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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 an 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.

- DECLARATION BY THE PRESIDENCY ON BEHALF OF THE EU ON RUSSIAN PLANS TO BUILD UP ITS MILITARY PRESENCE IN ABKHAZIA AND SOUTH OSSETIA (PRAGUE, 5 FEBRUARY 2009), P. 42
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The European Union and its Eastern Neighbourhood: Challenges and Prospects

In a recent European Commission Communication on the Implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) in 2008, it is stated that the ENP is “a growing partnership based on mutual interdependence.” This is evermore necessary since 2008 was a year of crises that led to gridlock both in the South and the East. The August 2008 war between Russia and Georgia, the Israeli intervention in Gaza in December 2008-January 2009 and the Russia – Ukraine gas crisis of January 2009 coupled with the growing negative impact on growth, trade, and investment of the global financial and economic crisis are all indicative of the frailty of the EU’s neighbourhoods.

On 7 May 2009, the Prague Eastern Partnership Summit took place amidst great expectations from its promoters in an effort to further solidify/strengthen the bonds between the European Union (EU) and its member states and their Eastern European Partners (hereinafter ENP East partners – Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus). Though the Eastern Partnership (EaP) was conceived to bring the ENP East countries that so desire closer to the EU, to date it has fallen short of expectations because states like Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova have been hit by domestic dissent, spats with their neighbours and stalled modernisation processes. The fact that EU member states like Poland and the Czech Republic have so warmly sponsored the initiative may suggest ulterior motives in their approach toward their Eastern neighbourhood.

The Russian factor is one that will not go away anytime soon as the parameters and content of future EU – Russia relations are currently being deliberated since June 2008 in the form of a new EU – Russia agreement replacing the Partnership and Co-operation Agreement concluded in 1994 and into force since 1 December 1997. At that time Russia was weaker and less self-confident than it is today. Albeit the Russian Federation’s adventurism in Georgia in August 2008 and its systematic attempts to prevent the further trespass of the EU (and NATO) on its neighbourhood or near abroad, Russia’s economic ties with the EU and its role in energy security cannot be discounted.

When the European Neighbourhood Policy was first promoted in 2003, it attempted to address a number of emerging concerns for the EU. The first had to do with the limits of enlargement given that the big bang enlargement was about to become a reality in 2004. As such the ENP was conceived as a policy aimed at curbing further membership – an ‘anything but membership’ policy where it made sense to group southern and eastern neighbour states together. Bilateral action plans were promoted allowing southern and eastern partners to enhance their relations with the EU at their own pace. The second concern stemmed from the repercussions of the post-Cold War world with the emergence of new forms of global terrorism and ethno-nationalist secessionist movements becoming the fad in the wider post-Communist space (former Yugoslavia and former Soviet Union) with ‘McMafia type’ transnational crime, weak state institutions and rule of law in abundance.

The European Security Strategy of December 2003 very much reflected these concerns. It stated explicitly that the EU has the strategic objective to “make a particular contribution to stability and good governance in our immediate neighbourhood [and] to promote a ring of well governed countries to the East of the European Union and on the borders of the Mediterranean with whom we can enjoy close and cooperative relations.” Furthermore, the European Union has acknowledged the shared common neighbourhood with Russia as a space where the “EU and Russia need to work together, as neighbours, on common concerns.”

The last point being that the non-polarising concept of a common neighbourhood where it is both in the interest of Russia and the EU to assure the neighbourhood’s stability, security and prosperity lest it became even more infested with the diseases the post-Cold War Pandora’s box had unleashed. In other words, the EU as a postmodern soft power entity saw itself as promoting a concept which was non-threatening to its eastern neighbours.

For Russia, though, the notion of neighbourhood (its ‘CIS space’) has been based on preserving its ‘historical and spiritual heritage’ which was encroached upon by the West in the early 1990s, when, as the key successor state of the Soviet Union, it went through dire political and economic upheaval. According to Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov:

Not only Russia has privileged interests, first and foremost, in relations with our closest neighbors; they also have the same privileged interests in Russia. Failing to understand it and trying to destroy what rests on our combined objective history and on the interdependence and intertwining of our economies, infrastructures, cultures and humanitarian spheres of life means to go against history.

As a consequence, for Russia, the EU’s neighbourhood policy and the Eastern

Partnership among others are revisionist policies which strive to remove from Russian influence the post-Soviet space thereby the ‘voluntary or involuntary aim of such method is to preserve the dividing line in Europe and move it ever closer to the Russian border.’

The Black Sea region is a telling example of the challenges in EU-Russian relations since all ENP East partners except Belarus are considered by the EU to be part of it. For Russia, the wider Black Sea area is an important element of its foreign policy given that it constitutes part of Russia’s ‘near abroad’ and its relevance as an energy transit region. More specifically, Russia seeks to remain one of the main stakeholders in the region “given the emergence of new strong regional (Turkey) and external actors (the US/NATO)”; it wants to counter and curb extremism, separatism and terrorism in the region; it wants to secure continuous energy, trade, civil and military communications “within and throughout the Black Sea and the [Bosporus] Straits”; and it seeks to prevent new dividing lines in the region including “the expansion of military coalitions which exclude Russia as a full member.”

At the same time, Russia is not convinced that the EU’s European Neighbourhood Policy could successfully contribute to making the shared neighbourhood more stable (an objective shared by Russia) as it does not effectively bar the road to further future EU enlargement. The analysis by Arkady Moshes is indicative:

Brussels cannot ignore a consolidated push of EU new member states to be more active on the eastern periphery. As long as it denies membership perspective for its neighbours, the policy of Wider Europe that it pursues, (however palliative it may look) nevertheless stimulates their search for alternatives to staying within the same geopolitical and geo-economic space as Russia. Moscow, in this situation, starts viewing the EU not so much as a partner, but rather as

a systematic rival to its foreign policy goals in the Western NIS and the Caucasus; a revisionist power; and is instinctively inclined to get involved in a 'zero-sum game' type of relationship with the EU.

Thus the notion of neighbourhood and how it is perceived by key stakeholders is a major conundrum. Does it enhance further cooperation or further division/competition? As the limits of the ENP became evident over time and the EU began to uncouple its neighbourhood policy with the evolution of the Union for the Mediterranean in the South and the Black Sea Synergy (BSS) policy in the East in 2007/2008, further dividing lines emerged. The BSS epitomises the concept of regional cooperation. It put the Black Sea region on the radar screen of the EU as a single distinct policy area (the accession of Bulgaria and Romania, both Black Sea states, on 1 January 2007 effectively contributed to this process). The BSS promoted the concept of regional cooperation between the EU and the region as well as between the states of the region. It also sought to work with regional institutions such as the BSEC (Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation) which had been in place since 1992 without EU direct involvement but with the participation of all regional stakeholders (including Russia and Turkey) thereby promoting a sense of regional and local ownership (something ENP South partners and Western Balkan states have strived for as well) of the process. Through its emphasis on sectoral cooperation (such as transport, environment, energy, trade inter alia), it also promoted the need for solid institutions, good governance principles, rule of law and accountability – in other words, it allowed for, in a non threatening manner, the introduction of the concepts of Europeanisation to the region.

Yet with hardly a year having past before the BSS was introduced to the world, the EU launched the Eastern Partnership (EaP), which paradoxically the EU-27 have committed to just as much as they did for the BSS and which seeks ever closer relations with the ENP East

partners testing the limits of Russian discomfort and EU unity, while duplicating many of the priorities of the BSS.

As such today, the EU beset by its own institutional inabilities to move beyond the restrictions of the Nice Treaty, awaiting (some would say praying for) the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty and its implementation, amidst a full-blown global financial crisis (which can only imply a hardening of mental and economic borders) finds itself sending contradictory signals to its ENP East partners and its strategic political and economic partner Russia because its member states have found it convenient to exploit the lack of leadership and direction by transforming their national prerogatives and priorities into European ones (much of the same it could be argued is in evidence in the Mediterranean). In fact, the new EU member states have increasingly divergent perspectives regarding further enlargement to the East.

Nevertheless, the reality that the EU has to have some sort of neighbourhood policy (however many adaptations it undergoes) and the symbiotic/interdependent nature of the relationship between Russia and the Union, at least in the economic front coupled with the devastating impact that the global financial crisis is having on both neighbours, implies that over the mid- to long-term there is much more that unites rather than divides the two sides. It is worth keeping in mind that the Union is Russia's main trading partner accounting for over 52% of Russia's main trade turnover and the main investor in Russia while 50% of Russian oil exports and 63% of its natural gas exports go to the EU. The challenge is to convert or at least spill over the economic interdependency into the political realm.

In order to advance though, the need for relevance and less policy confusion, more flexibility and pragmatism coupled with policy harmonisation, the avoidance of policy duplication and greater co-ownership is paramount. Otherwise, the strain on human and financial resources and objectives will only lead to greater policy disarray within the EU as

well as provide account for incentives and tools to effectively assure that the notion of a common neighbourhood is effectively promoted.

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**Declaration of the Prague Summit
Southern Corridor
(Prague, 8 May 2009)**

We, the Participants of the Southern Corridor Summit held in Prague on the 8th of May 2009; express our political support to the realization of the Southern Corridor as an important and mutually beneficial initiative, which will lead to the promotion of common prosperity, stability and security of all countries involved;

understand the Southern Corridor as an area of mutual interest providing opportunities for cooperation of the various entities in our public and private sectors. The trigger but not the sole focus of this process of strengthening relations among the Southern Corridor countries will be enhancing our mutually beneficial energy cooperation, which has the potential to serve as a cornerstone for the overall cooperation among countries involved;

acknowledge that infrastructure projects which interconnect the countries along the Southern Corridor will act as a catalyst for further co-operation in other areas. The successful cooperation in the field of energy will encourage investments also in transport area. The development of transport infrastructure, including for energy, will lead to an intensification of people-to-people contact, which is the fundamental prerequisite to further social, economic and political cooperation in the whole region;

intend to overcome the main remaining commercial and non-commercial obstacles by coordinating on common progressive strategy, individual commitments of the countries concerned, namely energy producer, transit and consumer countries, and clear scheduling for the completion and functioning of concrete energy and transport projects to be realized and operated within the Southern Corridor, including the Trans-Caspian energy transportation projects;

consider the Southern Corridor concept as a modern Silk Road interconnecting countries and people from different regions and establishing the adequate framework,

necessary for encouraging trade, multidirectional exchange of knowhow, technologies and experience.

We consider

The Southern Corridor concept as a synergy of the following documents:

- the Partnership and Co-operation Agreements between the EU and Azerbaijan, the EU and Georgia, the EU and Kazakhstan, and the EU and Uzbekistan;
- the Association Agreement between the EU and Turkey and the EU and Egypt;
- the European Neighbourhood Policy, including the Action Plans, the Eastern Partnership, EU-Central Asia Strategy and the Black Sea Synergy;
- the Memoranda of Understanding on strategic energy partnership between the EU and Egypt, EU and Kazakhstan, EU and Turkmenistan and EU and Azerbaijan;
- the Declaration of the Budapest Nabucco Summit of 27 January 2009;
- the Declaration of the Sofia Energy Summit of 24-25th April 2009;
- The Baku Initiative and the Energy Road Map endorsed on the occasion of the Astana Ministerial Conference of 30 November 2006;
- The Baku Energy Summit Declaration of 14th November 2008;
- The Ministerial Statement on the Nabucco gas pipeline project of 26th June 2006;
- Agreements on transportation of oil and gas through the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum oil and gas pipelines of 1999 and 2001 respectively;
- Agreement among the Republic of Turkey, the Hellenic Republic and Italian Republic concerning the development of the Turkey, Greece, Italy Transportation Corridor of 26 July 2007 in Rome;
- the European Council Conclusions of 8-9 March 2007, 16 October 2008 and 20th March 2009;

- the European Commission's Second Strategic Energy Review of 13 November 2008;
- Decision No 1364/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning trans-European energy networks (TEN-E);
- Commission Decision granting financial aid for an action of 2.12.2008 in the field of the trans-European energy networks (TEN-E);
- the EU-financed INOGATE technical feasibility studies on the Trans-Caspian-Black Sea Gas Corridor as well as the feasibility study on the Caspian Development Corporation (CDC);
- the European Commission's Communication on the extension of the major trans-European transport axes to the neighbouring countries, of 31 January 2007;
- the transport cooperation and initiatives involving the EU and the countries of the Southern Corridor;
- And bearing in mind international treaties and obligations, including those arising from the Energy Charter Treaty, the Energy Community Treaty as well as the existing bilateral and multilateral agreements fostering the development of projects of the Southern Corridor;

We declare

That the concept for the Southern Corridor is complementary to other existing energy and transport partnerships and projects of the EU and is open for the participation and contribution of third countries on a case-by-case basis in concrete projects, upon agreement of all the Parties to this declaration directly involved.

That one of the basic prerequisites for developing the Southern Corridor is cooperation to establish interconnections starting with direct energy and transport links among the countries concerned as appropriate. We therefore agree to promote a common initiative to develop the conditions necessary for more effective transportation networks, including of energy resources, goods and people as well as an improved exchange of know-how and technologies

within the Corridor with the participation of all the interested countries, international political conditions permitting. This should make the maximum use of the existing regional initiatives on energy and transport.

On the basis of declared principles

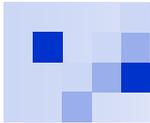
In the field of energy we,

agree to give necessary political support and, where possible, technical and financial assistance to the construction of the Southern Corridor, including the Trans-Caspian energy transportation projects, in order to support the diversification of energy sources, markets and transport routes, which will not only enhance the energy security of the participating countries, but also will simultaneously constitute fair and profitable opportunities for energy producers, consumers and transit countries, while recognizing the need for this to be feasible, economically competitive, technically and environmentally sustainable and timely.

welcome transparency, competitiveness, long term predictability and stable regulatory conditions to underpin the realization of concrete infrastructure projects in the framework of the Southern Corridor. This should include

- firstly, the means to provide producers with reliable commitments of the consumers on their aggregate demand and the identification of non-committed natural gas and oil volumes by producer countries that can be dedicated specifically to the EU as well as the Corridor countries markets with a precise timetable for their availability on the basis of their commercial profitability;
- secondly, the establishment of necessary and appropriate transit and environmental arrangements in line with the Parties' international commitments;
- thirdly, the need for companies to ensure direct, industry-standard commercial agreements between producers and consumers.

envisage a mechanism for aggregating sufficient volumes to be transported through the Southern Corridor, and, take note of the feasibility study on the Caspian Development



Corporation initiative that should lead to concrete proposals in this respect. In this context, eventually consider devoting, as appropriate, public and private financial resources necessary for the realization of the Southern Corridor, including encouraging the market-based participation of public and private companies.

attain the energy security of all parties including consumer and transit states, such as Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan, on the basis of commercial agreements that are in line with the Parties' international commitments.

welcome that the countries concerned will endeavor to:

- **implement** a clear, transparent, cost-based, stable and non-discriminatory transportation regime for natural gas or oil across the territories of the Corridor countries to end consumer markets, in line with the Parties' international commitments.

- **establish** direct connections between both sides of the Caspian Sea as one of the main important elements of the effective energy cooperation and favour the interconnection of the Southern Corridor with the EU through strategic infrastructure projects necessary for carrying natural gas by pipelines or ships. In the gas sector, interconnection will be established among others through the Nabucco project and the ITGI project both of which are financially supported in the EU Recovery Plan endorsed by the European Council of March 2009 as well as other projects within the Corridor. In the oil sector, an extension of the already operating transportation system between Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan could be developed in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea regions, taking into account the constraints of the Turkish straits.

-**promote** the activities of public and private companies that are involved or willing to participate in the realization of the Trans-Caspian energy link.

- **achieve** maximum energy efficiency and use of renewable energies as an important element for successful cooperation in the field of energy. Therefore, we express our

readiness to share technologies, knowledge and know-how in order to reach efficient fuel use and further development of alternative energy sources to allow long-term and sustainable growth for all Corridor countries;

- **share** technologies, knowledge and know-how for the development of energy resources, their transportation and technical upgrading within the Corridor.

In the field of transport we endeavour,

To support the promotion of regional and cooperative approaches to transport challenges in the Southern Corridor, which includes appropriate projects in the Mashreq, in particular Egypt and Iraq.

To intensify cooperation in view of promoting the implementation of relevant infrastructure projects and of policy measures to facilitate exchanges, to support efforts to make transport projects within the Southern Corridor an effective and responsive instrument of cooperation and enhancing public-private partnerships and other ways of attracting investments.

