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Statement of the ICBSS at the 23rd meeting of the Council of Ministers of the BSEC, Thessaloniki, 26 November 2010

By Dr. Zefi Dimadama

Thank you! Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Please allow me to join the other speakers in expressing my deep appreciation to the Government and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic for their excellent organisation of this meeting and the warm hospitality we have received in Thessaloniki, a place where history, culture and unique environment come together in an exciting way, pointing to further sustainable development.

For the first time I'm participating in the Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the highest event at BSEC level and I would like to reassure you that the ICBSS will base its work on continuity, commitment and dedication towards the noble goals of our organisation – the BSEC!

Dear Mr. Chairman,

The current BSEC Hellenic Chairmanship has made the promotion of **"Greening the Black Sea"** its **strategic focus**, with an eye to endorsing green growth and sustainable development in a broader cooperation process across existing state borders. I am convinced that such a strategic focus, not only will promote "green entrepreneurship" and sustainable development, but it will lead to a new paradigm, that of **Environmental Governance**. **Towards this direction the ICBSS**, as a regional think

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tank and a key actor, can contribute in the future.

Black Sea countries are endowed with an **invaluable natural heritage**, but fragile enough structurally and institutionally to be threatened by numerous environmental challenges and threats. The divergent economies of the region and the fragmented sectoral policies that are not compatible with environmental sustainability have accelerated the **environmental degradation** of the area. **However, the case has not been lost yet!** There is an alternative way:

A **new strategy that addresses the impact of climate change** and focuses upon **ecological security**, monitoring, risk analysis, management and long-term safety for the Black Sea environment and its population, in order to attain **gradual reliance on renewable** energy resources and a **better balance** between oil, gas and alternative energy sources.

A **new strategy that aims to the integration of the environmental “acquis” in all sectoral policies** in the Black Sea area and to the enhancement of **legitimacy, efficiency, accountability and transparency**, in the framework of **Environmental Governance**.

The EU is a strong ally in this effort, but I think that time has come for all of us to think how to transfer those challenging synergies we have developed through the Black Sea Synergy Program (BSS) into some concrete strategies with feasible results. Moreover, whenever we talk about the BSEC – EU interaction or the EU policies toward the Black Sea, we need to keep in mind that there’s a fascinating **world eastward – China, Japan, the Asian countries** – which shares mutually beneficial interests with the Black Sea region, particularly in the area of energy and transportation routes.

Dear Excellencies,

As all of us know, it is important to integrate that set of ideas so that **our work toward that direction will not end with the term in office of the Hellenic Chairmanship!** To that end, we need to develop **operational programs and policies** that will consider environmental protection as an integral part of economic development and regional policies.

Securing regional resources means creating a setting in which all Black Sea countries will have adequate and uninterrupted energy, water and food supply, in order to avoid crises of capable of ending up to intra- and inter- state political conflicts. Because of the complexity of these issues and their interconnection with broader regional affairs, we should be **grateful that the Hellenic chairmanship has taken the lead in promoting a discussion** on them. But at the same time, we need to ensure that these issues will not be ignored at any time in the future.

Dear Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished participants,

There’s much work for all of us to make the Black Sea region environmentally safe, stable and economically developed! I would like to assure all of you and specifically the upcoming Romanian Chairmanship that the **ICBSS will further promote synergies across regions by making the environment the core dimension of its endeavour!**

Thank you!

Eastern Partnership Foreign Ministers Meeting, Chair's Conclusions

Brussels, 13 December 2010 [Link](#)

1. On 13 December 2010 the second Foreign Ministers' meeting within the framework of the Eastern

Partnership was held in Brussels.

2. The meeting drew high level participation from the EU, including 27 EU Member States, the EU Council, the European Commission, the six Eastern European Partner countries (hereinafter the Partner countries), the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee (EESC), the Committee of the Regions (COR), the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). The meeting was chaired by the HR/VP Catherine Ashton, joined by Commissioner Stefan Füle. The Partner countries were represented by Foreign Ministers Edward Nalbandian of Armenia, Sergei Martynov of Belarus, Gregory Vashadze of Georgia, Iurile Leanca of the Republic of Moldova, Konstantin Gryshchenko of Ukraine and by Deputy Minister Mahmud Mammad-Guliyev of Azerbaijan. Further participants were Staffan Nilsson, President of the EESC, Mercedes Bresso, President of the COR, Horst Reichenbach, Vice President of EBRD and Claudio Cortese, Deputy DG for EIB.

3. Recalling the Eastern Partnership Declaration, adopted at the Summit on 7 May 2009 in Prague, Ministers underlined that the Partnership is 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. They also underlined the importance of the principles of inclusiveness, differentiation and conditionality, as well as joint ownership. Ministers expressed the need for a strong link between the ongoing review of the European Neighbourhood Policy and the further development of the EaP.

4. The Ministers also emphasized the strategic importance of the Eastern Partnership as a way to deepen and strengthen relations between the EU and the Partner countries, to accelerate political association, further economic integration and approximation towards the European Union and to support political and socio-economic reforms of the Partner countries.

5. The Ministers discussed the state of play of the Partnership on the basis of the implementation report from European Commission. They took note of the substantive implementation achieved since the last ministerial conference of December 2009, and welcomed the in-

tensification in the EU's bilateral relations with a number of Partners, demonstrated by progress in the negotiation of Association Agreements and steps towards greater mobility of persons.

6. The Ministers also noted with satisfaction the progress made in implementing the multilateral track of the Eastern Partnership. They welcomed the work done under the guidance of four thematic Platforms one year after the adoption of their work programmes.

7. The Ministers expressed the need to advance further in implementing Flagship initiatives and expressed their wish that other financial sources be found to complement the EU budget contribution to the EaP.

8. The ministers noted with satisfaction improved co-ordination of the work of International Financial Institutions and other donors in trying to achieve a more coherent and holistic approach to the EaP. In this vein, the ministers invited the Commission to further explore the potential of the informal Information and Coordination group which flanks the Eastern Partnership.

9. The Ministers expressed support for increased involvement of civil society in the technical work of the multilateral track of the Eastern Partnership in cooperation with the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum. During the Ministerial meeting, representative of the Civil Society Forum, presented the Ministers with the conclusions and recommendations of the meeting in Berlin on 18-19 November 2010. More structured dialogue between the EU and the civil society in the Partner countries on national level was mentioned.

10. During the discussion on the priorities for the coming period of implementation, Ministers stressed the need to make further progress particularly in negotiations on Association Agreements, including Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas, where appropriate or Institutional Reform Plans linked to the Comprehensive Institution-Building Programmes. Better use of the existing agreements and the Visa Code was stressed.

11. Ministers held an initial discussion on possible areas where more could be done within the Eastern Partnership, notably: improving sectoral cooperation; facilitating the participation of the Partners to the EU programmes; strengthening cooperation in the area conflict prevention and resolution; consolidating the role of civil society. Particular emphasis should be given to easing the mobility of certain categories of people such as students, researchers, academics or business operators.

