorandum of Understanding on co-operation in the field of energy of 1 December 2005, as reflected in the progress report presented to the Summit. They agreed to continue co-operation with the aim of advancing Ukrainian energy sector reform and of ensuring safe, reliable and transparent energy transit through Ukraine. The EU leaders commended Ukraine on obtaining observer status in the Treaty on the Energy Community and pledged EU support for her efforts to acquire membership. The Parties noted the good progress in bilateral co-operation on climate change and stressed the need to launch negotiations on a global and comprehensive post-2012 agreement at the United Nations climate change conference in December this year and to complete them by 2009.

The leaders welcomed the concrete steps taken to improve nuclear safety in Ukraine, such as the successful completion of the stabilisation measures of the existing Chernobyl shelter, and the agreement reached by Ukraine, the European Commission and the IAEA on the Terms of Reference for the joint evaluation of safety of the Ukrainian nuclear power plants.

The Parties stressed the importance of the implementation of the revised Action Plan on Justice, Freedom and Security, endorsed by the EU-Ukraine Co-operation Council on 18 June 2007, and the accompanying Scoreboard. The Parties looked forward to the swift finalisation of negotiations on the Ukraine-Europol Strategic Agreement. The Parties welcomed the signing of the Working Arrangements on the establishment of operational co-operation between the Ukrainian Border Guard Service and FRONTEX and the contacts initiated between relevant Ukrainian authorities and the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction.

The Summit welcomed the signature of the agreements on visa facilitation and readmission and agreed to take all necessary measures for their quick ratification and full implementation. Pending this, Ukraine requested EU Member States to further improve the processing of visa applications of Ukrainian citizens. The Parties recalled the joint declaration on technical and financial assistance in the framework of the readmission agreement. The Parties pledged to further develop their co-operation on JFS issues in the context of the future new enhanced agreement. EU leaders welcomed Ukraine's European choice and emphasised that further internal reforms and introduction of European standards would bring Ukraine closer to the EU.

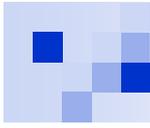
**Statement of the Participants of the Meeting of the Undersecretaries and the Heads of Delegation of the Ministries of Education of the BSEC Member States (Istanbul, 27-28 August 2007)**

We, the Undersecretaries and the Heads of Delegations of the Ministries of Education of the Republic of Armenia, Republic of Azerbaijan, Republic of Bulgaria, Georgia, Hellenic Republic, Romania, Russian Federation and Republic of Turkey gathered in Istanbul, Turkey on 27-28 August 2007 within the framework of BSEC,

Having regard to:

- Joint Baku Declaration of the BSEC Ministers of Education on 16 April 2004;
- Joint Athens Declaration of the Ministers Responsible for Education of the BSEC Member States on Cooperation in Higher Education and University Research on 29 September 2005

**Reassure** the utmost importance of cooperation in the field of education towards achieving the strategic goals laid down in the BSEC documents, specifically the BSEC Economic Agenda,



**Stimulate** lifelong learning from early childhood to adulthood through reviewing existing systems in BSEC Member States, exchanging training programs elaborated by the Boards of Education and also experiences and expertise in the field of education. Thus, linkages between learning, training and labor market in order to update every individual's knowledge and skills can be strengthened,

**Consider** the necessity of constant modernizing of technical and vocational education and training to keep up with the rapid changes brought about by globalization and technology and strengthen the cooperation in this field among BSEC Member States,

**Agree** that, together with Higher Education and University Research, another important BSEC area for cooperation in the field of education should be "Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in Education" to create and ensure wider equitable access to quality education at all levels in the Black Sea Region. In this regard the Participants recommend to the Working Group on Education to explore ways and means to further expand the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in our Educational Systems,

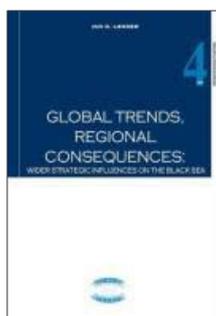
**Emphasize** the necessity of cooperation with the relevant international organizations in the field of education,

**Forward** this Statement to the respective BSEC Organs,

**Express** our gratitude to the Republic of Turkey, the BSEC Chairman-in-Office, along with BSEC PERMIS, for the warm hospitality.

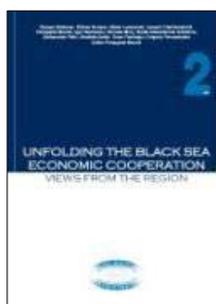
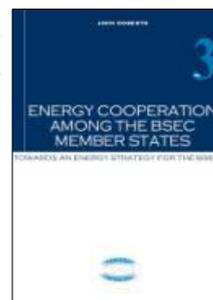
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## Recent Publications by the ICBSS



Lesser, Ian. "Global Trends, Regional Consequences: Wider Strategic Influences on the Black Sea". *Xenophon Paper* no. 4. Athens: ICBSS, November 2007.

Roberts, John. "Energy Cooperation among the BSEC Member States. Towards an Energy Strategy for the BSEC". *Xenophon Paper* no. 3. Athens: ICBSS, October 2007.



Manoli, Panagiota ed. "Unfolding the Black Sea Economic Cooperation: Views from the Region". *Xenophon Paper* no. 2, Athens: ICBSS, July 2007.

Includes articles by:

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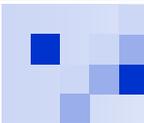
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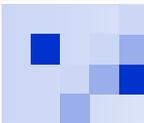
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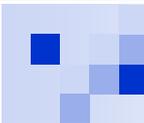
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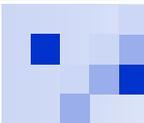


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  41. Starr, Frederick S. ed. *The New Silk Roads: Transport and Trade in Greater Central Asia*. Washington: Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program, June 2007.

## NEWS and EVENTS



F.l.t.r: F. Garces de los Fayos,  
P. Mantzouranis, E. Angelakas,  
M. Ungureanu, W. Schultheiss,  
C. Tsardanidis.  
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▪The [Second ICBSS Annual Conference](#) took place on Friday, 9 November 2007 in Athens. This year's event entitled **"The European Union and the Wider Black Sea Area"** focused on the ever more important relations between the two regions, their institutions and cooperation mechanisms, bringing together experts from both geographic areas and beyond.

▪The [Second ICBSS Annual Lecture](#) on **"The New Black Sea Area-New European Perusal of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation"** was included in the conference and was imparted by Dr. Zhelyu Zhelev, President of The Balkan Political Club and Former President of Bulgaria. Both events were open to the general public.



Dr. Zhelyu Zhelev  
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▪A [Closed Seminar](#) on **"The Role of Parliaments in Shaping New Relations between the EU and the Black Sea Region"** was organised by the ICBSS with the support of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC) in Athens, 8 November 2007.

▪The **Second ICBSS Task Force Meeting for a Joint Black Sea Strategy** took place in Athens, 26-27 October 2007.

▪ The ICBSS co-organised with CoPNAS the **Meeting of the Council of Presidents of the National Academies of Sciences of the BSEC Member States (CoPNAS)** in Ankara, 5 October 2007.

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