To implement the extension of transport trans European Networks to Turkey and South Caucasus and beyond to Central Asia along the Southern corridor, including connections to the Middle East.

To encourage, with respect to high importance of railway transport in economies of Corridor countries, all parties involved to further develop the strategic railway networks and their interoperability. In this regard we support the railway and maritime corridor connecting the Caspian Sea Region with the EU, as well as a roll-on roll-off ferry connections between the EU and the relevant countries of the Southern Corridor, including Georgia.

To share technologies, knowledge and know-how for technical upgrading of transport facilities within the Corridor in order to increase the transport efficiency.

To harmonize technical norms and standards, ensure transparent and competitive tariffs, and to simplify custom procedures and border crossing in order to

ensure fluent movement of all kinds of goods as a basic condition for deepening of trade among the involved countries.

In the field of overall cooperation we agree,

That strengthening of mutual relations must go hand in hand with following principles: transparency, non-discrimination, market economy and commercial profitability.

To favour stable regulatory framework ensuring clear and predictable investment environment, which contributes to mutual trust necessary for successful realization of all strategic projects within the Southern Corridor.

With respect to implementation and follow-up, we agree to strongly support the following steps:

On energy:

- The European Commission, together with the Council of the EU and the signatory partner countries, will monitor the implementation of this declaration and, in particular, work on developing an Action Plan seeking the implementation of the necessary conditions and the appropriate supporting measures for the Southern Corridor.

- For the EU Member States concerned and Turkey to finish the negotiations of the intergovernmental agreement on Nabucco as quickly as possible, to sign it by the end of June 2009 in Turkey, and to continue to support the necessary steps for its implementation inter alia by identifying gas volumes available for marketing in the EU and Turkey.

- For the EU Member States concerned and the relevant countries to progress further on the timely realisation of the ITGI project.

- For the EU and the concerned countries to conclude the feasibility study on the Caspian Development Corporation initiative by the end of 2009 in view of the possible identification of relevant actions for the implementation.

- For the EU and Iraq to sign an MoU on Energy as soon as possible, and for the EU and Egypt to cooperate and agree on specific

projects in developing Egypt's gas reserves and export potential for the EU, including via the Southern Corridor and encouraging energy investment, transfer of know-how for this purpose.

On transport

- To cooperate on the objective of promoting the extension of the trans-European transport networks to the countries of the Southern Corridor;

- To work on developing an action plan on possible additional appropriate measures, including safety and security, to facilitate transport and transit flows along the Southern Corridor;

- To work on a list of priority projects and policy measures for the development of the Southern corridor, and attract funds to implement them.

**European Parliament Resolution of
7 May 2009 on the Situation in the
Republic of Moldova
(Brussels, 7 May 2009)**

The European Parliament,

– having regard to its previous resolutions on the Republic of Moldova, in particular that of 24 February 2005 on the parliamentary elections in Moldova, as well as those on the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and Black Sea Regional Cooperation,

– having regard to the Final Statement and Recommendations of the EU-Republic of Moldova Parliamentary Cooperation Committee meeting of 22-23 October 2008,

– having regard to the Commission Strategy Paper of 2004, including the Republic of Moldova country report,

– having regard to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement signed on 28 November 1994 between the Republic of Moldova and the EU, which entered into force on 1 July 1998,

– having regard to the Commission Communication of 3 December 2008 on the Eastern Partnership (COM(2008)0823),

- having regard to the aid provided by the European Union to the Republic of Moldova in the framework of the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), including for the project entitled "Electoral Support to the Republic of Moldova", which provided financial assistance in support of free and fair elections in the Republic of Moldova,
- having regard to the EU-Republic of Moldova ENP Action Plan adopted at the seventh EU-Moldova Cooperation Council meeting on 22 February 2005, as well as to the annual progress reports on the Republic of Moldova,
- having regard to the EU-Republic of Moldova Visa Facilitation Agreement signed in 2007,
- having regard to the statement of preliminary findings and conclusions of the International Election Observation Mission (IEOM) to the Republic of Moldova for the parliamentary elections of 5 April 2009 and to the post-election report drawn up by the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) for the period from 6 to 17 April 2009,
- having regard to the joint statement of 9 April 2009 by the French, Czech and Swedish Ministers of Foreign Affairs on the situation in the Republic of Moldova,
- having regard to the EU Presidency statements of 7 and 8 April 2009 on the situation in the Republic of Moldova,
- having regard to the Conclusions of the General Affairs and External Relations Council of 27-28 April 2009, as well as to the exchange of views on this issue with the EU Presidency which took place at the meeting of Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs held on 28 April 2009,
- having regard to the statements issued on 7 and 11 April 2009 by Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the CFSP, on the situation in the Republic of Moldova,
- having regard to the statements issued on 6, 7 and 11 April 2009 by Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Commissioner for External

Relations, on the situation in the Republic of Moldova,

- having regard to the statement issued on 12 April 2009 by the UN Country Team in the Republic of Moldova,
- having regard to Resolution No 1280 of the Council of Europe of 24 April 2002,
- having regard to Amnesty International's Moldova Memorandum of 17 April 2009 on the situation in the Republic of Moldova during and after the events of 7 April 2009,
- having regard to the report of Parliament's ad hoc delegation to the Republic of Moldova, which visited the country from 26 to 29 April 2009,
- having regard to Rule 103(4) of its Rules of Procedure,

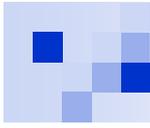
A. whereas the ENP and the Eastern Partnership due to be launched shortly recognise the Republic of Moldova's European aspirations and the importance of Moldova as a country with deep historical, cultural and economic links with the Member States of the European Union,

B. whereas the EU-Republic of Moldova Action Plan aims at encouraging political and institutional reforms in the Republic of Moldova, including in the fields of democracy and human rights, the rule of law, independence of the judiciary and freedom of the media, as well as good-neighbourly relations,

C. whereas a goal set for June 2009 is to launch the negotiations on the new Agreement between the Republic of Moldova and the EU at the EU-Moldova Cooperation Council,

D. whereas the Republic of Moldova is a member of the Council of Europe and of the OSCE and has thus committed itself to genuine promotion of democracy and respect for human rights, including in the field of preventing and fighting torture, ill-treatment and other inhumane and degrading treatment,

E. whereas parliamentary elections took place in the Republic of Moldova on 5 April 2009, and whereas they were monitored by



an IEOM composed of representatives from the OSCE/ODIHR and from the European Parliament, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe,

F. whereas serious concern was expressed during the pre-electoral period about government control of the public media, intimidation and harassment of opposition leaders and the private media and misuse of administrative resources for the benefit of the government party,

G. whereas between 500 000 and 1 million Moldovans live abroad, and whereas several appeals signed by a large number of NGOs and associations of the Moldovan diaspora, including one addressed in February 2009 to the President of the Republic of Moldova, the President of Parliament and the Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova concerning measures depriving Moldovans living abroad of the right to vote, were sent to the Moldovan authorities prior to the elections of 5 April 2009 and were ignored; whereas the number of Moldovan voters living outside the Republic of Moldova is very limited (22 000),

H. whereas the de facto authorities of the breakaway region of Transnistria prevented a large number of Moldovan citizens from participating in the elections,

I. whereas the IEOM concluded in its preliminary findings that the elections met many international standards and commitments, but that further improvements were required in order to ensure an electoral process free from undue administrative interference and to increase public confidence,

J. whereas the opposition parties and the group known as Coalition 2009 complained about massive irregularities during the election of 5 April 2009 in the preparation of lists of voters and supplementary lists and in counting and tabulation,

K. whereas, after a recount, the final results of the elections were published by the Central Election Commission on 21 April 2009 and validated by the Constitutional Court on 22 April 2009,

L. whereas the events that followed the elections were characterised by violence and the Moldovan Government's massive campaign of intimidation and violence, thus casting doubt on the commitment of the Moldovan authorities to democratic values and human rights and on the existence of public confidence in those authorities,

M. whereas peaceful protests were fuelled by doubts regarding the fairness of the elections and distrust of public institutions, including those that administered the electoral process, and whereas regrettable acts of violence and vandalism were exploited by the authorities to intimidate civil society by responding in a violent and disproportionate manner and to further restrict the already fragile fundamental rights and freedoms of Moldovan citizens,

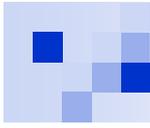
N. whereas it is accepted that at least 310 people were arrested and detained, whereas a number of those arrested are still being held in prison, and whereas, when arrested, detainees suffered systematic ill-treatment at police stations to an extent that might be regarded as torture,

O. whereas beatings and unwarranted arrests of civilians by unidentified police units seemed not to be directed towards pacifying the situation, but rather to lead to deliberate acts of repression,

P. whereas serious human rights abuses committed by the Moldovan authorities, unjustified harassment of representatives of civil society and protesters and instances of disregard for the rule of law and relevant European conventions to which the Republic of Moldova is a signatory are still continuing in that country,

Q. whereas the Moldovan Government accused Romania of involvement in the post-electoral demonstrations and expelled the Romanian ambassador; whereas the Moldovan Government also restored the visa obligation for citizens of that EU Member State,

R. whereas it must be stressed that no serious indications or evidence have come to light on the basis of which any EU Member State



could be accused of being responsible for the violent events of recent weeks,

S. whereas a genuine and balanced partnership can only be developed on the basis of common values with regard, in particular, to democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and civil liberties,

T. whereas the European Union is seeking to establish, through its programme for an Eastern Partnership, greater stability, better governance and economic development in the Republic of Moldova and in the other countries at its eastern borders,

1. Underlines the importance of a closer relationship between the EU and the Republic of Moldova and confirms the need to work together to contribute to increased stability, security and prosperity on the European continent and to prevent the emergence of new dividing lines;

2. Reaffirms its commitment to continuing a meaningful and goal-oriented dialogue with the Republic of Moldova, but attaches great importance to the introduction of strong provisions regarding the rule of law and respect for human rights, while stressing that further consolidation of relations, including through the conclusion of a new, enhanced agreement, should be made contingent on a real and manifest commitment on the part of the Moldovan authorities to democracy and human rights;

3. Stresses that full compliance with international democratic standards before, during and after the electoral process is of the greatest importance for the further development of relations between the Republic of Moldova and the European Union;

4. Strongly condemns the massive campaign of harassment, grave violations of human rights and all other illegal actions carried out by the Moldovan Government in the aftermath of the parliamentary elections;

5. Urges the Moldovan authorities to immediately cease all illegal arrests and to conduct government action in accordance with the country's international commitments and obligations with regard to

democracy, the rule of law and human rights;

6. Is particularly concerned about the illegal and arbitrary arrests and the widespread violations of the human rights of arrested persons, in particular the right to life, the right not to be subjected to physical abuse, torture or inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment, the right to freedom and safety, the right to a fair trial and the right to freedom of assembly, association and expression, and about the fact that these abuses are still continuing;

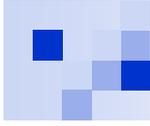
7. Stresses that a national dialogue must be established, with the participation of the government and the opposition parties, in a serious effort to fundamentally improve democratic procedures and the functioning of democratic institutions in the Republic of Moldova, and that it must immediately address the deficiencies noted in the findings of the IEOM;

8. Underlines, however, that internal tensions in the Republic of Moldova are very high and therefore firmly believes that there is an urgent need to set up an independent investigatory committee, involving the EU, the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture and independent experts, aimed at ensuring an impartial and transparent process of investigation;

9. Insists that all those found responsible for the brutal violence perpetrated against detainees be brought to justice; insists, further, that the findings of the investigatory committee should also lead to a genuine reform of the legal system and the police forces in the Republic of Moldova;

10. Calls for a special investigation to be conducted into the cases of those who died during the events following the elections as well as into all allegations of rape and ill-treatment during detention and politically-motivated arrests, such as those of Anatol Mătășaru and Gabriel Stati;

11. Condemns the campaign of harassment launched by the Moldovan authorities against journalists, civil society representatives and opposition parties, involving in particular arrests and expulsions



of journalists, interruption of access to websites and TV stations, broadcasting of propaganda on public channels and denial to opposition representatives of access to the public media; considers that these actions are intended to isolate the Republic of Moldova from domestic and international media and public scrutiny; deplores and condemns the continuation of this censorship through the letters sent by the Minister of Internal Affairs and the Minister of Justice to NGOs, political parties and the mass media;

12. Strongly deplores the decision by the Moldovan authorities to expel the Romanian Ambassador and to introduce a visa obligation for citizens of that European Union Member State; insists that discrimination against EU citizens on the basis of their national origin is not acceptable and calls on the Moldovan authorities to restore the visa-free regime for Romanian citizens;

13. Urges the Council and the Commission, at the same time, to undertake a review of the EU's visa system for the Republic of Moldova in order to relax the conditions for granting visas to Moldovan citizens, especially the financial conditions, and to make better regulated travel arrangements possible; hopes, however, that Moldovan citizens will not take advantage of a better visa and travel system to start a mass exodus from their country, but will be encouraged to make an active contribution to the further development of their home country;

14. Notes that claims that an EU country was involved in the events seem unfounded and were not discussed or repeated during the meetings held by the ad hoc delegation in the Republic of Moldova;

15. Requests immediate and substantial proof in support of any allegation by the Moldovan Government concerning the supposedly criminal actions of the protesters and the involvement of foreign governments;

16. Takes note of the statements by the Moldovan authorities with regard to the opening of a criminal file on the "attempted usurpation of state power on 7 April 2009" and calls for the investigation to be

conducted in a transparent manner and to clarify all the allegations made by the Moldovan authorities with regard to the possible involvement of one or more third countries in these events;

17. Considers it unacceptable, while condemning all acts of violence and vandalism, to present all protests as criminal acts and an alleged 'anti-constitutional plot'; believes that peaceful protests were considerably fuelled by doubts regarding the fairness of the elections, distrust of public institutions and dissatisfaction with the social and economic situation in the Republic of Moldova;

18. Believes that constructive dialogue with the opposition parties, civil society and representatives of international organisations is the only way out of the current situation in the Republic of Moldova;

19. Emphasises that any new election will require a consensus between the opposition and government on concrete improvements to the electoral process;

20. Reiterates the importance of the independence of the judiciary, and calls for further steps to ensure the editorial independence of all media, including Radio Television Moldova, and the cessation of any intimidation against the ProTV Channel and of any threats relating to the extension of its licence, and for considerable improvements in the Moldovan electoral law as crucial elements of any future electoral process and democratic consolidation in the Republic of Moldova;

21. Deplores the fact that the Moldovan Government made no efforts to facilitate voting by Moldovan citizens living abroad, in line with the suggestions of the Council of Europe's Venice Commission; calls on the Moldovan authorities to adopt in due course the necessary measures enabling this to take place;

22. Stresses the considerable discrepancies between the OSCE/ODIHR preliminary report on the conduct of the elections and the claims of widespread irregularities by a considerable number of Moldovan NGOs; points out that such discrepancies must be

taken into account in any future review of OSCE/ODIHR election monitoring activities and EU contributions to IEOMs;

23. Believes that, in order to preserve its credibility for the people of the Republic of Moldova, the EU should become involved in the management of the current situation in a proactive, profound and comprehensive way; urges the Council to consider the possibility of sending a Rule of Law Mission to the Republic of Moldova, in order to assist the law enforcement authorities in their reform process, especially in the police and justice areas;

24. Stresses that the Council, the Commission and the Member States must make full use of the ENP and, in particular, of the new programme for the Eastern Partnership in order to establish greater stability, better governance and balanced economic development in the Republic of Moldova and in the other countries at the Union's eastern borders;

25. Calls on the Commission to ensure that EU funding available to the Republic of Moldova in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms has greater outreach, in particular by making full use of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights and the provisions of the ENPI; calls on the Commission to submit to it a detailed report on the use of all EU funds in the Republic of Moldova, with special focus on those allocated to good governance and democratic development;

26. Calls on the Council and the Commission to strengthen the mission of the EU Special Representative in the Republic of Moldova, in terms of both its scope and its means;

27. Reiterates its support for the territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova and points out that a more robust EU role in finding a solution to the Transnistrian question is needed;

28. Stresses once again that the European Union must do everything in its power to offer the people of the Republic of Moldova a truly European future; urges all political forces in the Republic of Moldova and Moldova's partners not to take advantage of

the current situation of instability to divert Moldova from its European course;

29. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Parliamentary Assemblies of the Council of Europe and the OSCE and the Government and Parliament of the Republic of Moldova.