12. They looked forward to a strategic debate on the future of the Eastern Partnership at the upcoming Summit in Budapest in May 2011. The priorities for

further implementation agreed at this meeting shall serve as a basis for the Summit preparation.

13. The Ministers agreed to hold the next Eastern Partnership Foreign Ministers Meeting during the second half of 2011.

European Parliament, Foreign Affairs Committee, "EU Plans to Promote the Black Sea Region Need More Staff and Fresh Money"

Brussels, 9 December 2010 [Link](#)

The EU needs to give a new boost to its strategy for the Black Sea region, aiming to bring peace and stability to its neighbouring countries (Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Turkey, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine) and to ensure energy security in the area. A new budget line and more EU human resources are needed for this, said Foreign Affairs Committee MEPs on Thursday.

The Black Sea Strategy needs a specific EU budget line, which should prioritize the funding of small-scale development projects and cross-border cooperation, say MEPs. Other top priorities should be the stabilizing the region, ensuring respect for human rights, managing migration, improving energy security and promoting environmental and social development.

The newly-created EU diplomatic body (External Action Service) must also ensure that its structure and staffing takes into account the fact that the Black Sea region is a real priority for the EU, MEPs add.

MEPs also suggest enhancing the visibility of the future action plan, by holding regular ministerial meetings between the EU and Black Sea countries. Turkey and Russia would be very welcome partners in this regional cooperation, they add.

Current challenges

The Black Sea Region strategy, as defined in the resolution adopted by the Foreign Affairs committee on Thursday, encompasses three EU countries (Bulgaria, Romania, Bulgaria), a candidate country (Turkey) and five east European neighbours (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine), as well as Russia, as a strategic partner. This area today faces key challenges that the EU cannot ignore, such as protracted conflicts, displaced populations, bilateral disputes, closed borders and strategic rivalries leading to militarization and proliferation of arms, weak institutions, cross-border crime and deteriorating maritime safety.

On conflict prevention, the committee suggests that the EU should develop "a conflict early warning system" which would serve to build confidence in the

region and prevent the escalation of violence. Such a system would focus on concrete cases, such as public disclosure of arms sales and naval military activities. Here MEPs voice particular concern about the extension of the lease for Russia's Black Sea Fleet in Crimea.

President Van Rompuy and President Barroso Following the EU-Russia Summit, Press Release

Brussels, 8 December 2010 [Link](#)

The 26th EU - Russia Summit took place in Brussels on 7 December 2010. The EU was represented by Mr Herman van Rompuy, President of the European Council, and by Mr. José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission. The High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Mrs. Catherine Ashton, and Trade Commissioner Karel de Gucht also attended the Summit. The Russian side was represented by President Dmitri Medvedev, accompanied by the Foreign Minister of Russia, Mr. Sergey Lavrov.

Discussions, which took place in a friendly and open atmosphere, focused on common challenges facing both the EU and Russia, such as the global economic situation and climate change. Bilateral relations were reviewed, including the Partnership for Modernization. Topical regional and international issues also featured on the Summit agenda.

Leaders discussed the global economic developments, including the economic situation in the EU and Russia, and the implementation of lessons drawn from the economic and financial crisis. The EU recalled the importance of ensuring consistent follow-up of the G-20 meeting in Seoul in November, and stressed the necessity to quickly dismantle protectionist measures. The EU also stressed its continued support for early Russian accession to the WTO, and welcomed the agreement on the resolution of bilateral issues in the context of Russia's accession to the WTO. The EU also recalled the need for Russia to roll back existing trade barriers, in particular in view of the close WTO accession prospects.

The leaders discussed climate change, and the EU stressed the need for an ambitious outcome to ongoing Cancun conference.

The Summit also took note of progress in the negotiations on a New EU - Russia Agreement, which is to provide a solid basis for deepened bilateral relations covering all aspects of the relationship. Then EU side emphasized the importance to make balanced progress in the negotiations, including in the fields of trade, investment and energy.

Following the adoption of a joint statement on the Partnership for Modernization at the Rostov Summit on 1 June, the leaders welcomed the work plan which was presented to them by the EU and Russian coordinators. This initiative should contribute to a balanced implementation of the Common Spaces Roadmaps, and help solve outstanding issues.

The leaders discussed progress to date and the way ahead in the EU-Russia visa dialogue, where the EU and Russia will commence working together on common steps towards a possible visa-free travel regime.

The EU recalled its concerns regarding developments in the field of human rights and rule of law in the Russian Federation, including the situation in the Northern Caucasus and the situation for human rights defenders and journalists.

The EU and Russia discussed a number of key international and regional issues, including the protracted conflicts of Transnistria and Nagorno-Karabakh, the follow-up of the OSCE Summit in Astana, the Iranian nuclear issue as well as the latest developments in Côte d'Ivoire. The EU reiterated the importance of improving dialogue and cooperation as regards the improvement of security and stability in the common neighbourhood, and particularly called on Russia to fully comply with its commitments following the August 2008 war in Georgia.

The parties also discussed the prospects for greater cooperation on crisis management.

fore our countries should work towards a binding international agreement on climate change,

Recognizing also the importance of developing and implementing regional approaches as appropriate for combating the negative impacts of climate change as well as for reversing continuing trends of biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation,

Acknowledging that environmental technologies and practices aiming at protecting the land and marine environment, biodiversity and natural resources can secure a future of welfare for our region,

Being convinced of the importance of assuring the sustainable development of the wider Black Sea area and maintaining a long-term development process to the benefit of all,

Acknowledging the need in the Black Sea region for more effective action by sharing best practices experience and tools in mitigating climate change and seek common solutions to the benefit of all,

Being aware of the response to climate change as an opportunity for promoting green economy, creating new prospects for enhanced regional cooperation and economic development in the region,

Considering the importance of elaborating forward-looking approaches in the wider Black Sea area towards green development, as part of a coordinated regional response to climate change and a basis for sustainable development, that will enhance economic activity, investment, entrepreneurship and employment, by also focusing on a gradual turn towards new technologies, including cleaner energy and higher energy efficiency projects,

Stressing that the responses to climate change should be coordinated with social and economic development with a view to avoiding adverse impacts on the latter,

Taking note of the important contribution of the civil society in highlighting and tackling the issues related to climate change and environment, as well as their extensive expertise and know-how in this field,

Welcoming the “Black Sea turns Green” approach, proposed by the Hellenic Chairmanship-in-Office of the BSEC, which aims to reaffirm the role of the BSEC as a leader in regional cooperation,

Have agreed to:

1. Endorse the vision to transform the BSEC region into a model of clean energy by adopting low pollutant practices through resource efficient and climate resilient economies, in mitigating climate change.
2. Develop regional policy approaches on mitigating climate change with respect to the capabilities of the countries concerned and at the same time ensuring

Joint Declaration on Combating Climate Change in the Wider Black Sea Area, Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)

Thessaloniki, 26 November 2010

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States: the Republic of Albania, the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Bulgaria, Georgia, the Hellenic Republic, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Serbia, the Republic of Turkey and Ukraine, met in Thessaloniki, on 26 November 2010, and

Being aware that climate change, constituting a global problem resulting mostly from human activities, is a common challenge faced by all countries and therefore it requires global solutions as well as regional cooperation,

Recognizing that the Black Sea area is vulnerable to many negative impacts of climate change and there-

energy security and a sustainable development process providing for growth, employment and welfare.