Joint Declaration of the Prague Eastern Partnership Summit (Prague, 7 May 2009)

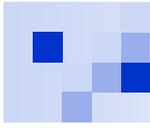
The Heads of State or Government and representatives of the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, the representatives of the European Union and the Heads of State or Government and representatives of its Member States have met in Prague to bring their relationship to a new level by establishing the Eastern Partnership and have adopted the following Joint Declaration:

A more ambitious partnership between the European Union and the partner countries

1. The Eastern Partnership is launched as a common endeavour of the Member States of the European Union and their Eastern European Partners (hereinafter the partner countries), founded on mutual interests and commitments as well as on shared ownership and responsibility. It will be developed jointly, in a fully transparent manner.

The participants of the Prague Summit agree that the Eastern Partnership will be based on commitments to the principles of international law and to fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law and the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as to, market economy, sustainable development and good governance.

The Eastern Partnership builds on and is complementary to existing bilateral contractual relations. It will be developed without prejudice to individual partner countries' aspirations for their future



relationship with the European Union. It will be governed by the principles of differentiation and conditionality.

The Eastern Partnership will be developed in parallel with the bilateral cooperation between the EU and third states.

2. The main goal of the Eastern Partnership is to create the necessary conditions to accelerate political association and further economic integration between the European Union and interested partner countries. The significant strengthening of EU policy with regard to the partner countries will be brought about through the development of a specific Eastern dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy. With this aim, the Eastern Partnership will seek to support political and socio-economic reforms of the partner countries, facilitating approximation towards the European Union. This serves the shared commitment to stability, security and prosperity of the European Union, the partner countries and indeed the entire European continent.

The Eastern Partnership should further promote stability and multilateral confidence building. Conflicts impede cooperation activities. Therefore the participants of the Prague summit emphasize the need for their earliest peaceful settlement on the basis of principles and norms of international law and the decisions and documents approved in this framework.

Furthermore, the Eastern Partnership could help to develop closer ties among the partner countries themselves.

3. The Eastern Partnership carries a clear political message about the need to maintain and bolster the course towards reforms. The Eastern Partnership will provide additional impetus to the economic and social and regional development of the partner countries. It will facilitate good governance, including in the financial sector, promote regional development and social cohesion and help to reduce partner countries' socioeconomic disparities. In this way, the Eastern Partnership will be complementary to macro-economic assistance provided through relevant international instruments.

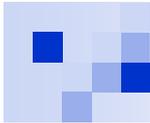
Deeper bilateral engagement

4. The participants of the Prague Summit share the wish to deepen and to intensify bilateral relations between the EU and the partner countries, taking into account the specific situation and ambition of each partner country and respecting existing bilateral relations between the EU and the respective partner country. They agreed that bilateral cooperation under the Eastern Partnership umbrella should provide the foundation for Association Agreements between the EU and those partner countries who are willing and able to comply with the resulting commitments.

5. New Association Agreements, beyond existing opportunities for trade and investment, will provide for the establishment or the objective of establishing deep and comprehensive free trade areas, where the positive effects of trade and investment liberalization will be strengthened by regulatory approximation leading to convergence with EU laws and standards. Open markets and economic integration are essential to the sustainable economic development of the partner countries and to underpin political stabilisation. Establishing bilateral deep and comprehensive free trade areas between the EU and partner countries could in the long-term perspective grow into a network of deep and comprehensive free trade areas.

6. The European Union will develop Comprehensive Institution-Building Programmes individually with each partner country in order to improve their administrative capacity, including through training, technical assistance and any appropriate innovative measures.

7. Supporting mobility of citizens and visa liberalisation in a secure environment is another important aspect of the Eastern Partnership. It will promote mobility of citizens of the partner countries through visa facilitation and readmission agreements; the EU, in line with its Global Approach to Migration, will also take gradual steps towards full visa liberalisation as a long term goal for individual partner countries on a case-by-case basis provided that conditions



for well-managed and secure mobility are in place.

8. The Eastern Partnership aims to strengthen energy security through cooperation with regard to long-term stable and secure energy supply and transit, including through better regulation, energy efficiency and more use of renewable energy sources. Provisions on energy interdependence could be included in the new Association Agreements or other bilateral arrangements between the EU and the partner countries. Energy cooperation should take into account the EU's Second Strategic Energy Review and each partner country's energy policy.

Focus on multilateral co-operation

9. The multilateral framework of the Eastern Partnership will provide for cooperation activities and open and free dialogue serving the objectives of the Partnership. It will operate on a basis of joint decisions of the European Union and the partner countries. It will provide a forum to share information and experience on the partner countries' steps towards transition, reform and modernisation and give the EU an additional instrument to accompany these processes. It will facilitate the development of common positions and joint activities. The multilateral framework is aimed at fostering links among partner countries themselves and will be a forum for discussion on further developments of the Eastern Partnership.

Legislative and regulatory approximation is crucial to those partner countries willing to make progress in coming closer to the EU. The multilateral framework will provide the setting for the systematic undertaking in this respect, including through dedicated sessions devoted to the presentation and explanation by the European Union of EU legislation and standards, as well as its comparison with national policy and legislation.

10. Meetings of Heads of State or Government of the Eastern Partnership will be held in principle every two years. They should take place in the EU and in the partner countries. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs will meet every year. These high-

level meetings will move and shape the Eastern Partnership further.

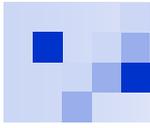
11. Four thematic platforms currently organised by the European Commission will allow for target-oriented sessions and serve for open and free discussions, on the basis of the main areas of cooperation, namely Democracy, good governance and stability; Economic integration and convergence with EU sectoral policies; Energy security; and Contacts between people.

12. The initial meetings of the four thematic platforms will take place during June 2009. Each platform will adopt a set of realistic, core objectives that should be updated periodically, with a corresponding work programme, and will review the progress achieved. Meetings would be held at least twice a year at the level of senior officials engaged in the reform work in the relevant policy areas. The platforms will report to the annual meetings of Ministers of Foreign Affairs. The work of the platforms may occasionally be promoted through sector-specific Ministerial meetings. There will also be panels to support the work of the thematic platforms in specific areas. Third states will be eligible for the participation on a case-by-case basis in concrete projects, activities and meetings of thematic platforms, where it contributes to the objectives of particular activities and the general objectives of the Eastern Partnership.

Activities within the multilateral framework of the Eastern Partnership should be voluntary and based on the principles of a cooperative approach.

13. The participants of the Prague Summit support the launching of Flagship Initiatives that will give additional momentum, concrete substance and visibility to the Eastern Partnership and are looking forward to an early discussion of the platforms in this regard.

14. Complementarity with regional initiatives between the European Union and relevant partner countries, in particular the Black Sea Synergy, will be ensured. Interaction with other regional initiatives should be considered on a case-by-case basis.



15. High representatives of the European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions, the European Economic and Social Committee, the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development have attended the Prague Summit. The Eastern Partnership will engage a wide range of actors, involving government ministries and agencies, parliaments, civil society, international organisations (such as the OSCE, Council of Europe and OECD), international financial institutions, the private sector, economic and social partners in the framework of the multilateral platforms.

Therefore, the participants of the Prague Summit invite the parliamentarians from the European Union and the partner countries to come forward with ideas regarding the European Parliament's proposal to establish a EU-Neighbourhood East Parliamentary Assembly (EURO-NEST PA), and the European Commission to develop and propose modalities for the establishment of a Civil Society Forum of the Eastern Partnership.

The participants also invite the European Investment Bank to work on investment support in the framework of its Eastern Neighbourhood mandate in favour of small and medium sized enterprises. They invite the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and other international financial institutions to establish an appropriate joint small and medium-sized enterprise facility.

Funding

16. In line with the March 2009 Eastern Partnership Declaration, adopted by the European Council, increased European Union financial support will be provided serving the goals of the Eastern Partnership and taking into consideration progress made by individual partner countries. The participants of the Prague Summit agree that beyond the Community grant assistance and national co-financing, the implementation of the Eastern Partnership will require additional financial resources and they therefore call on other donors, the

international financial institutions and the private sector to provide additional financing in support of reforms, the flagship initiatives and projects.

17. The Eastern Partnership should contain an innovative approach to promote joint ownership and deeper cooperation between the public and private sectors. Pro-active political support and the EU incentives and guarantees for the private sector should create the conditions for motivating the private sector to invest in the concrete projects in the partner countries and thus contributing to the attainment of the Eastern Partnership goals.

18. The participants of the Prague Summit encourage the EIB, EBRD and other International Financial Institutions to step up their efforts to assist all partner countries with the reform and modernisation process and to identify suitable investment projects.

Concluding points

19. The participants of the Prague Summit agree on the necessity to promote key principles and purposes of the Eastern Partnership among the public, mobilise support for and raise awareness of it. The increased visibility of concrete projects and activities will bring the initiative closer to citizens.

20. The participants of the Prague Summit call upon the current and incoming Presidencies of the Council of the European Union as well as the European Commission to intensify their joint efforts with the partner countries in order to define the schedule of ministerial and senior officials meetings within the multilateral dimension of the Eastern Partnership, to define the priorities of the activities of the thematic platforms for the period of 2009-2010, and to prepare proposals on early implementation of Flagship Initiatives.

21. The participants of the Prague Summit are confident that the results of the Prague Summit and the establishment of the Eastern Partnership will advance the cause of democracy, strengthen stability and prosperity, bringing lasting and palpable benefits to citizens of all participating states.

The participants of the Prague Summit will work closely to achieve the objectives envisaged by this Joint Declaration.

EU Presidency Statement on the Signature of the Agreements on the Joint Protection of Borders between Russia and the Separatist Regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia (Brussels, 1 May 2009)

The Presidency of the EU is deeply concerned by the signing of the agreements on the joint protection of borders between Russia and the Georgian separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which are in contradiction with the six point agreement of August 12, 2008.

The Presidency of the EU recalls the EU's full support to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia in its internationally recognized borders.

The Presidency remains committed and is ready to support every effort with a view to a peaceful and lasting solution to the conflict in Georgia. Security matters should be discussed in relevant international fora, in particular the Geneva discussions, the next session of which will take place on 18-19 May 2009.

Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the Implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2008 COM (2009) 188/3 (Brussels, 23 April 2009)

1. THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT – A YEAR OF CRISES

2008 was a difficult year for implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy. Its last few months were marked by crises that could pose long-term challenges for this key EU policy. Two violent conflicts broke out: the war between Russia and Georgia in August 2008 and the Israeli intervention in Gaza in December 2008/January 2009. At the

turn of the year Eastern partners and the EU suffered disruptions of gas supplies as a result of a dispute between Ukraine and Russia. Finally, the whole of the ENP area, particularly the East, was affected by the deepening global financial and economic crisis. This unfavourable context underscores the need for even more active and tangible EU support for the Neighbourhood to promote mutual prosperity, stability and security.

Despite the difficult overall environment, partners made significant progress on implementation of the ENP in several key areas, reflecting the policy's role as a catalyst for reforms. A number of partners advanced in trade negotiations, tax and customs reform and competition policy. The business environment also improved in a number of countries, in some cases linked to achievements in the fight against corruption. Yet corruption remains a significant issue in several countries. Overall the pace of reforms has slowed particularly in democratic reforms and human rights standards. This Communication provides an overview of these developments. It also highlights the impact of the financial and economic crisis on the partner countries and proposes a number of ways ENP instruments could contribute to the recovery process.

The gradual deepening of the ENP continued throughout 2008, based upon the proposals by the Commission in December 2007¹ and also with the development of two new initiatives: in July the Union for the Mediterranean was launched following a Commission Communication, and in December the Commission tabled its proposal for an ambitious Eastern Partnership. These major initiatives further reinforce the ENP and complement existing initiatives such as the Black Sea Synergy.

More detailed information can be found in the country-by-country Progress Reports and the Sectoral Progress Report, annexed. The ENP framework provides an objective and coherent approach. The reports reflect

¹ COM(2007) 774: 'A Strong European Neighbourhood Policy'

differences in sequencing and prioritisation of reforms under the bilaterally agreed Action Plans², as well as the diversity between partners.

2. DEVELOPMENTS IN BILATERAL RELATIONS

Armenia made progress on implementation of the ENP Action Plan. It is however still struggling with the consequences of an internal crisis in the aftermath of presidential elections in February 2008 that led to a state of emergency and resulting concerns about democratic standards and human rights, notably in the area of media freedom. This crisis occurred in a context of steady progress in reform during recent years. Important steps were taken in 2008 towards improving the transparency of the government decision-making process, notably the government's cooperation with NGOs and civil society, although more remains to be done. Armenia made progress on regional cooperation and dialogue with neighbouring countries. It also widely aligned itself with common foreign and security policy (CFSP) declarations and is generally very active in cooperating on CFSP-related issues. Progress was made on reforms of tax and customs, financial services, competition policy, social policy and poverty reduction. Armenia continued its cooperation with the EU on trade-related issues, including preparations for a possible future deep and comprehensive free trade agreement (DCFTA). The opening of a Delegation of the European Commission in Yerevan in February 2008 further contributed to the strengthening of bilateral relations with Armenia.

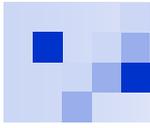
Azerbaijan made, like last year, only limited progress in the area of democratic governance. The Presidential Elections in October 2008 showed progress towards meeting OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) commitments

but there were shortcomings in the electoral process. Some progress was made in the area of the judiciary, whose independence nevertheless remains a cause for concern. There were negative developments on protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The December 2008 decision of the National TV and Radio Council not to extend the licences of foreign broadcasters to transmit on local frequencies further restricted media pluralism. In the business field, Azerbaijan was assessed by the World Bank as one of the top reformers in the world. The macroeconomic environment was favourable with strong economic growth, mainly due to the high oil and gas prices, particularly in the first half of 2008. Azerbaijan continued negotiations on its accession to the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Good progress was made in the context of the 2006 Memorandum of Understanding on a strategic partnership in the field of energy and in strengthening its role as energy producer. After the reporting period, in 2009, some encouraging signs were seen, notably with the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture and the withdrawal of the libel charges against a human rights defender. The opening of a Delegation of the European Commission in Baku in February 2008 further contributed to the strengthening of bilateral relations with Azerbaijan.

A positive step on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was taken, despite the prevailing high tensions, with the first document jointly signed by the Presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia since 1994. The EU maintains its support for the solution of the conflict in the framework of the OSCE Minsk group.

In **Georgia**, implementation of the ENP Action Plan was seriously affected by exceptional events. In the course of 2008, Russia took a number of unilateral steps aimed at strengthening its relations with Georgia's separatist regions Abkhazia and South Ossetia, notably building up its military presence. A sequence of military incidents and provocations culminated in August 2008 in the outbreak of an armed conflict with Russia over the control of

² The ENP covers Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Republic of Moldova, Morocco, and the occupied Palestinian territory, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine. Action Plans have been adopted with twelve of the partners, namely all but Algeria, Belarus, Libya and Syria.



South Ossetia, causing hundreds of casualties, the displacement of about 192,000 people and serious environmental damage, leaving 7,000 Russian troops on Georgian territory. The ensuing recognition by Russia of the self-declared independence of the two separatist entities violated Georgia's sovereignty and complicated peaceful and sustainable settlement of the conflicts. A ceasefire agreement was concluded with EU help, and the European Council expressed firm support for Georgia's territorial integrity. At the same time, two rounds of contested early elections have highlighted the need to inject new momentum into democratic reforms and to encourage political pluralism, in line with the ambitious agenda of reforms pursued since the "Rose Revolution". In spite of this difficult context, Georgia made some progress on implementation of the ENP Action Plan, with notable achievements in fighting corruption, facilitating access to justice and improving the business and investment climate and customs administration. Concrete measures are needed with respect to labour law, rights at work and social dialogue. Georgia continued to cooperate with the EU on trade-related issues, including preparations for a possible DCFTA. Georgia also continued cooperation in the area of justice, freedom and security as the basis for EU-Georgia negotiations on visa facilitation and readmission agreements.

[...]

The **Republic of Moldova** (hereinafter "Moldova") has made progress in a number of areas of the ENP Action Plan, with the continuing reform of the judicial system, the publication of the reports of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and the positive cooperation with the EU Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM). Moldova also continued to cooperate with the EU on all questions related to the Transnistria settlement efforts, including on confidence-building measures geared to improving grass-roots dialogue and has ensured a correct implementation of the conditions for benefiting from the EU Autonomous Trade Preferences. An EU-Moldova mobility partnership was signed. In November 2008

negotiations were launched on Moldova's accession to the Energy Community Treaty, reflecting substantial progress in energy sector reform. However, no or limited progress was made on certain key priorities, such as the respect for human rights, including freedom of expression. The same goes for market and regulatory issues, implementation of national strategies against corruption, drugs and trafficking in human beings, and in sectors such as transport. The adoption of a modified electoral law constitutes a regression. The elections, held in April 2009, will be reported upon next year.