3. Strive to develop common approaches on climate change demonstrating leadership and strong commitment to action in the international arena, aiming at contributing to international and regional agreements through seeking the possibility of developing common policy positions, as well as project- based initiatives.

4. Continue their work on the adoption of regional regulations and development programmes, so as to set the framework for attracting public and private investment in all sectors that can contribute to this vision.

5. Benefit from the existing network of civil society organizations dealing with climate change and environmental issues in the Black Sea area.

6. Strengthen collaboration on addressing common challenges by elaborating shared plans and initiatives concerning the implementation of models of environmental risks assessment, especially early warning prediction models, with the aim of taking joint measures and increasing safety precautions against disasters in the wider Black Sea area.

7. Further increase public awareness on ecological issues for the long-term safety of the Black Sea environment.

8. Commit themselves, within this framework, to contributing to the success of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change negotiations.

Delegations of the Russian Federation and the European Union, Joint Statement on the Occasion of the Conclusion of the Bilateral Talks on the Key Issues in the Accession of the Russian Federation to the WTO

Brussels, 24 November 2010 [Link](#)

The negotiators of the Russian Federation and of the European Commission have concluded the bilateral talks on key outstanding elements in the accession of the Russian Federation to the WTO. The reached understanding complements the results of the bilateral negotiations concluded in 2004 with regard to important aspects of Russia's export duty regime and railway fees. The negotiations resulted in a balanced outcome on all the issues concerned by these bilateral talks, in a spirit of taking into account mutual interests.

Both sides are confident that this agreement will greatly facilitate the overall process of accession of Russia to the WTO, and they re-affirm their shared commitment to continue working in a constructive and co-operative spirit on the remaining questions in this multilateral process to achieve this goal as soon as possible. They are

aware of the remaining multilateral issues to be resolved in such areas as agricultural trade, technical regulations, including sanitary and phyto-sanitary rules, and the investment regime in the automotive sector, in order to complete this process. They express their confidence, however, on swift progress on this path.

Both sides stressed their strong expectation that the rapid accession of Russia to the WTO will greatly contribute to the opening of new opportunities to do business with and in Russia and strengthen the international competitiveness of the Russian economy by harmonizing its economic regime with global trading rules. They agreed to conduct their current trade relations in a manner reflecting the spirit of the agreements reached between the EU and Russia in the context of Russia's WTO accession negotiations.

Council of the European Union, 14th EU-Ukraine Summit, Joint Press Statement

Brussels, 22 November, 2010 [Link](#)

1. The 14th EU-Ukraine Summit took place in Brussels on 22 November, 2010. The European Union (EU) was represented by Mr. Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council and Mr. José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission. Ukraine was represented by President Viktor Yanukovich.

2. The leaders recalled that EU-Ukraine relations are based on common values and a common history and that the EU has acknowledged Ukraine's European aspirations and welcomed its European choice. They noted that the depth of the EU-Ukraine relationship will be determined by the implementation of reforms and by further consolidation of common values.

3. The parties discussed the issue of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, democratic values and the rule of law based on an independent and impartial judiciary. They stressed in particular the importance of a free media. Following the recent local elections, the leaders recalled the need for further strengthening of democratic development in Ukraine in particular the electoral framework.

4. The leaders took note of the recent constitutional developments in Ukraine. The EU side encouraged the Ukrainian authorities to undertake constitutional reform in an inclusive and comprehensive manner in close cooperation with the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe.

5. The leaders expressed their satisfaction at the progress achieved in EU-Ukraine relations. In this regard they stressed the importance of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement which is currently being negotiated. They

reiterated their common commitment to establishing a deep and comprehensive free trade area between Ukraine and the EU with a view to providing for gradual integration of Ukraine's into the EU's internal market. They looked forward to the conclusion of negotiations as soon as possible while retaining the quality and viability of the Association Agreement.

6. The leaders welcomed important reforms taken by Ukraine notably in the economic sphere to ensure an early return to growth and competitiveness. They heralded the agreement reached with the IMF on a Standby Loan for Ukraine based upon a macro-economic stability programme. For its part, the Ukrainian side welcomed the EU's commitment to provide additional support through a macrofinancial assistance package of €610 million. Both sides expressed their commitment to a swift conclusion of negotiations on the associated Memorandum of Understanding. The leaders also stressed the importance of further efforts to combat corruption and to improve the business and investment climate. They noted the key role the Public Procurement Law, adopted earlier in the year, could play in this regard. The EU will continue to support Ukraine in advancing its reform agenda.

7. The leaders warmly welcomed the Action Plan towards visa liberalisation for Ukraine. The Action Plan sets out all technical conditions to be met by Ukraine in order to progress towards the establishment of a visa free regime as a long term perspective for short stay travel for Ukrainian citizens. Its implementation will start now and will be systematically monitored by both sides.

8. The EU heralded Ukraine's signature of the accession Protocol to the Energy Community following the adoption of a law on the Principles of Functioning of the Natural Gas Market and looked forward to its imminent accession to that body. The leaders expressed their confidence that the reforms required by the Energy Community Treaty would significantly strengthen the transparency, competitiveness and sustainability of the sector. The EU will continue to support Ukraine in enhancing energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources, implementing the necessary reforms to modernize its energy sector in line with its commitments under the Energy Community Treaty as well as the conditions envisaged in the Joint Declaration of the EU-Ukraine international conference on modernization of Ukraine's gas transit system of March, 2009.

9. The leaders welcomed the initiative of the President of Ukraine to hold the international conference on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl catastrophe in Kyiv in spring 2011 in order to mobilize support for the completion of the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant projects.

10. The leaders also welcomed signature at the Summit of

a Protocol allowing Ukraine to participate in EU programmes which will further support regulatory and administrative reform, thereby promoting sectoral integration through convergence of Ukrainian policies with EU norms, standards and best practices. The Protocol paves the way for participation in EU programmes in areas such as business and entrepreneurship, energy and information, communication and technology.

11. The leaders discussed the EU's continuing support for Ukraine in particular through the Eastern Partnership and welcomed Ukraine's active engagement in this initiative. They looked forward in particular to the start of Comprehensive Institution Building support to assist Ukraine in public administration reform and notably in the areas of state aids control, sanitary and phyto-sanitary control, migration and coordination of the legislative programme in Ukraine. They also discussed the preparation of the forthcoming Eastern Partnership Summit in May in Budapest.