[...]

Ukraine made progress in many areas covered by the Action Plan. However, the pace of reform slowed down as a consequence of continuing domestic political instability and, in the second part of the year, the deepening global financial and economic crisis. Ukraine made no or only limited progress in the implementation of some key political reform measures including constitutional and judicial reform and combating corruption. Major achievements during the reporting period were Ukraine's accession to the World Trade Organisation in May 2008, the good progress in the negotiations on the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, including those aspects related to a deep and comprehensive Free Trade Area, the launch in October of a visa dialogue with the aim of establishing a visa free regime as a long term perspective and the continuing positive cooperation with the EU Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM). Cooperation on CFSP matters was also positive, with Ukraine aligning itself on nearly all CFSP positions open for alignment. In December 2008 Ukraine and the Commission services signed a new administrative arrangement on closer cooperation in the field of civil protection. In November negotiations were launched on the country's accession to the Energy Community Treaty. Cooperation on energy was further enhanced in the context of the Memorandum of Understanding on Energy.

3. NEW FRAMEWORKS TO STRENGTHEN THE ENP

In 2008, the European Union continued to substantially strengthen its relations with its neighbours through new frameworks which complement the differentiated bilateral relations. Equally, the continued implementation of the Africa-EU Joint Strategy, which covers five of the ENP countries, contributes to the same goals by its own result-oriented and focused partnerships.

[...]

The Black Sea Synergy: first year of implementation³

A Foreign Ministers' meeting took place in Kyiv in February, 2008. The Joint Statement adopted identifies fields requiring action at the regional level including energy, transport, communications, trade, the environment, maritime policy, fisheries, migration, law enforcement and the fight against organised crime.

The Black Sea Synergy has also attracted considerable interest from NGOs. The first of a series of Black Sea Synergy civil society seminars on human rights issues took place in May 2008 in Moldova. A platform on migration has been established.

The Commission has launched exploratory talks with the countries of the region about the extension of the trans-European transport networks, and a ministerial meeting on transport was held in Baku in December 2008. The Commission has increased its focus on maritime safety and security and has begun to implement the Motorways of the Sea concept in the Black Sea. Work has also started on extending the Common Aviation Area to the Black Sea countries. The Commission has started preparing for the accession by the European Community to the Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution (Bucharest Convention). Bulgaria and

³ COM(2008) 391 - Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament - Report on the first year of implementation of the Black Sea Synergy.

Romania have made formal proposals to amending the Convention in order to allow the European Community to become a party.

Proposal for an Eastern Partnership⁴

In response to the Union's strategic interest in seeing stability, better governance and economic development at its Eastern borders, to the need to help the Union's partners to consolidate their statehood and sovereignty, including through democratic reforms, and to their stated choice to intensify their relations with the EU, in December 2008 the Commission made a proposal for an Eastern Partnership. In this proposal the Commission drew a distinction from the regional cooperation initiated in the Black Sea Synergy, in order to obtain maximum complementarity with the Synergy, which is just entering its operational phase.

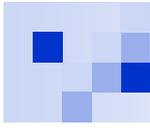
The Eastern Partnership Communication contains an ambitious set of policy proposals for deeper relations with the Eastern European and South Caucasus countries, to advance political association, further economic integration and gradually promote mobility, having a full visa liberalisation as a long-term goal. The Partnership would have both a bilateral and a multilateral dimension. At multilateral level, it would introduce "cooperation platforms" on democracy, good governance and stability; economic integration and approximation to EU policies; energy security; and contacts between people. The European Council welcomed the proposals in March 2009.

The Eastern Partnership will be launched at a Summit on 7 May 2009 and structured through annual meetings of Foreign Ministers and biennial summit meetings. The first meetings of the thematic platforms are foreseen shortly after the launch.

4. IMPACT OF THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC CRISIS

The global financial crisis has affected the partner's real economies to different degrees.

⁴ COM(2008) 823 - Communication of the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament - Eastern Partnership



So far the Eastern neighbourhood countries have been more seriously affected by the changed global economic conditions. These countries, whose buoyant growth in the previous years had been driven essentially by foreign capital inflows (in the form of FDI, bank credits or, in some cases, remittances) are now suffering from the drying up of international capital and credit markets. For several countries in the region the financial meltdown is compounded by the dramatic drop in the prices of export commodities on which several countries in the region rely heavily: energy, metals and agricultural commodities. The social impact is likely to unfold with risks of increased vulnerabilities and poverty making social responses and reforms more urgent and challenging.

The largest economy in the Eastern neighbourhood, Ukraine, suffered a sharp economic downturn in late 2008: trade conditions with the decline in export prices for steel and the global financial crisis exposed the banking and corporate sectors' vulnerability to the face of a cut off from external financing. Real GDP decreased significantly, bringing overall economic growth down to some 2.5% for the whole year. The downturn of the Ukrainian economy, expected to continue in 2009, has also adversely affected countries for which it is an important trading partner, such as Moldova and Belarus.

The Ukrainian authorities quickly agreed on a stand-by arrangement with the IMF for about EUR 12.8 billion under a comprehensive economic stabilisation programme. The first tranche has been disbursed, with discussions ongoing on the implementation of IMF conditions for the second tranche. Ukraine's public and publicly guaranteed debt remained at a sustainable level during 2008. The main concern is the refinancing of banking and corporate short-term external debt. The legal framework to resolve the situation of banks was amended under the anti-crisis legislation of November 2008; implementation of this legislation is a top priority for the authorities in 2009 so that viable banks can continue lending and thereby support the resumption of economic growth.

Ukraine was not the only country in the region to obtain financial support from the Bretton-Woods Institutions. The IMF has already put in place financing arrangements with Georgia, Belarus and Armenia. Moldova is likely to follow later this year.

[...]

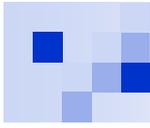
For the entire ENP area, the global financial and economic crisis nevertheless poses risks to some key sectors of the economy in 2009, such as remittances, export-oriented industries, tourism and construction. The poor outlook for European growth, in particular, poses significant risks since the EU is the main export market and employs a large proportion of the expatriate workers who are a source of remittances. Exports are also likely to be affected by competition from lower-wage countries. Inward investment is likely to suffer because of the European slowdown. FDI volumes are also likely to be affected since European firms might decide to postpone investments. The drying-up of liquidity in the banking sector in developed countries could hamper the privatisation process in partner countries. SMEs could face an even more difficult access to finance which could severely affect their economic activities. A spill-over of the crisis to EU neighbours would aggravate the already high unemployment of youth in particular and further challenge employment and social reforms.

In a situation of an economic crisis, the trade and trade-related priorities from the ENP Action Plans become more important than ever. The regional economic integration processes in the Neighbourhood need also to be continued.

As an early response to the London G20 Summit, the Commission set out, in a recent

Communication⁵, timely, targeted and coordinated measures to be taken as of this year by the EU as a whole, with a view to supporting partner countries in their efforts to cope with the impact of the global financial crisis. With this in mind, the European Commission will, inter alia,

⁵ COM(2009) 160, 8.4.2009: Supporting Developing Countries in Coping with the Crisis.



accelerate the Mid-Term Review of its external assistance programmes in 2009 and 2010, with a view to reflect new needs and priorities.

5. CONCLUSIONS

A growing partnership based on mutual interdependence

The EU's relations with its neighbours have thus on balance continued to intensify, despite the difficult international context. This trend is reflected in the overall progress made with the ENP "front-runners" identified in the 2008 Communication just as much as in developments with the other countries, including those that are not, at present, full participants in this policy. It is reflected both in the depth of bilateral relations and in the growing web of multilateral initiatives. The crises in 2008 and the remaining challenges in partner countries have only reinforced the strategic rationale for an intensified ENP providing tangible and credible support to create mutual security and prosperity dividends.

A number of countries have asked that these developments be reflected in a formal upgrading of their relations with the EU. This demonstrates the ENP's force of attraction and the positive incentives provided by a performance-based, differentiated policy. Such upgrading would institutionalise and increase political exchanges, intensify the country's participation in the EU economic area, and bring about greater integration in various policy areas. The Commission considers that the EU should be open to such requests, not least to sustain the momentum of reforms in partner countries. Formal upgrading would be based on the commitment to shared values and interests and when Action Plan implementation demonstrates the ambition of the partner concerned to go further, notably as concerns democratic practice, respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law.

Addressing the challenges of governance and the economy

The EU's toolbox for implementation of the ENP is becoming increasingly sophisticated.

While continuing to pursue a differentiated policy, tailored to the situation of each partner, the Commission will ensure that successful approaches and instruments developed for one country or region will be replicated, as appropriate, in other parts of the Neighbourhood. In particular, a number of proposals made in the Communication on the Eastern Partnership, such as a stronger comprehensive approach to institution-building or national policies supporting social and economic cohesion could also be considered to support relations with the Union's Southern neighbours.

The financial support accompanying the partners' reforms must also be adapted to new priorities emerging from the challenges that the Neighbourhood faces. The Commission's proposals for ENPI programming for the period 2011-13 will duly reflect this.

The overall lack of progress on governance issues observed in 2008 underlines the need for the EU and its partners to redouble their efforts, both with intensified political dialogue and with tailored assistance, including the Governance Facility which remains an important political incentive. The Commission will decide on the next allocations under this facility in the light of the analysis in this Communication and the annexed country reports.

While the deepening global financial and economic crisis underscores the need for partner countries to keep up the pace of economic reforms and refrain from protectionist and trade-distorting measures, it also calls for tangible EU support. In that respect the Commission proposes to:

- Ensure, in its regular contacts with the partners, an intensive dialogue on the response to the financial crisis and its economic and social consequences and in particular on the way to cushion the impact on the most vulnerable whilst further promoting decent work conditions and securing a sustainable economic and social development;
- Contribute to addressing the short term liquidity problems stemming from the

financial crisis by further mobilising community macro-financial assistance loans provided in cooperation with the International Monetary Fund and in coherence with IMF programme conditions. If other means of provisioning the guarantee fund for external actions prove to be insufficient to meet the needs, setting aside part of future ENPI grant funding could be considered. In addition, the Commission urges Member States to consider providing bilateral macro-economic assistance to ENP countries, similarly coordinated with the IMF;

- Strengthen the regulatory environment of the financial sector and institutions that can ensure appropriate supervision of financial markets (central banks, banking and financial sector supervisory authorities, security exchange commissions, etc), by means of technical assistance, and where appropriate, twinning, programmes over the next two years. Within this additional support, the possibility of the European Central Bank and the national central banks of the Eurosystem further extending technical assistance programmes to partner countries' central banks will also be explored;
- Encourage the EIB and EBRD to accelerate their lending operations, including in the Eastern Neighbourhood;
- Address the impact of the economic crisis by means of trade and investment support. This may include prioritising the SME Facility foreseen under the Eastern Partnership, and, if additional funds are available, providing an additional contribution to the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP) and/or the Neighbourhood Investment Facility (NIF).

**NATO Summit Declaration Issued by
the Heads of State and Government
(Strasbourg/Kehl, 4 April 2009)**

[...]

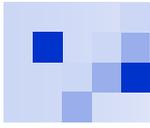
2. We warmly welcome Albania and Croatia into our Alliance. Our nations are united in

democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law, and we reaffirm our adherence to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. NATO contributes to stability and security, which are the essential foundations necessary to tackle the global financial hardships and uncertainty we face. Transatlantic cooperation remains essential to protect our peoples, defend our values, and meet common threats and challenges, from wherever they may come.

[...]

29. Stability and successful political and economic reform in Ukraine and Georgia are important to Euro-Atlantic security. At Bucharest we agreed that Ukraine and Georgia will become members of NATO and we reaffirm all elements of that decision as well as the decisions taken by our Ministers of Foreign Affairs last December. We are maximising our advice, assistance and support for their reform efforts in the framework of the NATO-Ukraine Commission and NATO-Georgia Commission, which play a central role in supervising the process set in hand at the Bucharest Summit. We welcome in particular the planned reinforcement of NATO's Information and Liaison Offices in Kyiv and Tbilisi. Without prejudice to further decisions which must be taken about MAP, the development of Annual National Programmes will help Georgia and Ukraine in advancing their reforms. The annual review of these programmes will allow us to continue to closely monitor Georgia and Ukraine's progress on reforms related to their aspirations for NATO membership. We also welcome the valuable contributions made by both countries to NATO's operations.

30. We remain convinced that the mutually beneficial relationship between NATO and Ukraine, launched twelve years ago with the Distinctive Partnership, will continue to contribute to regional and Euro-Atlantic security. In this context, we appreciate Ukraine's valuable contributions to our common security, including through participation in NATO-led operations. We encourage Ukraine's continued efforts to promote regional security and cooperation.



We underscore the importance of Ukraine's commitment to continue implementing needed political, economic, defence and security sector reforms, in order to achieve its Euro-Atlantic aspirations, and we will continue to provide assistance to this end. Political stability is of crucial importance to the successful implementation of these reforms.

31. The NATO-Georgia relationship has deepened substantially in the past year. We remain committed to fostering political dialogue with, as well as providing assistance to, Georgia. We strongly encourage Georgia to continue implementing all necessary reforms, particularly democratic, electoral, and judicial reforms, in order to achieve its Euro-Atlantic aspirations. We reiterate our continued support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia within its internationally recognised borders.

32. We encourage all participants in the Geneva talks to play a constructive role as well as to continue working closely with the OSCE, UN and the EU to pursue peaceful conflict resolution on Georgia's territory. We welcome as a positive step the agreement reached in the framework of the Geneva talks on joint incident prevention and response mechanisms and we urge all the participants involved to engage in their rapid implementation. We note the renewal of the mandate for the UN Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) and the roll-over of the mandate for the OSCE Military Monitors. We call for a new mandate for the OSCE Mission to Georgia as well as for unimpeded access for UN, EU, and OSCE observers throughout all of Georgia, including the regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. We are concerned by the continued tensions and violence along the administrative boundary lines and call on all parties to demonstrate restraint.

33. The NATO-Russia partnership was conceived as a strategic element in fostering security in the Euro-Atlantic area, and we remain committed to it. Dialogue and cooperation between NATO and Russia are important for our joint ability to meet effectively common security threats and

challenges. We reaffirm the importance of upholding the common values and all the principles enshrined in the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act and the 2002 Rome Declaration by all members of the NATO-Russia Council. Our relations with Russia depend on trust and the fulfilment of commitments. Since our last Summit, dialogue and cooperation with Russia have suffered from profound disagreements on a number of issues. The Alliance will continue to assess developments in relations with Russia.

34. We urge Russia to meet its commitments with respect to Georgia, as mediated by the European Union on 12 August² and 8 September 2008. In this context, we view Russia's withdrawal from the areas it has committed to leave as essential. We have welcomed steps taken to implement those commitments, but the withdrawal is still incomplete. The Alliance has condemned Russia's recognition of the South Ossetia and Abkhazia regions of Georgia as independent states, and continues to call on Russia to reverse its recognition which contravenes the founding values and principles of the NATO-Russia Council, the OSCE principles on which the security of Europe is based, and the United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding Georgia's territorial integrity, which Russia endorsed. In addition, the build-up of Russia's military presence in the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia without the consent of the Government of Georgia is of particular concern.

35. Despite our current disagreements, Russia is of particular importance to us as a partner and neighbour. NATO and Russia share common security interests, such as the stabilisation of Afghanistan; arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation of WMD, including their means of delivery; crisis management; counter-terrorism; counter-narcotics; and anti-piracy. Following through with the decisions taken by the Foreign Ministers at their meetings in December 2008 and March 2009, we look forward to the reconvening of formal NATO-Russia Council meetings, including at Ministerial level, as soon as possible before

summer 2009. We are committed to using the NATO-Russia Council as a forum for political dialogue on all issues – where we agree and disagree – with a view towards resolving problems, addressing concerns and building practical cooperation. We are convinced that the NATO-Russia Council has not exploited its full potential. We therefore stand ready, in the NATO-Russia Council, to assess possibilities for making it a more efficient and valuable instrument for our political dialogue and practical cooperation.

[...]

41. The Black Sea region continues to be important for Euro-Atlantic security. We welcome the progress in consolidation of regional cooperation and ownership, through effective use of existing initiatives and mechanisms, and based on transparency, complementarity and inclusiveness. We will continue to support, as appropriate, efforts based on regional priorities and dialogue among the Black Sea states and with the Alliance.