12. The leaders discussed international and regional issues of common interest, in particular relations with Belarus, Russia as well as the Transnistria settlement in the Republic of Moldova. As partners in the 5 + 2 Transnistria settlement format, they agreed to continue their close co-operation underlining that the unconditional resumption of formal 5 + 2 talks remained a shared goal for both. They expect progress on this matter on the occasion of the OSCE Summit in Astana on 1-2 December 2010. The leaders agreed to strengthen cooperation in fighting against the acts of piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia. In this regard, the EU welcomed the participation of Ukraine in the EU NAVFOR Somalia – Operation Atalanta and looked forward to its further contribution.

Lisbon Summit Declaration, Press Release

Lisbon, 20 November 2010 [Link](#)

[...]

17. We welcome, and continue to support, the Government of Serbia's stated commitment to Serbia's Euro-Atlantic integration. We welcome the increasing cooperation between NATO and Serbia. We reiterate our openness to Serbia's further aspirations, including taking advantage of NATO's partnership opportunities for political consultation and practical cooperation. We call upon Serbia to maintain its efforts with a view to fully cooperating with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in order to achieve additional positive results, the most critical issue being the arrest of the remaining fugitives, and their transfer to the ICTY.

18. We call upon Serbia to support further efforts to-

wards the consolidation of peace and stability in Kosovo. We urge both to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by the European Union-facilitated dialogue between them, which was welcomed in the United Nations General Assembly Resolution of 9 September 2010 as a contribution towards peace, security and stability in the region. We encourage progress in consolidating the rule of law. We welcome progress and encourage further efforts to protect ethnic minorities and communities, as well as historical and religious sites in Kosovo.

19. Stability and successful political and economic reform in Georgia and Ukraine are important to Euro-Atlantic security. We will continue and develop the partnerships with these countries taking into account the Euro-Atlantic aspiration or orientation of each of the countries.

20. At the 2008 Bucharest Summit we agreed that Georgia will become a member of NATO and we reaffirm all elements of that decision, as well as subsequent decisions. We will foster political dialogue and practical cooperation with Georgia, including through the NATO-Georgia Commission and the Annual National Programme. We strongly encourage and actively support Georgia's continued implementation of all necessary reforms, particularly democratic, electoral and judicial reforms, as well as security and defense sector reforms, in order to advance its Euro-Atlantic aspirations. We welcome the recent opening of the NATO Liaison Office in Georgia which will help in maximizing our assistance and support for the country's reform efforts. We welcome Georgia's important contributions to NATO operations, in particular to ISAF. We reiterate our continued support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders. 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 in the internationally-recognized territory of Georgia. We continue to call on Russia to reverse its recognition of the South Ossetia and Abkhazia regions of Georgia as independent states.

21. A stable, democratic and economically prosperous Ukraine is an important factor for Euro-Atlantic security. Recognizing the sovereign right of each nation to freely choose its security arrangements, we respect Ukraine's policy of "non-bloc" status. NATO remains committed to providing the relevant assistance to Ukraine for the implementation of wide-ranging domestic reforms. We welcome the Ukrainian Government's commitment to continue to pursue fully Ukraine's Distinctive Partnership with NATO, including through high-level political dialogue in the NATO-Ukraine Commission, and reform and practical cooperation through the Annual National Programme, and in this context, we recall that NATO's door remains open, as stated in the Bucharest Summit

decision. We remain convinced that mutually beneficial cooperation between NATO and Ukraine will continue to be of key importance for peace and security in the Euro-Atlantic area and beyond, and appreciate the constructive role Ukraine plays in this respect, including through its participation in NATO-led operations. We welcome Ukraine's interest in developing new areas of cooperation.

22. NATO-Russia cooperation is of strategic importance, as reflected by today's meeting of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) at the level of Heads of State and Government in Lisbon. In light of common security interests, we are determined to build a lasting and inclusive peace, together with Russia, in the Euro-Atlantic Area. We need to share responsibility in facing up to common challenges, jointly identified. We want to see a true strategic partnership between NATO and Russia, and we will act accordingly, with the expectation of reciprocity from Russia. We recommit ourselves to the goals, principles and commitments which underpin the NRC. On this firm basis, we urge Russia to meet its commitments with respect to Georgia, as mediated by the European Union on 12 August and 8 September 2008². Over the past year, NATO-Russia cooperation has progressed and produced notable results. We welcome, in particular, the completion of the Joint Review of 21st Century Common Security Challenges, which has identified practical cooperation projects on Afghanistan, including counter-narcotics; non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery; counter-piracy; counter-terrorism; and disaster response. We also welcome the new extended arrangements offered by Russia to facilitate ISAF transit to and from Afghanistan. We are actively pursuing cooperation with Russia on missile defense, including through the resumption of theatre missile defense exercises. We will also want to discuss in the NRC a range of other topics, including Afghanistan; implementing OSCE principles; military deployments, including any that could be perceived as threatening; information sharing and transparency on military doctrine and posture, as well as the overall disparity in short-range nuclear weapons; arms control; and other security issues. We look forward to discussing all these matters in the NRC, which is a forum for political dialogue at all times and on all issues, including where we disagree. Our dialogue and cooperation with Russia also help us to resolve differences by building trust, mutual confidence, transparency, predictability and mutual understanding.

[...]

28. Security and stability in the Black Sea region continue to be important for Euro-Atlantic security. We welcome the progress in consolidating regional cooperation and ownership, through effective use of existing initiatives and mechanisms, based on transparency, complementarity and inclusiveness. We encourage these efforts

and stand ready to support them, as appropriate, based on regional priorities and dialogue and cooperation among the Black Sea countries and with the Alliance.

NATO-Russia Council, Joint Statement

Lisbon, 20 November 2010 [Link](#)

We, the Heads of State and Government of the NATO-Russia Council, met today in Lisbon and affirmed that we have embarked on a new stage of cooperation towards a true strategic partnership.

We reaffirmed all the goals, principles and commitments set forth in the Founding Act, the Rome Declaration and the OSCE 1999 Charter for European Security, including the 'Platform for Cooperative Security', and recognized that the security of all states in the Euro-Atlantic community is indivisible, and that the security of NATO and Russia is intertwined. We will work towards achieving a true strategic and modernized partnership based on the principles of reciprocal confidence, transparency, and predictability, with the aim of contributing to the creation of a common space of peace, security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. The NRC member states will refrain from the threat or use of force against each other as well as against any other state, its sovereignty, territorial integrity or political independence in any manner inconsistent with the United Nations Charter and with the Declaration of Principles Guiding Relations Between Participating States contained in the Helsinki Final Act.