[...]

58. We remain concerned with the persistence of protracted regional conflicts in the South Caucasus and the Republic of Moldova. It is essential for all parties in these regions to engage constructively in peaceful conflict resolution. We call on them all to avoid steps that undermine regional security and stability, and to respect the current negotiation formats. We continue to support the territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova, and will also continue to support efforts towards a peaceful settlement of these regional conflicts, taking into account these principles. We welcome OSCE efforts and processes in these regions, to which the Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform could be a useful complement.

[...]

**European Parliament Recommendation
to the Council on the
New EU - Russia Agreement
(Brussels, 2 April 2009)**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal for a recommendation to the Council by Janusz Onyszkiewicz on behalf of the ALDE Group on relations between the EU and Russia (B6-0373/2007),
- having regard to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Russian Federation, of the other part⁶, which entered into force on 1 December 1997 and which would have expired in 2007 had it not been automatically prolonged,
- having regard to the Council decision of 26 May 2008 to open negotiations with the Russian Federation on a new agreement and the resumption of those negotiations in December 2008,
- having regard to the objective of the EU and Russia, set out in the joint statement issued following the St Petersburg Summit held on 31 May 2003, to set up a common economic space, a common space of freedom, security and justice, a space of cooperation in the field of external security and a space of research and education, including cultural aspects and subsequently adopted road maps,
- having regard to the agreement between the European Community and the Russian Federation of 25 May 2006 on the facilitation of the issuance of visas to the citizens of the European Union and the Russian Federation⁷,
- having regard to the European Energy Charter signed on 17 December 1991 and the subsequent Energy Charter Treaty (ECT), which was opened for signature on 17 December 1994 and entered into force in April 1998, and which is legally binding between all Contracting Parties that have ratified the ECT and those which did not opt

⁶ OJ L 327, 28.11.1997, p. 1

⁷ OJ L 129, 17.5.2007, p. 27.

out of applying the ECT provisionally pending its entry into force, pursuant to Article 45(2), and to the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue instituted at the sixth EU-Russia Summit held in Paris on 30 October 2000,

- having regard to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to the 1991 UN/ECE Espoo Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context ("Espoo Convention"),

- having regard to its resolution of 8 July 2008 on the environmental impact of the planned gas pipeline in the Baltic Sea to link up Russia and Germany⁸,

- having regard to the unprecedented disruption of supply of Russian gas to the European Union in January 2009,

- having regard to the EU-Russia human rights consultations and their lack of tangible results,

- having regard to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR) and the protocols thereto,

- having regard to ongoing negotiations on the accession of the Russian Federation to the World Trade Organization (WTO),

- having regard to the many credible reports by Russian and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) on the continuing grave violations of human rights in Russia, the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights relating to Chechnya and the many such cases pending before the Court,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the Russian Federation, including in particular those of 18 December 2008 on attacks on human rights defenders in Russia and the Anna Politkovskaya murder trial⁹, of 13 March 2008 on Russia¹⁰, of 10 May 2007 on the EU-Russia Summit to be held in Samara on 18 May 2007¹¹, of 19 June 2008 on the EU-Russia Summit of 26-27 June 2008 in

⁸ Texts adopted, P6_TA(2008)0336

⁹ Texts adopted, P6_TA(2008)0642

¹⁰ Texts adopted, P6_TA(2008)0105

¹¹ OJ C 76 E, 27.3.2008, p. 95

Khanty-Mansiysk¹², of 25 October 2006 on EU-Russia relations following the murder of the Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya¹³, of 14 November 2007 on the EU-Russia Summit¹⁴ and of 13 December 2006 on the EU-Russia Summit in Helsinki on 24 November 2006¹⁵,

- having regard to its resolution of 26 May 2005 on EU-Russia relations¹⁶,

- having regard to its resolution of 19 June 2007 on EU economic and trade relations with Russia¹⁷, which states that "the human rights situation in Russia should be an integral part of the EU-Russia political agenda" and that "extensive economic cooperation between Russia and the EU must be based on high standards of democracy and free market principles",

- having regard to its resolution of 3 September 2008 on the situation in Georgia¹⁸

- having regard to its resolution of 26 September 2007 on towards a common European foreign policy on energy¹⁹,

- having regard to its resolutions of 17 January 2008 on a Black Sea Regional Policy Approach²⁰ and on a more effective EU policy for the South Caucasus: from promises to actions²¹,

- having regard to the joint statement of the EU-Russia Permanent Partnership Council on Freedom, Security and Justice of 22 November 2007,

- having regard to the joint statement by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly on the Russian Duma elections held on 2 December 2007,

- having regard to Rule 114(3) and Rule 83(5) of its Rules of Procedure,

¹² Texts adopted, P6_TA(2008)0309

¹³ OJ C 313 E, 20.12.2006, p. 271

¹⁴ OJ C 282 E, 6.11.2008, p. 329

¹⁵ OJ C 317 E, 23.12.2006, p. 474

¹⁶ OJ C 117 E, 18.5.2006, p. 235

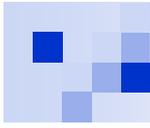
¹⁷ OJ C 146 E, 12.6.2008, p. 95

¹⁸ Texts adopted, P6_TA(2008)0396

¹⁹ OJ C 219 E, 28.8.2008, p. 206

²⁰ OJ C 41 E, 19.2.2009, p. 64

²¹ OJ C 41 E, 19.2.2009, p. 53



- having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the opinions of the Committee on International Trade and the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (A6-0140/2009),

A. whereas EU relations with Russia are of crucial importance for the purposes of pragmatic cooperation; whereas Russia is a permanent member of the UN Security Council, a member of the G8, the third largest trading partner of the EU, the fourth largest trading partner of the Eurozone and an essential energy supplier to the EU; whereas the EU shares with Russia not only economic and trade interests but also an objective to act in the international arena, as well as responsibility for global issues and issues concerning the common European neighbourhood; whereas enhanced cooperation and good-neighbourly relations between the EU and Russia should be based on mutual trust and common values of democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law as well as on cooperation on international issues, and are therefore of key importance to the stability, security and prosperity of the whole of Europe; whereas EU relations with Russia should be based on mutual respect but also on the respect by each of the parties of the sovereignty of nations in their neighbourhood,

B. whereas the EU is based on common values, such as democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law, and whereas full respect for these values must be one of the foremost priorities in pursuing enhanced cooperation with any third state,

C. whereas cooperation between the EU and Russia is beneficial for international stability; whereas, in addition, Russia has a responsibility to contribute to financial and political stability and a sense of security in Europe and in the world, in particular by adopting and maintaining a responsible and peaceful approach to the EU-Russia common neighbourhood; whereas the EU already engages with Russia on Afghanistan, the Middle East and the Balkans and in the UN and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in developing common views and approaches on other key

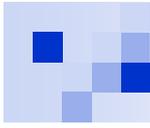
security issues, such as nuclear proliferation, arms control and disarmament, the fight against terrorism, drug trafficking and organised crime, climate change and the global economic and financial crisis,

D. whereas the declarations of the new US administration, particularly by the Vice President Joe Biden and the Secretary of State Secretary Hillary Clinton, concerning the policy towards Russia, show a willingness within a new and open US policy to cooperate for a more stable and secure world,

E. whereas Russia's disproportionate counter-attack, triggered by the Georgian troops entering South Ossetia and extended to the other Georgian territories with the use of armour and air power, as well as the unprovoked military action in Abkhazia, including attacks on and the occupation of Georgian seaports, followed by the recognition of the two break-away enclaves, South Ossetia and Abkhazia, puts a question mark on Russia's readiness to build, together with the EU, a common space of security in Europe; whereas the further development of the EU's partnership with Russia needs to include a significant dialogue on security, based on the commitments of both partners to their shared values, respect for international law and territorial integrity and commitment to and obligations under the Helsinki Charter,

F. whereas the negotiations on a new agreement aimed at enhancing cooperation between the EU and the Russian Federation in no way legitimise the current status quo in Georgia, while the obligation for Russia to implement fully the agreements signed on 12 August and 8 September 2008 with regard to the conflict in South Ossetia and Abkhazia remains valid, since its compliance with those agreements should be a sine qua non for the successful completion of the talks, which should include a renunciation by all parties of the use of force against neighbouring countries,

G. whereas, particularly after the events in Georgia, the parties' positions on Kosovo and the common neighbourhood remain farther apart than ever,



H. whereas the conclusion of an agreement on future cooperation remains of the utmost importance for further development and intensification of cooperation between the two sides; whereas the EU's policy towards Russia must be based on unity and solidarity and whereas the EU should have a common approach and speak with one voice; whereas the EU Member States should inform and consult in due time with the other Member States potentially concerned by bilateral agreements or disputes with Russia,

I. whereas the new comprehensive agreement designed to replace the current PCA must represent an improvement in quality and reflect the whole breadth of the cooperation, the new realities of the 21st century and compliance with the principles of international relations and respect for democratic norms and human rights,

J. whereas the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), signed by 16 NATO members and 6 Warsaw Pact countries in 1990 and amended in 1999, is the most significant disarmament agreement in history where conventional weapons are concerned; whereas this Treaty has been ratified by Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine, but has been shelved by NATO; whereas Russia has since suspended the Treaty,

K. whereas the most recent parliamentary and presidential elections in Russia were conducted in conditions falling far short of European standards as regards access for international election monitors, the ability of opposition parties to organise and field candidates, the fairness and independence of the media and the neutrality of public bodies, leading to serious departures from Russia's obligations as a member of the Council of Europe and the OSCE,

L. whereas the Russian Federation is a member of the Council of Europe and thus has committed itself to the objectives of the Council, which are, in particular, to promote democracy and respect for human rights and to consolidate democracy and stability in Europe; whereas the EU should strongly defend the principle that respect for the rule of law and existing commitments in that

organisation is vital to the success of the EU-Russia partnership,

M. whereas numerous reports by NGOs and independent experts show that the 2006 law on NGOs and other measures taken by the Russian Government, including the anti-extremism legislation and the extension of State control over significant sections of the media, severely undermine freedom of expression and hamper human rights and civil society activities in Russia,

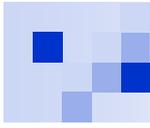
N. whereas the continued incarceration of political prisoners and the treatment of human rights defenders contradict the commitment of the Russian Federation to strengthening the rule of law in Russia and ending "legal nihilism",

O. whereas the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and a number of independent human rights organisations have raised serious questions about standards of justice in Russia, including the lack of judicial independence, the denial of fair trials to defendants in politically controversial cases, the harassment and persecution of defence lawyers and the return of the trial and detention of political prisoners within the Russian penal system,

P. whereas the Russian Federation has resisted taking effective action to ensure an end to continuing abuses and impunity for crimes, despite the fact that the European Court of Human Rights has, in a growing number of judgments, found Russia responsible for serious systemic human rights abuses, including extrajudicial executions, torture and enforced disappearances,

Q. whereas the underlying principles governing economic and trade relations between the EU and the Russian Federation should be reciprocity, sustainability, transparency, predictability, reliability, non-discrimination and good governance; whereas the new agreement should be legally binding and should provide for clear dispute-settlement mechanisms,

R. whereas the recent crisis in gas supplies to the European Union, which left millions of citizens in Bulgaria, Slovakia and elsewhere in the EU without heating and hot water in



freezing winter temperatures, raises serious concerns over the reliability of Russian energy supplies,

S. whereas, in terms of energy security, relations between the EU and Russia offer great potential for positive and constructive mutual interdependence, provided that the partnership is based on the principle of non-discrimination and fair treatment, and on equal market conditions, as provided for in the ECT; whereas the recent gas crisis proved the need for the adoption of, and compliance with, a set of rules based, as a minimum, on the current ECT; whereas a secure energy relationship between the EU and Russia equally rests on transparency of energy trading in transit countries; whereas Russia's energy policies in practice have featured examples of monopolistic and coercive abuse, particularly the denial of third-country transit rights, supply interruptions and the violation of property rights,

T. whereas the Brussels European Council of 15-16 June 2006 recommended that the negotiation of the European Energy Charter Transit Protocol be concluded, that ratification of the ECT by all signatories to the Charter be secured and that the Commission be invited, especially in view of the recent gas crisis, to set out elements for an agreement with Russia on energy completing the existing and binding PCA or within the framework of the successor to the PCA; whereas the ECT is already legally binding on all EU Member States and on Russia as a signatory pursuant to Article 45,

U. whereas close collaboration in the field of energy policy and the definition of a long-term energy strategy are preconditions for balanced development of the EU and Russian economies alike,

V. whereas the EU has often failed to speak with a common voice in its relations with Russia; whereas a functioning mechanism should exist within the Council, under the responsibility of the High Representative, which would enable Member States to consult each other sufficiently in advance on every bilateral issue with Russia which could have repercussions on other Member States and the EU as a whole,

W. whereas the ongoing economic crisis that is deeply affecting both Russia and the EU offers an opportunity for a new start for bilateral relations based on a better and franker mutual understanding that avoids the suspicions and the shortfalls of the past and provides the basis for the definition and enhancement of real shared common values,

1. Addresses the following recommendations to the Council and the Commission and asks them to take them into account when pursuing the negotiations:

a) continue to insist on a broad, wide-ranging and legally binding agreement based on a shared commitment to human rights, covering the whole range of cooperation between the parties and representing a step up from the current PCA, both in terms of the depth of the commitments and the subjects covered; insist that the agreement should comprise enforcement mechanisms for its relevant parts;

b) insist on the fact that the violation by Russia of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia and its role in the gas dispute at the beginning of 2009 have seriously endangered relations between the EU and Russia and the negotiations on the new agreement;

c) insist that the EU's relationship with Russia must be based on respect for the rule of international law and all binding agreements and treaties to which Russia and EU Member States adhere, including the UN Charter, the ECHR and the ECT, as well as the rules and commitments incumbent on members of the OSCE and Council of Europe;

d) insist on the fact that a close partnership, enhanced cooperation and good neighbourly relations between the European Union and Russia, as well as the new policy of the US administration towards Russia, can create a stable foundation and a precondition for stability, security and prosperity in Europe and worldwide; in this framework, welcome the declarations of the US administration concerning the great potential for cooperation with Russia;

e) put in place a consultation mechanism, under the responsibility of the High Representative, which would enable Member States to consult each other sufficiently in advance on every bilateral issue – whether an agreement or a dispute – with Russia which could have repercussions on other Member States and the EU as a whole, thereby allowing for the adoption by the EU of a position which is as coherent as possible by ensuring that the concerns of every Member State are fully taken into account and preventing any one Member State from blocking the negotiations at a later stage;

f) insist on reinforcing the role of the Parliamentary Cooperation Committee in the new agreement, so as to strengthen the parliamentary dimension of the cooperation between the EU and Russia;

g) reiterate the commitments agreed upon at international level by both the EU Member States and Russia, notably as members of the Council of Europe and the OSCE, and raise with the Russian Government concerns about the human rights situation and the shrinking space for Russia's civil society, urging it to uphold freedom of expression and association by bringing legislation regulating civil society into line with Russia's European and international commitments, to take prompt and effective steps to foster a favourable working climate for human rights organisations and independent charitable organisations engaged in the promotion of cultural links between Russia and EU Member States, and to stop intimidation and harassment of human rights defenders and refrain from harsh administrative measures against those organisations;

h) call on the Russian Government to fully respect media freedom and guarantee the enjoyment by independent media of political and economic conditions enabling them to function normally; urge the Russian Government to put an end to the continuous violence and persecution perpetrated against journalists;

i) recall President Medvedev's public commitment to strengthening the rule of law

in Russia and raise concerns over the independence of Russia's judiciary and legal system;

j) take the view that the regular six-monthly EU-Russia human rights consultation has failed to produce any tangible results since its establishment in 2005 and needs to be revised, in order to allow for a substantial and result-oriented dialogue on human and minority rights issues in both Russia and the EU and on EU-Russian cooperation on human rights issues in international forums;

k) insist, therefore, on a thorough overhaul of the EU-Russia human rights consultations, including the creation of a formal role for independent NGOs from Russia and the EU, the involvement of officials from all relevant departments of the Russian Government and an end to the issuing of separate communiqués by the Russian Government;

l) appeal to the authorities of the Russian Federation to guarantee the existence and sustainable development of the traditional lifestyle, culture and language of indigenous people living within its borders;

m) urge the Russian Government to implement fully the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights, providing an opportunity to promote accountability for past abuses and ensure an end to ongoing violations;

n) express strong concern at the situation in Chechnya, where Kadirov's regime has failed to bring peace and reconciliation and on the contrary has imposed fear and oppression that eroded civil society and suppressed any open and democratic voice, and call for a real political settlement;

o) stress that the programme for the support of Russian compatriots, supported by the Russian authorities, should not be misused as an instrument aimed at reinforcing political influence in certain EU Member States;

p) continue to maintain support for Russia's accession to the WTO and support the further opening-up of the Russian economy; regard full compliance by Russia with the

WTO rules as a necessary precondition and a minimum standard for the creation of a free-trade zone between the EU and Russia, which continues to be a long-term objective;

q) while welcoming the recent changes, call for further improvements to be made in legislation and law enforcement as regards the protection of intellectual, industrial and commercial property rights in order to increase competitiveness and make the investment climate attractive by approximating regulatory systems with the highest international standards and norms; urge the Russian authorities, ahead of and preceding Russia's forthcoming membership of the WTO, to align Part IV of Russia's Civil Code on Intellectual Property Rights and relevant procedural enforcement rules with WTO rules and international agreements, particularly the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), and to ensure full implementation thereof, so that counterfeiting and piracy can be effectively combated;

r) insist that the ECT, as an existing treaty which is legally binding on Russia and all EU Member States, should be the basis for relations in the field of energy and that the principles of the ECT and the Transit Protocol thereto should be incorporated in the new agreement, while reiterating its call on Russia to strengthen its commitment to a rules-based approach by ratifying the ECT and signing and ratifying the Transit Protocol, bearing in mind Parliament's opinion that the partners should be free to negotiate wording that goes beyond that of the ECT, as to the depth of cooperation and the areas covered by it, but that the agreement should in no circumstances be less comprehensive than that already subscribed to by the parties within the framework of the current PCA;

s) within the framework of the negotiations for the new agreement, finalise negotiations on the Transit Protocol and call on Russia to sign it in order to put in place a legal framework governing the transit of energy supplies between the parties which follows on from that already in place under the ECT;

t) underline the need for proper environmental impact assessments for all energy-related infrastructure projects, in order to guarantee that international standards of environmental protection are met; in this regard, urge the Russian Federation to ratify the Espoo Convention and the protocol thereto on Strategic Environmental Assessment;

u) call for a strengthening of the efficiency and crisis-response capacity of the EU-Russia energy dialogue, for increased transparency, reciprocity and security of investment and for a consequent enhancement of security of energy supply, and underline the need to establish mechanisms for a transparent rules-based system and dispute-settlement mechanism in the field of energy;

v) draw attention to the dispute-settlement mechanism contained in the ECT, already signed by Russia and Ukraine;

w) establish a clear code of conduct governing relations between the EU, Russia and the countries of the shared neighbourhood, including provisions relating to respect for the sovereign independence of all European states, a commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes and a determination to resolve frozen conflicts;

x) upgrade the existing political dialogue so as to encourage discussion of "hard security issues", which are often at the core of the disagreements between the EU and Russia but which indubitably affect European and global security, stressing the need for multilateral arms control and reduction, as well as for non-proliferation regimes;

y) call on the Russian Government to make – together with the EU and the other members of the Contact Group for Kosovo – a positive contribution to finding a sustainable political solution for the future of Kosovo and for the further enhancement of the stability of the Western Balkans;

z) call on the Russian Government to demonstrate its commitment to resolving in a constructive and peaceful manner, together with Georgia and the EU, the "modalities of security and stability in Abkhazia and South Ossetia" as agreed in the agreement of 12

August 2008; call on the Russian Government to provide tangible assurances that Russia will not resort to the use of force against any of its neighbours;

aa) raise concerns with the Russian Government regarding its decision to recognise Abkhazia and South Ossetia as sovereign states, to sign military-assistance and cooperation agreements with the de facto authorities of those two Georgian provinces and to establish military bases there, since these steps undermine the territorial integrity of Georgia as insisted upon by the relevant UN resolutions; call on Russia once again to reverse its decision and maintain that Russia cannot be regarded as an impartial moderator in the peace process; urge the Russian Government to ensure that EU monitors are granted full access to all areas affected by the conflict, in compliance with the mandate of the EU Monitoring Mission;

ab) insist that the goal of visa-free travel vis-à-vis Russia be pursued in the light of Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001²², which states that exemption from a visa requirement should be subject to a considered assessment of a variety of criteria relating inter alia to illegal immigration, public policy and security and the EU's external relations with third countries, consideration being also given to the implications of regional coherence and reciprocity, bearing in mind that relations between the EU and white-listed third countries are typified by a special political dimension requiring those third countries to attain an appropriate level in terms of democratic values and fundamental rights;

ac) insist that visa facilitation for students, researchers and businessmen should be a priority in order to promote people-to-people contacts; insist, however, that any further liberalisation of the visa regime vis-à-vis Russia will be conditional on a corresponding liberalisation of the visa

arrangements vis-à-vis European Neighbourhood Policy countries, in order to avoid any discrepancies;

ad) in accordance with the EU-Russia agreement on facilitation of short-stay visas, request from the Russian authorities a clear commitment to reduce bureaucratic obstacles applied in a non-reciprocal manner with respect to all travellers, such as the need to have an invitation and to register upon arrival; bear in mind that the changes made in Russian visa rules in recent years and its ceasing to issue multiple-entry business visas may have negative consequences on business and commercial links between the EU and Russia; also bear in mind Parliament's view that facilitated travel for Russian passport holders should be limited to Russian residents only;

ae) urgently address the Kaliningrad transit and visa problem, possibly by providing for the whole of the Kaliningrad Oblast to be covered by the local border traffic regime;

af) insist that the EU-Russia relationship be based on the principles of liberalised and open markets and reciprocity of investment rights between the partners, and therefore demand that, in exchange for close and beneficial economic ties, the Russian Government guarantee the property rights of foreign investors and review the 2008 Strategic Sectors Law, which gives the Russian State broad discretion to discriminate against foreign investors, by contrast to the EU internal market which is freely open to Russian investors; demand that the law on investment in strategic sectors must be compatible with Russia's current and future obligations under the WTO as well as the current PCA;

ag) within the framework of the ongoing WTO accession negotiations, call on the Russian authorities not to suspend certain already negotiated and agreed commitments and to fully respect the 2004 EU-Russia agreement on WTO accession by eliminating all discriminatory charges, in particular for railway cargo, as well as to abolish export duties on untreated timber;

²² Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 of 15 March 2001 listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement (OJ L 81, 21.3.2001, p. 1)

ah) call on Russia to honour its commitment to phase out Siberian overflight payments and to sign the agreement reached on this issue at the summit in Samara;

ai) address with the Russian Government its plans to develop free trade agreements with certain countries, which may affect the creation of a common economic space with Russia;

aj) address a number of shipping-related concerns with the Russian Government, including free passage through the Pilawa strait, access for EU shipping to the passage to Asia along the Northern Russian territory, and the potential environmental hazards resulting from, inter alia, the growth of tanker traffic in the Baltic Sea;

ak) address with the Russian Government the issue of congestion on the EU common border, which remains a serious obstacle to EU-Russia trade and economic relations;

al) ask the Russian Federation to cooperate constructively with the EU with a view to resolving the status of break-away territories, including Transnistria, and to contribute to the strengthening of the sovereignty of the Moldovan Government, as a sine qua non for the stability of a key border region of the EU; stress that progress on this issue hinges upon the withdrawal of the Russian troops stationed inside Moldova, as pledged by Russia inter alia at the 1999 OSCE Istanbul Summit;

am) while recognising the positive aspects of the intensification of scientific cooperation between EU and Russia, call for further comprehensive analyses of the (security-related) impacts of Russia's possible association with the Seventh Framework Programme;

an) develop informal guidelines as to how the principles of solidarity and mutual accountability could underpin EU-Russia relations, with the aim of developing a more united and consistent policy vis-à-vis Russia;

2. Asks the Council and the Commission to keep Parliament and its Committee on Foreign Affairs regularly and fully informed of the progress of the negotiations and

reminds them that the PCA will need Parliament's approval;

3. Considers it important that mutual legal obligations should be strengthened through the early conclusion of the PCA and Russian accession to the WTO;

4. Instructs its President to forward this recommendation to the Council and, for information, to the Commission, the State Duma and the Government and the President of the Russian Federation.

**Yerevan Declaration on Prospects of
Cooperation in the Field of Transport in
the BSEC Region
(Yerevan, 27 March 2009)**

We, the Ministers of Transport of the BSEC Member States having gathered in Yerevan on 27 March, 2009, within the framework of the Armenian Chairmanship-in-Office of BSEC to discuss the prospects of cooperation in the field of transport and to define the ways and means of intensifying our cooperation,

Recognizing the necessity of following-up the implementation of the Joint Declarations previously adopted by the Ministers of Transport of the BSEC Member States;

Considering the role of transport as a basis for economic development and one of the major means for enhancing the trade among the BSEC Member States;

Stressing that the construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of the BSEC regional transport connections will stimulate further development of trade relations within the BSEC Region, as well as between Europe and Asia;

Reiterating the significance of the development of transport infrastructure, facilitation of transport procedures, development of multimodal transport flows, removing the physical and non-physical barriers in the region;

Acknowledging the entry into force of the Memorandum of Understanding on Coordinated Development of the Black Sea

Ring Highway and the work of the relevant Steering Committee;

Acknowledging the entry into force of the Memorandum of Understanding on Development of the Motorways of the Sea at the BSEC Region and the work of the relevant Ad Hoc Working Group;

Welcoming the work of the BSEC Steering Committee for Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region, and the fruitful results of the BSEC Public-Private Round Table Meeting;

Acknowledging the signing by some Member States the Agreements on Simplification of Visa Procedures for Professional Lorry Drivers and for the Businesspeople Nationals of the BSEC Member States;

Taking into consideration the need for developing further cooperation in the civil aviation sector and to explore the possibilities for cooperation in this field;

Recognizing the need to deepen the cooperative relations with the relevant international organizations and financial institutions, as well as other stakeholders of transport sector;

Acknowledging the importance for the BSEC Member States of the full and effective implementation of the UNECE International Agreements and Conventions in the field of transport and the UNECE contribution in promoting coordinated development of Euro-Asian transport links and international transport facilitation;

Emphasizing the further development of sustainable interaction between BSEC and the EU, as well as international organizations and institutions, such as UN ECE, UN ESCAP, TRACECA, CIS, EurAsEC, IRF, IRU, with the aim to promote the BSEC operations on transport interconnections between Europe and Asia;

Have agreed:

1. To further exert joint efforts for promoting the sustainable and efficient transport operations based on mutually acceptable transport policies in the BSEC Member States;

2. To elaborate efficient transport connections facilitated procedures within the transport networks prioritized in the framework of BSEC, including the development of multimodal transport and further reinforcement of trade flows among the BSEC Member States, as well as between Europe and Asia;

3. To realize by the Member States the concrete projects on the coordinated development of the Black Sea Ring Highway, as identified by the objectives and provisions provided for in the respective MoU;

4. To make efforts for accelerating the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Development of Motorways of the Sea at the BSEC Region resolving the main essential issues of conceptual nature and shaping a harmonized approach based on common interest in accordance with principles of feasibility, sustainable development, safety and security;

5. To make further efforts for the implementation of the BSEC MoU on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods;

6. To call upon the BSEC Member States to consider the possibility of entering the Agreements on Simplification of Visa Procedures for Professional Lorry Drivers and for the Businesspeople Nationals of the BSEC Member States into force;

7. To identify and elaborate joint priority projects of regional impact, and consider the possibility of their implementation through existing BSEC mechanisms, Public-Private Partnership and other funding schemes with the support of other international organizations and financial institutions;

8. To continue close cooperation with the international transport organizations aiming at the development of integrated transport networks;

9. To invite BSEC Member States that have not yet done so to adhere to all major UNECE International Agreements and Conventions in the field of transport and effectively implement them and encourage BSEC-UNECE enhanced cooperation in the fields of development of Euro-Asian

transport links and international transport facilitation, including organization of joint events;

10. To continue the efforts for organizing training seminars and conferences aimed at the exchange of experiences and best practices in the transport sector among experts of the BSEC Member States, other countries and international organizations;

The Ministers expressed gratitude to the Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Armenia for the hospitality extended to the delegations and the excellent organization of the Meeting in Yerevan. 2009.

Yerevan Declaration on Energy Cooperation in the BSEC Region (Yerevan, 20 March 2009)

We, the Ministers of Energy of the BSEC Member States having gathered in Yerevan on 20 March 2009 to discuss the state of cooperation in the field of energy and to define the ways and means of intensifying our cooperation in the framework of BSEC, as well as between the BSEC and the EU:

Emphasizing the need to ensure energy security and the reliable energy supplies in the BSEC region;

Acknowledging in this context the ever increasing importance and significance of the wider Black Sea area for regional, European and wider international energy security and the need for broad international cooperation;

Guided by the provisions of the Istanbul Summit Declaration, adopted by the Heads of State and Government of BSEC Member States on the occasion of the 15th Anniversary of BSEC on 25 June 2007 in Istanbul, as well as other BSEC Declarations;

Reaffirming our commitment to the provisions of BSEC Declarations and Joint Statement on Cooperation in Energy, adopted by BSEC Ministers of Energy in Baku (2003), Alexandroupolis (2005), Sochi (2006) and Kyiv (2008);

Attaching great importance to the cooperation in the field of energy between the BSEC and the EU in order to develop secure, stable and integrated energy markets;

Taking into account the EU energy policies towards the Black Sea and Caspian region, in particular regional initiatives, programs and projects in the field of energy and underlining the need for closer coordination to enhance the synergy effect;

Welcoming in this regard the adoption of the "Proposals for the Joint BSEC-EU Plan of Action in Energy" and expressing our commitment to its further elaboration;

Considering the possibility of developing, together with interested parties, the regional cooperation in the field of energy as a foundation for sustainable development in the wider Black Sea area, as well as between the BSEC and the EU;

Recognizing BSEC as an advanced, inclusive and comprehensive institutional cooperation framework in the Black Sea Region and the need for additional measures to further promote cooperation in the field of energy;

Welcoming the work done by ICBSS on the regional energy studies;

Have agreed to:

Undertake collective efforts towards elaboration of a common approach to energy security in the wider Black Sea area;

Develop inter-system connections of the energy markets of the BSEC Member States with the aim to further integrate them as well as diminish individual risks of the BSEC Member States;

Facilitate the development of infrastructure to ensure the integration of the energy markets of the BSEC and the EU Member States, diversification of energy supplies and enhancing energy security both at the national level, as well as at the level of the BSEC and the EU;

Encourage cooperation with the Energy Community and make efforts towards further development of the integrated energy market in the South-Eastern Europe linked to the EU market;

Study the possibility of the elaboration of projects of common interest for the BSEC and the EU in the sectors of oil, natural gas and electricity as well as in renewable energy and energy efficiency;

Elaborate a coordinated policy among BSEC Member States towards the increasing of energy efficiency and development of renewable sources of energy. Develop practical and purpose-oriented cooperation to adhere in this direction with the EU;

Take steps to further elaborate on the Joint BSEC-EU Plan of Action in energy with the aim of its adoption by both sides;

Organize in due course a conference on energy to discuss the outcomes of the regional studies and define ways for elaboration of the BSEC regional energy strategy.

We express our gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Armenia for the warm hospitality and excellent organization of the present Ministerial Meeting.

**Council of the European Union
Presidency Conclusions
(Brussels, 20 March 2009)**

[...]

Enhancing the Union's energy security

24. Energy security is a key priority which needs to be enhanced by improving energy efficiency, diversifying energy suppliers, sources and supply routes, and promoting the Union's energy interests vis-à-vis third countries. In order to deliver on energy security, the EU collectively, as well as each Member State, must be prepared to combine solidarity with responsibility. In that light, the European Council endorses the broad initiatives set out in the Second Strategic Energy Review (SER) and further refined in the Council (TTE) conclusions of 19 February 2009. In particular, it agrees on the following:

-Energy infrastructures and interconnections must be developed. To that end, the Commission, in cooperation with Member

States, is invited to rapidly present the detailed actions required to realise the priority areas identified in the SER²³. These actions are without prejudice to other agreed priority energy projects. Looking to the longer term, the Commission is invited to present early in 2010 its proposal for a new EU Energy Security and Infrastructure Instrument.

-The recent gas crisis has demonstrated the urgent need to establish adequate crisis mechanisms in the EU as well as to work to obtain clear guarantees from suppliers and transit partners that supplies will not be interrupted. The Council should examine by the end of 2009 the forthcoming Commission proposals to revise legislation on the security of gas supply. This should include an appropriate crisis mechanism ensuring the preparedness of all actors, including the energy industry, transparency and prior information through the development of EU and regional plans for security of supply; solidarity among Member States through the development of regional plans; and improved assessment and coordination through the redefinition of the threshold for deciding actions at Community level.