The NRC member states are committed to working as 29 equal partners in order to fulfil the tremendous potential of the NATO-Russia Council through the continued development of their political dialogue and practical cooperation based on their shared interests. We underscore that the NRC is a forum for political dialogue at all times and on all issues, including where we disagree. We are determined to make full use of the NRC mechanism for consultation, consensus-building, cooperation, joint decision and joint action on a wide spectrum of security issues in the Euro-Atlantic region. We all agree that the NRC member states can benefit from visionary and transparent policies aiming at strengthening security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area, including through existing institutions and instruments. We strongly support the revitalization and modernization of the conventional arms control regime in Europe and are ready to continue dialogue on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation issues of interest to the NRC. We welcome the conclusion of the New START Treaty and look forward to its early ratification and entry into force. The NRC member states are resolved to seek a safer world for all and to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, in accordance with the goals of the Treaty

on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), in a way that promotes international stability, and based on the principle of undiminished security for all.

Today, we have endorsed the Joint Review of 21st Century Common Security Challenges, which was launched a year ago. We share common important interests and face common challenges. On that basis, we have identified concrete practical cooperation activities.

We agreed to discuss pursuing missile defense cooperation. We agreed on a joint ballistic missile threat assessment and to continue dialogue in this area. The NRC will also resume Theatre Missile Defense Cooperation. We have tasked the NRC to develop a comprehensive Joint Analysis of the future framework for missile defense cooperation. The progress of this Analysis will be assessed at the June 2011 meeting of NRC Defense Ministers.

We underlined the importance of international efforts in support of the Afghan Government and in promoting regional peace and stability. In that context, the revised arrangements aimed at further facilitating railway transit of non-lethal ISAF goods through Russian territory are of particular value. Building on the success generated by the NRC Project on Counter-Narcotics Training, we welcome the inclusion of Pakistan as a participant country along with Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, and we have agreed to expand the scope of the Project to provide further direct assistance to institutional capacity-building, in close consultation with the governments providing trainees. Additionally, with the aim of contributing to the ability of the Afghan Air Force to operate its helicopter fleet more efficiently, we have also tasked the development of an NRC Helicopter Maintenance Trust Fund in 2011.

On counter-terrorism, the NRC will strengthen its cooperation, including through jointly developing technology to detect explosives¹, countering terrorist threats to civil aviation² and exchanging information on terrorism. The Russian Federation confirmed its interest in resuming its support to NATO's counter-terrorist operation "Active Endeavour" in the Mediterranean Sea.

As piracy and armed robbery at sea continue to pose a significant and growing threat to maritime security, the NRC member states will expand existing tactical level cooperation, including through joint training and exercises.

We will build on our improved relations to help solve the issues where our views differ. Based upon our joint cooperation agenda, we, the NRC Heads of State and Government, have agreed to further broaden and deepen NATO-Russia dialogue and practical cooperation and bolster a NATO-Russia partnership that enhances security for all in the Euro-Atlantic area and beyond.

Declaration of the Ministers in Charge of Tourism of the Member States of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation

Athens, 15 November 2010

We, the Ministers in charge of Tourism / Heads of the Tourism Administrations of the Member States of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, namely:

Republic of Albania
Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan
Republic of Bulgaria
Georgia
Hellenic Republic
Republic of Moldova
Romania
Russian Federation
Republic of Serbia
Republic of Turkey
Ukraine

Recognizing the importance of tourism in promoting economic development, mutual understanding, goodwill and close relations among peoples,

Acknowledging the significant role of tourism in protecting and enhancing the natural and cultural heritage leading towards sustainable development,

Considering the efforts taken on a permanent basis by the BSEC Member States in the development of

Taking into account the provisions of the Rhodes Declaration of the Ministers of Tourism of the Member States of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, adopted on 31 March 2005,

Recognizing the importance of visa facilitation procedures which could contribute to the promotion of tourism within the Black Sea region with a view to discuss the issue with the relevant authorities of the BSEC Member States.

We declare our intention:

to intensify our efforts with a view to positioning the BSEC area as a tourism destination to the world tourism market and to stimulate as well as strengthen the image of our region as a unique and attractive destination,

to further develop the cooperation between the tourism professionals, the tourism organizations and associations

and the travel and tourism agencies of the BSEC Member States, in order to promote traveling within the BSEC region and attract more tourists from other countries,

to ensure tourism promotion within a broadest strategy of sustainable development,

to encourage cooperation in the field of Special Interest Tourism, where appropriate, through existing or new projects, mainly in the areas of:

cultural tourism projects, namely: “The Route of the Rose” (Bulgaria), “The Routes of Coinage” (Greece), “Cultural Route of the Roman Emperors” (Serbia), “The Silk Road” (Turkey), “Myths of the Two Seas” (Azerbaijan), “Wine Routes of Azerbaijan” (Azerbaijan), “Vine and Wine Routes Project” (Armenia), “Legend of Argonauts” (Georgia),

maritime tourism, including yachting and cruising, as a vehicle for the enhancement of tourism in the BSEC area, ensuring its competitiveness in the framework of international agreements and regulations,

winter and sports tourism including exchange of experience and know-how concerning ski resort infrastructure and management, as well as the promotion of leisure sports activities all year round,

health, spa and wellness tourism, including exchange of expertise developing natural thermal springs, spas and thalassotherapy centers,

business tourism with an emphasis on the MICE tourism activities – meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions – within the BSEC Member States and in other countries,

to encourage the relevant authorities of the BSEC Member States to undertake initiatives with a view to protecting the environment of the Black Sea region for the benefit of tourism development in the area,

to organize tourism training programmes and training exchanges for the personnel employed in the tourism sector and to encourage synergies among tourism educational institutions, in order to achieve higher quality of services in the region,

to exchange statistical information and to publish an annual report for tourism activities of the BSEC Member States,

to continue our close cooperation with the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the European Union and other international organizations or entities related to tourism, in order to benefit from their experience and know-how and in order to promote tourism in the Black Sea region worldwide.

We underline the importance of tourism in promoting people to people contacts. In this context, we stress the beneficial role of visa facilitation as a tool of advancing

mobility issues in the Black Sea region. We welcome the progress achieved so far in this field and underline the need for further cooperation and coordination.

We welcome the willingness of the Hellenic Republic, as the only Schengen Member of the BSEC Organization, to undertake initiatives in order to introduce simplified visa procedures for tourists of the BSEC Member States.

We agree to meet, whenever appropriate, to follow-up the decisions taken and to consider the matters related to tourism cooperation among the BSEC Member States.

We express our gratitude to the Hellenic Republic for the organization of the Meeting and for the hospitality extended.

Visa Free Regime for Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina: the European Commission Welcomes the Council's Decision, Press Release

Brussels, 8 November 2010 [Link](#)

The Ministers of Interior of the European Union adopted today the proposal to introduce visa free travel for citizens from Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Cecilia Malmström, European Commissioner for Home Affairs welcomed the Council's decision, commenting: "Today is an historical day for Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The citizens of these two countries will soon be able to travel with a biometric passport without visa to the EU countries participating in the common visa policy and those associated to the Schengen area. Visa free travel will facilitate people-to-people contacts, enhance business opportunities and give the possibility for the people of the region to get to know the EU better. But a visa-free regime also comes with responsibilities for both the governments and the people of the countries benefiting from this freedom. In the framework of previous visa liberalization processes with the Western Balkans, we noticed an increased influx of unfounded asylum requests. This has been of major concern for the EU Member States and prompted the European Commission to set up a post-visa monitoring process that aims at preventing risks of misuse and abuse of the asylum procedures. It is of the utmost importance that Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to intensify their information campaign with the aim to properly explain to their citizens the meaning of short-term visa-free travel and what it entails, in particular warning against misuse for purposes incompatible with visa-free travel. I am confident that the efforts made by the authorities of the two countries, together with the monitoring mechanism, will offer an effective response to these worries and will allow citizens from Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina to

fully benefit from this historical opportunity".

Štefan Füle, European Commissioner for Enlargement, commenting today's decision said: "The visa-free regime is the best proof that reforms at home bring tangible benefits for citizens and progress in relations with the EU. We can build on this in order to further the reforms needed to bring the two countries closer to their European aspirations".

Štefan Füle European Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy, European Neighbourhood Policy Review, Press Release

Brussels, 26 October 2010 [Link](#)

Mr. Chairman, Honourable Members,

It is a pleasure to be here with you today for this exchange of views on the European Neighbourhood Policy.

The Lisbon Treaty has created the conditions for the EU to become a global player. I have stated several times before this House that, as Commissioner for Enlargement and the Neighbourhood, I intend to work closely with High Representative/Vice President Ashton and the External Action Service in helping the EU to live up to this ambition.

But let me say that, if the EU wants to become a credible global player, it should start from its Neighbourhood. In the months and years to come, we must demonstrate our capacity to act convincingly in our Neighbourhood, using all the instruments and opportunities for joined-up action offered by the Lisbon Treaty. This will be one of the main yardsticks with which our ability to implement the Foreign Policy provisions of the Lisbon Treaty will be measured. This makes this Strategic Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy a very timely exercise.

We are now in the middle of our consultation process. We have received contributions from almost all Member States and ENP partner countries. We have listened to experts and academics. We have met with senior officials of partner countries. Yesterday, I had an exchange of views with the Member States in the Foreign Affairs Council. Today, I am here with you. In ten days we will meet with Civil Society organizations from all over the region.

Drawing conclusions at this stage of the process would be premature, but we can start by identifying a number of emerging issues on which to reflect further.

The European Parliament, through its reports, has greatly contributed in the past to shaping and guiding the development of the European Neighbourhood Policy. I trust that, in the debate today, you will give us elements to

enrich our reflection further.

In the letter Cathy Ashton and I sent last July to EU and partner countries' Foreign Ministers, we have asked three questions. What should be our vision for the ENP within a 10-15 year horizon? What should be the medium-term objectives we pursue, broadly speaking, during the term of this Parliament and Commission? What can we improve in terms of our instruments and resources? I shall try to answer these three questions.

Let me start with the vision. I should say from the outset that all our partners were very pleased with this wide-ranging consultation process. All of them want stronger relations with the EU based on high-level political dialogue. All of them look forward to deeper economic integration based on approximation of legislation and regulatory convergence, to easier mobility, to increased financial co-operation. There is a clear demand for a strong ENP. And this is true even if some partners do not like the label under which it comes.

This is in itself very positive. But it would be wrong for us to think that this is enough. We know we are not the only players in the Neighbourhood. There are others who seek to extend their influence in a way that is not always compatible with EU values or the EU acquis. Belarus has agreed to a Customs Union with Russia. China's economic and political influence is growing.

Expectations are high and the EU needs to be unambiguous about what it can offer to its neighbours and what it expects from them in return. And my view is that we have not always been so clear. Our response to demands for upgrading relations, especially with our Mediterranean Neighbours, has sometimes privileged "form" over "substance". Our approach to different countries has not been fully coherent.

Often the EU has shied away from expressing its expectations on shared values. We should be more forceful in underlining that good governance and political reform are not "optional" elements of our policy offer but go hand in hand with deepened political and economic relations. The European Parliament, through its network of bilateral and multilateral contacts with the Parliaments of partner countries, plays a very important role in the promotion of democratic principles.

Our consultations so far highlight a large degree of consensus about an ENP vision along the lines of Article 8 of the Lisbon Treaty, of an area where political co-operation is as close as possible and economic integration is as deep as possible.

How close? How deep? As one expert put it: "the long-term goal could amount to anything between a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area [DCFTA] plus 1 % and EU Accession minus 1%" ... depending, of course, on the ambition of individual partners.

When it comes to economic integration, this logically leads us to a vision of full integration into the EU internal market and to the extension of the four freedoms in exchange for the adoption of a large part of the EU acquis and the development of the related administrative capacity.

And here, there are some important gaps between the partners' expectations and what the EU may be prepared to offer.

The first gap is about the number of freedoms that partner countries' citizens should enjoy. Partners expect to be able to enjoy all four. Some EU Member States have the tendency to focus on just three of them. There are clear (and understandable) concerns when it comes to the freedom of movement.

The second is about financial support. Partners highlight the cost of the reforms linked to the convergence with the acquis and the conclusions of Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas. Some EU Member States are reluctant to speak about increased financial resources to support the cost of reforms.

Possibly, the key to bridging these gaps lies in a gradual approach based on a clearer and more rigorous differentiation. A DCFTA or a visa-free regime require not only clear commitments from partner countries but also the administrative capacity to credibly implement these commitments. There should be no fudging on this. But we should also be ready to reward real progress and give ourselves the requisite means. Financial allocations should be much higher for those countries that really undertake political reform or implement a DCFTA than for those that declare their readiness to do so. We do not differentiate enough at present. And the EU should be more forthcoming on mobility with those countries that take credible steps to control their external borders and meet other preconditions.

At this stage, let me also say that I believe differentiation should be based on partner countries' ambition in their relations with the EU, on their readiness to accept shared values, on which the EU is based, on their performance in governance and reform — rather than on their geographical position. Of course some of the neighbouring countries are European and see themselves as potential EU members. But their aspirations are not a reason to offer less to others, or to be less demanding. If European neighbours are more ambitious, it will be up to them to set the bar higher: I am comforted in this approach by the fact that most Member States and almost all partners agree that the European Neighbourhood Policy should remain the "one roof" under which we frame relations with our neighbours.

To attain the goal I have outlined, there are a number of areas that should attract our attention in the medium term. There we would see seven issues deserving further

reflection.

One is the request by several of our partners for more political steering of our relationships. This is not meant as adding opportunities for formal discussion but rather as maintaining an enhanced, continuous and substantial dialogue at political level. I see this as a legitimate request and one that can help us address misunderstandings and difficult issues in a spirit of confidence and partnership. We now need to reflect on the best manner to put the idea into motion, not only among Foreign Ministers but also on other areas of close co-operation.