[...]

-Stressing the importance of diversifying sources, fuels and routes of energy supply, the European Council underlines the increasingly important part played by energy in the EU's external relations. It invites the Commission to present by the end of the year proposals for concrete action on the development of the Southern corridor including a mechanism to facilitate access to Caspian gas. It is of particular importance for the EU and its Member States to continue delivering consistent messages ("speaking with one voice") to supplier and transit countries.

[...]

²³ Southern Gas Corridor, a diverse and adequate LNG supply for Europe, effective interconnection of the Baltic region, the Mediterranean Energy Ring, adequate North-South gas and electricity interconnection within Central and SE Europe and the North Sea and North West Offshore Grid.

III. European Neighbourhood Policy Eastern Partnership

29. Promoting stability, good governance and economic development in its Eastern neighbourhood is of strategic importance for the European Union. In line with the Commission communication of 3 December 2008, the European Council welcomes the establishment of an ambitious Eastern Partnership and adopts the Declaration annexed to these conclusions. It calls for all necessary preparations to be made for the Eastern Partnership launching summit with the partner countries on 7 May 2009.

30. The Eastern Partnership will promote stability and prosperity among the EU's Eastern partners covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy. The European Council commits, on the terms set out in the declaration, to a deeper bilateral engagement and to a new multilateral framework involving the EU, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, aiming at accelerating reforms, legislative approximation and further economic integration.

31. The European Council further calls on the Commission as well as the current and incoming Presidencies to advance speedily with the practical implementation of the Partnership together with the partners and requests the Commission to submit in due course a report on the first year of implementation of the Eastern Partnership.

[...]

Declaration by the European Council on the Eastern Partnership (Brussels, 20 March 2009)

1. Promoting stability, good governance and economic development in its Eastern neighbourhood is of strategic importance for the European Union. The EU therefore has a strong interest in developing an increasingly close relationship with its Eastern partners, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. The European Union's proposal for an ambitious

Eastern Partnership to be established with these countries serves this objective.

The Eastern Partnership will bring about a significant strengthening of EU policy with regard to its Eastern partners by seeking to create the necessary conditions for political association and further economic integration between the European Union and its Eastern partners through the development of a specific Eastern dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy. To achieve this, the Eastern Partnership seeks to support political and socio-economic reforms, facilitating approximation and convergence towards the European Union. In the same vein, the Eastern Partnership will help to build trust and develop closer ties among the six Eastern partners themselves.

2. Work under the Eastern Partnership will go ahead without prejudice to individual participating countries' aspirations for their future relationship with the European Union. The Eastern Partnership will be governed by the principles of joint ownership, differentiation and conditionality. Shared values including democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights will be at its core, as well as the principles of market economy, sustainable development and good governance. Increased European Union engagement will be in line with the main goals of the Eastern Partnership, depending on the progress made by individual partners. Increased financial support in line with the Commission's proposal of €600m for the period to 2013 will respect the resources available under the multiannual Financial Framework, including adequate margins.

3. There will be effective complementarity between the Eastern Partnership and existing regional initiatives in the EU's neighbourhood, in particular the Black Sea Synergy. The European Council underlines the EU's commitment to strengthen the Black Sea Synergy and to support its implementation, noting that its focus is on regional cooperation in the Black Sea region, whereas the Eastern Partnership focuses on approximation and will strengthen the links of partner countries with the EU. The

Eastern Partnership will also be developed in parallel with the bilateral cooperation between the EU and third countries.

4. Bilateral cooperation under the Eastern Partnership should provide the foundation for new Association Agreements between the EU and those partners who have made sufficient progress towards the principles and values set out in paragraph 2 above and who are willing and able to comply with the resulting commitments including the establishment, or the objective of establishing, deep and comprehensive free trade areas. The European Union's Comprehensive Institution-Building Programmes will help the participating countries to improve their administrative capacity. The Eastern Partnership will promote mobility of citizens of partner countries through visa facilitation and readmission agreements. The EU, in line with the Global Approach to Migration, should also take gradual steps towards full visa liberalisation as a long term goal for individual partner countries and on a case by case basis provided that conditions for well-managed and secure mobility are in place. The Eastern Partnership aims to strengthen the energy security cooperation of all participants with regard to long-term energy supply and transit, including through better regulation and energy efficiency. It will put at the disposal of partners the EU's expertise in social and economic development policies.

5. The multilateral framework of the Eastern Partnership will provide for cooperation activities and dialogue serving the objectives of the Partnership. It should operate on a basis of joint decisions of EU member states and Eastern partners, without prejudice to the decision making autonomy of the EU.

The European Council proposes to hold regular meetings in principle once every two years at the level of Heads of State or Government of the Eastern Partnership, and once a year at the level of Foreign Ministers. Four thematic platforms should be established according to the main areas of cooperation (Democracy, good governance and stability; Economic integration and convergence with EU policies; Energy

security; and Contacts between people). The European Council also supports the launching of Flagship Initiatives in order to give momentum and concrete substance to the Partnership. The EU looks forward to an early discussion with the partners in this regard.

Third countries will be eligible for participation on a case-by-case basis in concrete projects, activities and meetings of thematic platforms, where it contributes to the objectives of particular activities and the general objectives of the Eastern Partnership.

6. The Eastern Partnership will engage a wide range of actors, including government ministries and agencies, parliaments, civil society, international organisations, financial institutions and the private sector.

7. On the basis of this Declaration, the EU will conduct the necessary consultations with Eastern partners with a view to preparing a Joint Declaration on the Eastern Partnership to be adopted at the Eastern Partnership launching summit on 7 May 2009. The European Council looks forward to launching the Eastern Partnership as a common endeavour with partners, being confident that this initiative will advance the cause of good governance, increase prosperity and strengthen stability, bringing lasting and palpable benefits to the citizens of all participating countries.

Joint Statement Following the Working Meeting of the Coordinators of the EU - Russia Energy Dialogue (Moscow, 20 March 2009)

A working meeting of the coordinators of the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue, Minister of Energy of the Russian Federation Sergey Shmatko and Member of the European Commission responsible for energy Andris Piebalgs, took place on 20 March 2009 in Moscow under the chairmanship of Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Igor Sechin.

The Parties examined the status and perspectives of cooperation in the field of energy and:

- took note of the timeliness of the structural changes that were carried out in the Energy Dialogue and the formation of the thematic groups in line with the priority directions of cooperation in the fields of strategies, forecasts and scenarios, market developments, and energy efficiency. This allowed streamlining the Dialogue with today's realities and giving a new impetus to its further development;

- agreed to continue discussion on basic principles of cooperation between the EU and Russia in the field of energy. Under the guidance of these principles it is possible to minimise the negative consequences under the global financial and economic crisis and lower the risks to stable production, transportation and consumption of energy resources;

- expressed support to the implementation of all infrastructure projects that aim at diversifying the supply of hydrocarbons to the EU, and also to the connection of the energy systems UCTE and IPS/UPS through back-to-back direct current links in order to provide energy security for the EU and Russia;

- positively assessed the work of the mission of international observers towards eliminating the consequences of the gas crisis and agreed to continue the process of monitoring of gas transit through the gas transportation system of Ukraine in order to ensure the supply of Russian gas to European consumers;

- agreed on further steps concerning the finalisation of the early warning mechanism for crisis situations with a view of not only predicting their emergence but also of reacting in a timely and prompt manner to disruptions of the supply of energy carriers to the EU in order to minimise possible damage, including via relevant preventive measures.

**EU External Relations Council
Conclusions on the
Eastern Partnership
(Brussels, 23 February 2009)**

[...]

Ministers discussed over lunch preparations for the launch of the EU's Eastern Partnership, on the basis of input from the Presidency and the Commission (a presidency paper, a presidency progress report, and a communication from the Commission).

They reaffirmed the political commitment by the December 2008 European Council to establish the Eastern Partnership.

They also noted that there were a number of issues, such as visa liberalisation, the articulation between the Eastern Partnership and the Black Sea Synergy, the participation of Third countries or the financing, which will require further discussion as part of the process of developing and implementing the Eastern Partnership.

The relevant Council bodies will now start working on preparations for the Spring European Council, which is expected to establish the Eastern Partnership.

The Eastern Partnership is a multinational forum formed by the EU member states and six eastern Europe and southern Caucasus states: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. It is intended to facilitate the negotiation of free trade zones for services and agricultural products, as well as partnership agreements and visa agreements.

[...]

**Council of the European Union
Conclusions on "Second Strategic Energy
Review - An EU Energy Security and
Solidarity Action Plan"
(Brussels, 19 February 2009)**

The Council agrees to the following priorities:

I. Short term Priorities

Efforts for interconnection and diversification of energy suppliers, sources and supply routes must intensify, notably in the gas sector, as was proved during the recent unprecedented interruption of gas supplies from Russia via Ukraine to the EU. In order to provide for the infrastructure needs and diversification of energy supplies of a well integrated EU energy market and to be able to prevent possible future major supply disruptions in gas or other energy sectors or cope with their consequences, the Council agrees to:

- Carrying out further work on the six priority infrastructure actions: the Southern gas corridor, a diverse and adequate LNG supply for Europe, effective interconnection of the Baltic region, the Mediterranean Energy Ring, adequate North-South gas and electricity interconnections within Central and South-East Europe, and the North Sea and North West Offshore Grid, as outlined in the 2nd Strategic Energy Review. These actions are without prejudice to ongoing TEN-E projects and to the discussion on concrete projects in the context of both the TEN-E policy revision, the European Recovery Plan and decisions on financing that will be taken in accordance with applicable budgetary and financial rules or to the financing of other infrastructure that may contribute to diversify suppliers, sources and routes in a geographically balanced way and to enhance connectivity for central as well as peripheral European energy markets.

[...]

- Exploring the feasibility of a mechanism, in line with EU competition rules, which would facilitate access to Caspian gas with a view to enabling competitive new gas sources to come onto the European market and the necessary infrastructure to be constructed.

[...]

Due to increasing energy demand worldwide and in order to ensure a more diversified and secure supply, energy policy represents a key part of external relations of the EU and its Member States. Building on the "Energy

Policy for Europe" Action Plan²⁴, the Council stresses that it is important to:

- Ensure that the EU and its Member States deliver consistent messages ("speaking with one voice"), drawing from the experience of the January gas supply crisis, on external energy issues in their dialogues with supplier, transit and consumer countries.

- Messages to third countries should be consistent with the EU policy objectives, focusing on the reduction of GHG, energy efficiency, renewables and low-emission technologies

- Step up energy relationships with third countries and regions, that should be based on the *acquis* and on the principles of the Energy Charter Treaty, notably through:

- Rapid development of the Eastern Partnership while ensuring complementarity with all other forms of cooperation already existing in the Union's neighbourhood, such as the Black Sea synergy, in line with the conclusions of the December 2008 European Council

- Further development of Energy cooperation with Russia

- Continued high level political engagement with supplier and transit countries along the Southern Corridor

- Accession of Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova and pursuing further accessions to the Energy Community Treaty

- Strengthened cooperation with Mediterranean countries

- Further develop a common approach to external energy policy to support EU, Member States and companies to develop energy cooperation, by defining a common agenda towards energy partner countries and developing new broad-based partnerships.

- Increase transparency and reliability through meaningful exchange of information between the Commission and Member States

²⁴ European Council Action Plan (2007 – 2009), Energy Policy for Europe, heading III International Energy Policy

level on energy relations, including long term supply arrangements, with third countries while preserving commercially-sensitive information.

**Declaration by the Presidency on Behalf of the EU on Russian Plans to Build up its Military Presence in Abkhazia and South Ossetia
(Prague, 5 February 2009)**

The European Union is seriously concerned about the plans announced by the Russian Federation to build up its military presence in the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia without the consent of the Government of Georgia. Among other things, this applies to Russian plans to construct a naval installation on the coast of Abkhazia.

The EU would consider the implementation of such plans to be a serious violation of the principle of Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, to which the EU is strongly committed. Any military build-up in Abkhazia and South Ossetia would be in contradiction with the spirit of the August and September 2008 ceasefire agreements and jeopardise stability and security in the region by further increasing tensions.

The EU expects Russia to act in a responsible manner and to continue to implement all its commitments. The EU also calls on Russia to use all relevant international fora, in particular the talks in Geneva, to discuss security matters.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and Azerbaijan, align themselves with this declaration.

* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

**Declaration of the Budapest Nabucco Summit
(Budapest, 27 January 2009)**

We, the participants of the Nabucco Summit held in Budapest on the 27th of January 2009,

Attaching great importance to the diversification of hydrocarbon sources, markets and routes of delivery based on the principles of market economy, transparency, reliability, predictability, free competition and mutual benefits, as well as to the uninterrupted and secure supply of natural gas for the domestic markets of all countries at competitive prices and conditions,

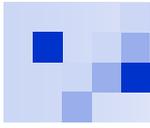
Considering that the harmonisation of the interests of energy consumers, suppliers, transit countries and energy companies is a prerequisite of the overall energy security, which will also contribute to the economic development and prosperity of the countries concerned,

Underlining that the growing interdependence between energy producing, consuming and transit countries requires a strengthened partnership among all stakeholders with a view to enhancing energy security,

Emphasising, against the background of growing energy supply concerns in the transit and consumer countries, the viability of additional energy supply projects, complementing deliveries from existing routes and suppliers,

Bearing in mind in this context the EU-Central Asia Strategy and the European Neighbourhood Policy, as important frameworks for enhancing relations of the European Union and countries of the Caspian Sea region and the Middle East in the field of energy security,

Aware of the necessity to create a new energy corridor (the Southern Energy Corridor) linking the European Union, Turkey and Georgia to the Caspian Sea region and the Middle East,



Considering Nabucco an innovative, viable and robust priority project to directly connect the natural gas suppliers of the Caspian Sea region and the Middle East to the European Union, Turkey and Georgia, and encouraging the upcoming European Council to be held on 19-20 March 2009 to place Nabucco among the Union's priority energy projects,

Reiterating the importance of the Ministerial Statement on the Nabucco Gas Pipeline project signed in Vienna on 26 June 2006,

Acknowledging the progress achieved in the preparation of this project due inter alia to the efforts made by the countries party to the project, the European Commission, the Nabucco International Ltd. and other stakeholders to further accelerate the early implementation phase, to secure the necessary volumes of natural gas for the pipeline, to complete the legal framework (intergovernmental agreement and project support agreements), and to exempt the project from the EU Gas Directive according to the provisions of Article 22,

Welcoming all endeavours aimed at increasing the natural gas production in the countries of the Caspian Sea region and the Middle East, in particular the efforts the Republic of Azerbaijan makes to develop Shah Deniz and other gas fields, as well as the efforts of other interested partners to transport gas through the Caspian Sea to the consumer countries, which fit well with the goals of the Nabucco pipeline project,

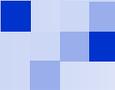
Highly appreciating the results of the Baku Energy Summit of the 14th of November 2008, particularly concerning the Nabucco project,

Reiterating our strong commitment to the Nabucco pipeline project,

Deciding to further expand the mutually beneficial cooperation among the producer, transit and consumer countries, international institutions and energy companies to create the necessary political, legal, economic and financial conditions for the successful and prompt realization of the Nabucco pipeline project,

We express our willingness to

- support the development of a clear, transparent and cost-based transmission regime along the entire length of the Nabucco pipeline;
- strongly encourage foreign direct investment in the source and transit countries, as well as the transfer of know-how and technology, which require active participation of energy companies;
- foster cooperation among the European Union, its Member States, Turkey, Georgia, the countries of the Caspian Sea region and the Middle East, aiming at the creation of an effective energy partnership including reliable ways of meeting the domestic needs of producing countries, transit countries and European markets;
- actively support all initiatives and proposals that would secure the above objectives, *inter alia*
 - the proposal of the European Commission and Turkey to establish the Caspian Development Corporation, a concerted sector initiative to combine political, legal and commercial resources to build a strong link across the Caspian Sea;
 - Turkmenistan's intention to hold a high-level conference in 2009 based on the Resolution of the 63rd Session the United Nations General Assembly on the Reliable and Stable Transit of Energy and Its Role in Ensuring the Sustainable Development and International Cooperation initiated by Turkmenistan;
 - the Sofia Energy Summit "Natural Gas for Europe: Security and Partnership" to take place on 24-25 April 2009;
 - the "Southern Corridor Summit" to be organized by the Czech Presidency of the Council of the European Union on 7 May 2009;
 - the closing event of the Nabucco Intergovernmental Conference and signing of the agreement in the first half of 2009 in Turkey.