The second concerns the DCFTAs which are at the core of our offer. The prospect of participating in the Internal Market is a powerful agent of change. We should pursue negotiations of DCFTA in the shorter term with the most advanced of our neighbours, both in the East and in the South. Our partners highlight the importance for them of having easier market access, in particular for agricultural and agro-industrial products. We should on our side stress that, for partner countries to fully reap the fruits of such an agreement, serious reforms are needed to ensure the independence and fairness of the judiciary and to curb corruption.

The third request is easier mobility. While there are obvious political difficulties, it would be hard to ignore the insistence of all our partners on this point. We may need to think outside the box here and move away from a black-or-white approach. Perhaps we could develop a broader, win-win, approach to mobility and migration where security concerns can also be addressed. Or focus selectively on certain categories of people such as students, researchers or businessmen. Or envisage the type of robust differentiation I was referring to earlier.

The fourth pertains to protracted conflicts and what the EU can do to help advance these towards a resolution. This is a question we cannot avoid. The inability to contribute to conflict resolution is highlighted as one of the main shortcomings of the ENP, even though this is an issue which goes beyond the policy itself. Partners have asked us to be more active. The EU should be more present and allocate more resources to confidence-building. But can we go beyond confidence-building? There are clear expectations among our neighbours that, with the Lisbon Treaty, the EU will be able to deploy all its instruments (including CFSP and ESDP) in a more coherent way. This is an area which requires further reflection.

The fifth request is about deepening sectoral co-operation. There is demand for greater co-operation in areas such as energy, environment, climate change, education, industrial co-operation or technology transfer. This is also in our interest and we need to respond positively. Partners are also very keen to have more access to EU programmes and participate in EU agencies.

A sixth issue concerns the involvement of civil society.

Civil Society Organisations [CSOs] in partner countries are our most faithful and powerful ally when it comes to promoting values and good governance. They are also an important ally when it comes to convergence towards EU standards in areas such as environment or climate change. We need to involve them more in policy formulation and monitoring. We need to link them up with CSOs in the EU. We need to invest in them and strengthen their capacity.

Finally, there is the question of the regional specificities within our neighbourhood and of their contribution to our overall objectives. A tailor-made approach towards the various regions of the Neighbourhood should remain a key characteristic of the ENP. Moreover I am persuaded that the ENP should promote regional co-operation among ENP partners, particularly in the context of the Eastern Partnership and the Union for the Mediterranean which are the main, although not the only, ENP regional dimensions.

With the Eastern Partnership the EU has established an ambitious agenda for deepening relations with the six Eastern partners, both bilaterally and as a group. Eighteen months after the Prague Summit there has been much progress on establishing new contractual relations and multilateral co-operation has become very intense. The ENP review offers us an opportunity to look at these first achievements and prepare successfully the Summit in Budapest next May.

The Union for the Mediterranean [UfM] is also moving forward. In spite of the political difficulties related to the Middle East Peace Process, the Secretariat is about to be established and much work has been done on the projects that the UfM will support. We need to identify, as part of the review, practical ways to contribute to the implementation of this initiative. We must help it deliver on its essential objective of generating the jobs, the growth and the innovation capacity that are acutely needed in the Mediterranean region within the years to come.

Let me finally come to the question of policy instruments, financial instruments and, last but not least, resources.

The ENP Action Plans have proven their worth as a central policy implementation tool. Now that we come to a second generation, we need to make them more focused and better linked to the partner countries' reform agenda and to the financial resources necessary to implement them.

The European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument [ENPI] has been a step change in the way we deliver our assistance. But many underline that more should be done to link the reform priorities of ENP Action Plans with financial co-operation —and that financial assistance should be delivered more rapidly, with less red tape and with the flexibility to respond to emerging

needs. Partner countries also asked us to look more closely at pre-accession assistance for inspiration. We will seriously reflect on this but we will need your support.

There is a trade-off between efficiency and control. I know you are concerned about democratic control on external spending: the “democratic scrutiny” under ENPI has worked well and, outside that framework, we have always been forthcoming to Parliament requests for consultations and exchange of views. We should carefully reflect before making this process, and more generally the overall preparation and delivery of our aid, heavier or more formal. I should also stress here one very important point: assistance to Neighbouring countries is fundamentally different from classical development aid. We need to be able to respond rapidly to emerging needs and evolving policy goals. We need the minimum of agility required to espouse partner countries’ reform agendas and needs.

I hesitate to speak about financial resources in what is indeed a difficult economic and financial situation for the EU. There are certainly efficiency gains to be made by better targeting and delivering assistance. There is mileage to be gained in developing innovative financial instruments. We can co-ordinate EU and Member States assistance better, by using the Action Plans as our programming reference. But let’s be frank, we need to give ourselves the financial means to support an ambitious policy. We cannot ask for far-reaching reforms and decline much needed support. The ENP will need to be treated as a priority in the next financial framework.

Mr. President, Honourable Members, let me say a few words of conclusion.

These are our thoughts around a number of issues that are emerging from this Strategic Review. These thoughts are preliminary and I expect they will continue to evolve and become more concrete as the consultation process goes on. On February 1st, Mrs. Ashton and myself will invite EU Member States and ENP Partners to a Ministerial conference. We expect this conference to provide us with guidance for the proposals that we will put forward in April in a Communication to the Council and the European Parliament.

But I wanted to share these initial thoughts with you already today and hear your reactions and suggestions. If we want the ENP to become an anchor for our neighbours, thus reflecting the ambition of the Treaty, we need your views and your support.

EU Foreign Affairs Council, Conclusions on Eastern Partnership

Luxembourg, 25 October 2010 [Link](#)

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

The Council recalls its Conclusions of 26 July 2010 on the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). It reiterates its commitment to a strong ENP including its regional dimensions. The Council also recalls the Declaration by the European Council on the Eastern Partnership of 19/20 March 2009, as well as the Joint Declaration of the Prague Eastern Partnership Summit of 7 May 2009 which established the Eastern Partnership as a specific Eastern dimension of the ENP. It confirms the strategic importance for the European Union of promoting stability, good governance and economic development in its Eastern neighbourhood. The EU is committed to deepening relations and strengthening cooperation with its Eastern partners.

Since its launch at the Prague Summit, the Eastern Partnership has reinvigorated the EU’s policy towards its Eastern partners (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine), with a view to creating the necessary conditions for political association and further economic integration between the European Union and interested partner countries. It has created a meaningful political framework for deepening relations with the partner countries, including cooperating on reform. Through the Eastern Partnership, the EU will continue to support political and socio-economic reforms of the partner countries, facilitating approximation and convergence towards the European Union. The Council recalls that the Eastern Partnership is founded on mutual interests and commitments, as well as on shared ownership and responsibility.

It is now important for the dynamics of the process to be maintained so that further tangible results can be made. The second Eastern Partnership Summit in Budapest in May 2011 will provide an opportunity to take stock of progress made and give guidance for the future.

The Council recalls that the active engagement of the partner countries and their commitment to shared values and principles, including democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and good governance are essential to take the process forward and to make the negotiation and the subsequent implementation of ambitious future Association Agreements a success. The EU is committed to assisting the partner countries in this regard.