**Council of the European Union
EU Declaration on the Russia/Ukraine
Problem and Energy Security
(Brussels, 8 January 2009)**

1. The present situation caused by interruptions of gas supplies from Russia via the Ukraine creates serious difficulties for a number of EU countries. Given the importance attached to solidarity within the EU, this is a problem for the EU as such. It is unacceptable for the EU to see its citizens and enterprises suffering from gas shortages due to the non respect by both partner countries of their contractual obligations.

2. With the first evidence of gas supply reductions in early January 2009, the EU has undertaken concerted efforts to facilitate the dialogue between Russia and the Ukraine. Both sides have to date shown insufficient determination to solve the problem, which damages their credibility. The EU, however, expects that the current negotiations will bring a quick solution. It urges Russia and the Ukraine to honour their obligations as supplier respectively transit country and to immediately resume normal deliveries to the European market.

3. The EU calls on both parties to accept independent monitoring of the actual flows of gas through the pipelines.

4. A special Energy Council will take place on 12 January in order to look at the situation on the energy market, including monitoring, and to discuss the concrete measures to be taken.

5. The EU also insists on the necessity to create the conditions for a long term solution, based on internationally recognized principles, thus putting an end to regularly occurring crises in the midst of winter.

6. Security of energy supply is a priority for the EU. It involves the responsibility and solidarity of all the Member States. Therefore, the EU will speed up work on the various energy security initiatives mentioned under paragraph 17 of the October EC conclusions. Particular emphasis will be put on priority interconnections both within the EU and with supplier and transit countries, increased transparency, and the developing of crisis mechanisms to tackle temporary supply disruptions. Energy security will be on the agenda of the upcoming General Affairs Councils with a view to reaching decisions at the Spring European Council.

Recent Publications by the ICBSS



Stribis, Ioannis. "Black Sea Sectoral Partnerships: A Tentative Model." *Policy Brief*, no. 14. Athens: ICBSS, April 2009.

The launch of the Black Sea Synergy initiative by the European Union brought into the discussion the concept of the Black Sea Sectoral Partnerships as tools for the effective implementation of this policy, linking stakeholders from the region (the European Union, the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation and their member states) and beyond. The exact modalities of such Partnerships remain however unclear. After a short presentation of the relevant experience acquired in the framework of the Northern Dimension, the Policy Brief endeavours to identify the main elements that are necessary in order to develop effective Black Sea Partnerships. In this respect a Partnership should therefore be project- or programme-oriented, ensure the participation of and ownership by all interested stakeholders, provide for meaningful funding opportunities and have a smooth and efficient governance scheme. Particular attention should be paid as well to the process of the generation of ideas that would eventually be developed as concrete Partnerships.

Gultekin-Punsmann, Burcu. "The Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform: An Attempt to Foster Regional Accountability". *Policy Brief*, no. 13. Athens: ICBSS, April 2009.

The August 2008 war in Georgia brought sudden instability and unpredictability in the area immediately beyond Turkey's northeastern border. Turkey has traditionally kept a low profile in the South Caucasus and was concerned with the preservation of the status quo in the region, despite all the divides, blockades and trade restrictions. The Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform, announced in the context of increasing polarisation and harsh rhetoric, allowed the channels of communication and dialogue with Russia to remain open. The opening towards Armenia, that triggered a new momentum in the normalisation of Turkish – Armenian relations, has brought important credibility to the Caucasus Platform initiative. For the first time, the good Turkish – Russian understanding is being used to solve problems in the common geographical neighbourhood. The Georgian – Ossetian and the Russian – Georgian wars have been a wake-up call for the countries of the region. Hopefully this will lead to regional accountability as the countries of the region have started to assess the costs of the conflicts.





Tsantoulis, Yannis. “Black Sea Synergy and Eastern Partnership: Different Centres of Gravity, Complementarity or Confusing Signals?” *Policy Brief*, no. 12, February 2009.

This comparative analysis is primarily based on the two Communications published by the European Commission entitled *Black Sea Synergy – A New Regional Cooperation Initiative* of 11 April 2007 and *Eastern Partnership* of 3 December 2008, and on the *Commission Staff Working Document* accompanying the *Eastern Partnership*. The basic idea is to

analyse the key features of both the Black Sea Synergy and the Eastern Partnership and consider the impact of these two policy approaches for the region as a whole. Overall, the objective is to briefly assess the content of these two policy initiatives/approaches and examine their interaction and the level of their complementarity – if there is any. To this end, after a brief and focused presentation of each policy, this paper undertakes a more detailed comparative analysis of the key official documents launching the Black Sea Synergy and the Eastern Partnership reflecting thus on the potential implications and the probability of a future *modus vivendi*.

Japaridze, Tedo. “A Memo on How to Make the EU – BSEC Relations Relevant and Productive”. *Policy Brief*, no. 11, February 2009.

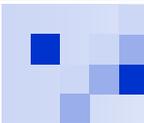
In light of the recent emergence of the “Black Sea Synergy” and the “Eastern Partnership”, and following the developments in the wider Black Sea area, the European Union and the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) need to explore in a more efficient and critical manner the perspectives of their interaction in the foreseeable future. The purpose of this Policy Brief is to consider certain built-in structural and institutional elements in the relations of these two institutions, and to identify balances, some loopholes as well as some risks in their interaction, reflecting on some regional perceptions and misperceptions which nourish or even re-shape the existing reality in the region and in the EU.

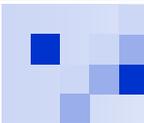


Other Recent Publications on the Black Sea Region

The following are selected recent publications pertinent to the Black Sea region

1. Prystayko, Olena. "Eastern Partnership – threat or chance for Russia?" *EU-Russia Centre*, 12 May 2009.
2. Munteanu, Igor, coord. *The Black Sea Region: A Security Minefield or a Partnership Road? A Plea towards Enhanced Solidarity and Cooperation in the EU Neighbourhood*. Intra-regional Perspectives on the Black Sea Affairs, Discussions Papers, no.4. Bucharest: Editura Cartier, May 2009.
3. Wallace, Helen. "The European Union and its Neighbourhood: Time for a Rethink". ELIAMEP Thesis 4/2009. Athens: ELIAMEP, May 2009.
4. Torbakov, Igor, and Hanna Ojanen. "Looking for a New Strategic Identity: Is Turkey Emerging as an Independent Regional Power?" *Briefing Paper*, no. 30. Helsinki: The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 7 May 2009.
5. Karatnycky, Adrian, and Alexander Motyl. "The Key to Kiev: Ukraine's Security Means Europe's Stability". *Foreign Affairs* 88, no 3 (May-June 2009).
6. Rumer, Eugene, and Angela Stent. "Russia and the West". *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy* 51, no. 2 (April-May 2009).
7. Akçakoca, Amanda et al. "After Georgia: Conflict Resolution in the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood". *EPC Issue Paper*, no. 57. Brussels: European Policy Centre, 29 April 2009.
8. Dura, George, and Elena Gnedina. "Moldova's 'Wannabe Democracy' is Worth Rescuing". *CEPS Policy Brief*, no. 185. Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies, 23 April 2009.
9. Glenn, John. "The Myth of 'Exporting' Democracy: Lessons from Eastern Europe after 1989". *GMF Policy Brief*. Washington, D.C.: The German Marshall Fund of the US, 21 April 2009.
10. Sherr, James. "Moldova's Crisis: More than a Local Difficulty". *REP Briefing Note*. London: Chatham House, 17 April 2009.
11. Ordzhonikidze, Maria. "The EU and Russia: How to Move Forward". *EU-Russia Centre*, 6 April 2009.
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13. Giragosian, Richard. "The Military Balance of Power in the South Caucasus". *ACNIS Policy Brief*, no. 2. Yerevan: The Armenian Centre for National and International Studies, April 2009.
14. Kassenova, Nargis. "The Gas Crisis and the Financial Crisis: The Impact on EU-Central Asia Relations in the Energy Sphere". *ISS Opinion*. Paris: Institute for Security Studies, April 2009.
15. Lesser, Ian. "The Obama Visit and After: Changing Style and Substance in US-Turkish Relations". *On Turkey*. Washington, D.C.: The German Marshall Fund of the U.S., April 2009.
16. Valasek, Tomas. "What the Economic Crisis Means to the EU's Eastern Policy". *Policy Brief*. London: Center for European Reform, April 2009.
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18. Fernandes, Sandra Dias. "Time to Reassess the European Security Architecture? The NATO-EU-Russia Security Triangle". *EPIN Working Paper*, no. 22. Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies, 31 March 2009.

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19. Cohen, Ariel, ed. "Russia and Eurasia: A Realistic Policy Agenda for the Obama Administration". *Special Report*, no. 49. Washington, D.C.: The Heritage Foundation, 27 March 2009.
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 21. Vinatier, Laurent. "A Suspended Sentence for Ukraine before the next Gas Dispute?" *Thomas More Institute*, 4 March 2009.
 22. McDermott, Roger. "Russia's Armed Forces: The Powers of Illusion". *Russie.Nei. Visions*. no 37. Brussels: Institut Français des Relations Internationales, March 2009.
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 28. Moshes, Arkady. "EU-Russia Relations: Unfortunate Continuity". *European Issues*, no. 129. Paris/Brussels: Robert Schuman Foundation, 24 February 2009.
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 41. Nikolov, Krassimir, ed. *Assessing the Common Spaces between the European Union and Russia*. Sofia: Bulgarian European Community Studies Association, February 2009.
 42. Olcott, Martha Brill. "A New Direction for U.S. Policy in the Caspian Region". *Policy Brief*. Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 2009.
 43. Roberts, John. "Russia and the CIS: Energy Relations in the Wake of the Russia-Ukraine Gas Crisis." *ISS Opinion*. Paris: Institute for Security Studies, February 2009.
 44. Sherr, James. "Europe, Russia, Ukraine and Energy: Final Warning". *The World Today* 65, no. 2 (February 2009).
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NEWS and EVENTS

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

The European Policy Centre (EPC) in cooperation with the Permanent International Secretariat of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC PERMIS) and the ICBSS organised a Round Table discussion on "The BSEC and the EU: Prospects for Enhanced Interaction" in Brussels on 29 April 2009.

ICBSS OUTREACH PROGRAMME

A Round Table Discussion on "Debating the EU's New Eastern Policy: The Black Sea Synergy and the Eastern Partnership" was organised jointly by the ICBSS and the Centre for Eastern Studies (OSW) in Athens on 3 April 2009.



2ND INTERNATIONAL BLACK SEA SYMPOSIUM "THE BLACK SEA REGION: THE STATE OF PLAY AND THE WAY FORWARD"

Over 120 young professionals from 25 countries applied to participate in the event to be held on the island of Kalymnos, Dodecanese, Greece on 30 June – 5 July 2009.

Following on from the success of the 2008 International Symposium, over 120 young professionals from 25 countries have applied to participate in this year's event, exceeding the expectations not only in number but also in the overall high level of qualifications of the applicants. Approx. 40 participants will have the opportunity to gain insights into issues of importance for the future development of the Black Sea region during a four-day intensive course of interactive sessions and workshops. Prominent experts will lead sessions focusing inter alia on the role of key stakeholders, the protracted conflicts, energy security, or EU-Russian relations. Sessions alternate with workshops on conflict resolution guided by expert facilitator Prof. Benjamin Broome (Arizona State University). In smaller groups participants will develop action recommendations for policy makers and civil society as well as project ideas to be pursued by the participants themselves after the end of the Symposium.

The International Black Sea Symposium (IBSS) has been created in order to contribute to dialogue, understanding and cooperation in the Black Sea region and beyond. It does so by providing a forum for study, dialogue and networking in a multicultural and interdisciplinary environment. The

target group are young professionals (22-35 years old), such as policy-makers, academics, journalists, diplomats, Members of Parliament, entrepreneurs, civil society leaders and researchers, primarily from the countries of the wider Black Sea area, EU member states, the United States and Central Asia.

The 2nd International Black Sea Symposium is organised and hosted by the ICBSS in cooperation with and with the support of the following partners:

Bertelsmann Stiftung; The Black Sea Trust, a project of the German Marshall Fund of the United States; Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV); EU-Russia Centre; Harvard Black Sea Security Program; Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs; The Hellenic Observatory, London School of Economics; Institute for Regional and International Studies, Sofia; Municipality of Kalymnos; New Eurasia Foundation; Open Ukraine Foundation; Postgraduate Programme on "Political, Economic and International Relations in the Mediterranean", Department of Mediterranean Studies, University of the Aegean; South Aegean Region.

For more information on the International Black Sea Symposium project visit our website or contact symposium@icbss.org.

THE COMMISSION ON THE BLACK SEA



The Commission on the Black Sea *is an initiative which aims to contribute to a joint vision and common strategy for the Black Sea region by developing new knowledge on areas of key concern.* Throughout 2009, the Commission will carry out a policy-oriented study on the future of the Black Sea region to be presented in a comprehensive report.

At the same time, the Commission will also make related policy recommendations addressed to the main actors in the Black Sea context. The four core themes to be addressed are: democracy, socio-economic welfare, regional cooperation, and security.

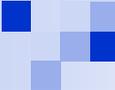
Project Initiators

The Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation, a project of the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMFUS BST), Romania; the Bertelsmann Stiftung, Germany; the Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV), Turkey; and the International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS), Greece; jointly developed the project and launched it in January 2009. All partners have extensive expertise on the region and have previously collaborated in the frame of other projects. This core group of partners jointly implements the project whilst actively seeking the involvement of further experts and actors.

Project Context

The Black Sea region is increasingly becoming a priority on the international agenda. In fact, a regional approach is gradually developing as actors understand that common problems need to be addressed jointly in order to find effective solutions. However, cooperation efforts are seriously hampered by a number of factors such as uneven economic and political development within and among countries, nationalist forces, and longstanding animosities between regional players. The August 2008 events in Georgia have clearly demonstrated the potential for violent escalation of unresolved conflicts and the negative impact of such events on the local population but also on the entire region. The same can be said of the winter 2008/2009 gas crisis between Ukraine and Russia.

In this context it is imperative to foster dialogue and devise cooperation policies so as to contain and ultimately resolve conflicts with peaceful means. However, little policy oriented research exists on the challenges and opportunities for cooperation in the Black Sea region, meaning that it is harder to develop sound, evidence-based policies. Moreover, existing research tends to focus on specific topics (e.g. energy, transport, the environment, etc.), and/or be based on a rather one-sided view (national or Western/Euroatlantic).



Project Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Commission on the Black Sea aims to redress this imbalance by developing a comprehensive, policy-oriented study on the future of the Black Sea region which will be produced jointly involving scholars and stakeholders from the region as well as from countries beyond the Black Sea region, with a view to be as comprehensive and balanced as possible. The goal is to present not just short term, sectoral or stakeholder-specific interests, but to provide input for a new vision and long-term strategy addressing key aspects of the overall development of the Black Sea as a region.

To facilitate the mainstreaming of the study's results, the Commission will produce by early 2010 a joint report with an executive summary as well as policy recommendations addressed to key stakeholders. The project will be accompanied by targeted dissemination activities and a project website is available at <http://www.blackseacom.eu/>

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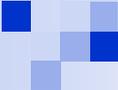
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- EU General Affairs Council, Conclusions on Energy Security (Brussels, 26 January 2009)
- Council of the European Union, Conclusions on Energy Security in Relation with the Russia/Ukraine Gas Dispute (Brussels, 12 January 2009)
- Council of the European Union, EU Declaration on the Russia/Ukraine Problem and Energy Security (Prague, 8 January 2009)
- Council of the European Union, Sixth Meeting of the Accession Conference at Ministerial Level with Turkey (Brussels, 19 December 2008)
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- Council of the European Union, Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy – Providing Security in a Changing World – (Brussels, 11 December 2008)
- EU-Armenia Cooperation Council, Ninth Meeting Press Release (Brussels, 9 December 2008)
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- Ministerial Statement at the 16th OSCE Ministerial Council (Helsinki, 5 December 2008)
- Joint Declaration of the Foreign Ministers and Deputy Minister of France, Russia, and the United States on Nagorno-Karabakh at the 16th OSCE Ministerial Council (Helsinki, 4-5 December 2008)
- Communication from the Commission to the Parliament and the Council on *the Eastern Partnership*, COM (2008) 823/4 final (Brussels, 3 December 2008)
- Commission Staff Working Document Accompanying the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the Eastern Partnership, SEC (2008) 2974/3 (Brussels, 3 December 2008)
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