The Council underlines that progress on the bilateral track of the Eastern Partnership, on the basis of the own merits of each of the partner countries, remains essential. This includes the upgrading of bilateral contractual rela-

tions, and, in this context, developing Comprehensive Institution-Building with each of the partners, as well as promoting the mobility of citizens in a well managed and secure environment, and strengthening energy security. In the same context, the EU will continue to pursue the establishment of Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas with Eastern partners once they have met the necessary conditions.

The Council notes the progress made so far in negotiations with Ukraine on a future Association Agreement, including the establishment of a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, and encourages further efforts on both sides so that the negotiations can be finalized soon. Negotiations with the Republic of Moldova on a future Association Agreement have made very good progress since they were launched in January this year. Furthermore, the accession of Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova to the Energy Community offers a concrete perspective for the integration of both countries in the EU's internal energy market on the basis of alignment with the relevant acquis. As for future Association Agreements with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, the Council welcomes the launch of negotiations in July and hopes that these will progress swiftly. The extent of Belarus' participation in the bilateral track of the Eastern Partnership continues to depend on internal political developments in Belarus. The EU will therefore continue to follow the situation pertaining to democracy and human rights in Belarus.

The Council reiterates the importance it attaches to people-to-people contacts as a means to promote mutual understanding, as well as business, civil society and cultural ties. Recalling the Stockholm Programme and the Joint Declaration of the Prague Summit, the Council reiterates its commitment to promote mobility of citizens of the Eastern partner countries through visa facilitation and readmission agreements, and once these are successfully concluded and implemented, to 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.

With regard to Ukraine, the EU-Ukraine visa dialogue examining the conditions for visa free travel as a long-term goal should now enter a fully operational phase on the basis of an action plan setting out all technical conditions to be met by Ukraine before the possible establishment of a visa-free travel regime. The action plan will be "two phased" and will be tailored to Ukraine's current progress. It will contain two tiers of benchmarks: preliminary benchmarks concerning the policy framework (legislation and planning), which in turn will pave the way for meeting more specific benchmarks, covering effective and sustainable implementation of relevant measures including concrete results on the ground.

Moreover, the effective implementation of visa facilitation and readmission agreements will remain of particular importance.

Through the Council, EU Member States will be fully associated in the different steps of the process, including by being consulted on the draft action plan and both sets of benchmarks. The draft action plan will take into account the expert analysis produced during the exploratory phase of the visa dialogue and will be accompanied by an initial assessment of the impact of possible future visa liberalization. The Council will also be kept informed through Commission reports on the fulfillment of the first set of benchmarks, in view of taking a decision to initiate an assessment of the second set of more specific benchmarks. Furthermore, Member State experts will participate in the monitoring missions conducted by the Commission services and in regular consultations in relevant Council Working Groups.

The Council underlines that there will be no automaticity in this process and progress in the fulfillment of benchmarks will be closely examined and decided upon by the Commission and the Council.

EU Foreign Affairs Council, Conclusions on the Republic of Moldova

Luxembourg, 25 October 2010 [Link](#)

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

The Council acknowledges the European aspirations of the Republic of Moldova and welcomes its efforts towards political association and economic integration with the European Union. It underlines the very positive dynamics in EU-Republic of Moldova relations during the last year as well as the active contribution of the Republic of Moldova to it.

The Council welcomes interest and active participation of the Republic of Moldova in the Eastern Partnership. It expresses satisfaction that negotiations on the future EU-Republic of Moldova Association Agreement are making very good progress. The Council also welcomes the ratification of the Rome statute of the International Criminal Court by the Republic of Moldova.

The Council welcomes the achievements of the Republic of Moldova as reflected in the Commission's Progress Report of May 2010, which highlighted the country's efforts to effectively implement structural reforms, based on a government programme fully aligned with the objectives of the EU-Republic of Moldova Action Plan. The Council looks forward to the Republic of Moldova continuing to address important challenges such as strengthening democracy and the rule of law, improving the investment climate, pursuing EU approximation in all areas

of the EU-Republic of Moldova Action Plan, fighting corruption and organized crime, and tackling the problem of poverty. The Council stresses the EU's readiness to continue to deepen its relationship with the Republic of Moldova and to provide appropriate technical and financial assistance to support reform efforts.

The Council reaffirms the EU's readiness to continue to support the Republic of Moldova, including with macro-financial assistance and high level advice to the government. Substantial macro-financial assistance €90 million in the form of grants –will start being delivered to the state budget of the Republic of Moldova in the coming weeks.

The Council notes also that the Commission will deliver soon to the government of the Republic of Moldova its key recommendations in view of preparing the country for a deep and comprehensive free trade area. This will provide companies of the Republic of Moldova substantially improved access to the EU market, following the existing Autonomous Trade Preferences granted by the EU. This will also help to create an attractive investment climate for EU companies in the Republic of Moldova. The Council invites the Commission to prepare directives for a deep and comprehensive free trade area to be negotiated as an integral part of the Association Agreement. Such negotiations will start as soon as the necessary conditions are met.

The Council reiterates the importance of people to people contacts and welcomes the opening in June 2010 of the visa dialogue examining the conditions for visa free travel of citizens of the Republic of Moldova to the EU as a long term goal. On the basis of the exploratory phase of the dialogue, the Council underlines the achievements made so far, the existing challenges and the importance of further reform efforts by the Republic of Moldova, and invites the Commission to prepare a draft action plan, in line with the approach set out in paragraphs eight and nine of the Council Conclusions on the Eastern Partnership of 25 October 2010, setting out all the conditions to be met by the Republic of Moldova before the possible establishment of a visa free travel regime, with a view to the visa dialogue entering a fully operational phase as soon as appropriate. Through the Council, EU Member States will be fully associated in the different steps of the process, including by being consulted on the draft action plan and both sets of benchmarks. The effective implementation of the readmission agreement will remain important in this context.

The Council notes that the Republic of Moldova has taken important steps during the past year in consolidating democracy. In this regard, the conduct of the constitutional referendum of 5 September in line with democratic standards was an encouraging sign. It is important that the parliamentary elections announced for 28 November take the country further forward on this path

and fully meet international standards for free and fair elections.

The Council also welcomes the policy of constructive engagement of the Republic of Moldova in the Transnistria settlement efforts, including through the support of the Republic of Moldova to confidence building measures. The Council underlines the continued efforts of the EU to contribute to a sustainable settlement of the Transnistria conflict, based on the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova. It reaffirms the EU's call for a resumption of official settlement talks in the 5+2 format as early as possible.

EU General Affairs Council, 3040th Council Meeting, Conclusions on Serbia, Press Release

Luxembourg, 25 October 2010 [Link](#)

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"1. On 22 December 2009, President Mr Boris Tadic presented the application of the Republic of Serbia for membership of the European Union. The Council decided to implement the procedure laid down in Article 49 of the Treaty on the European Union. Accordingly, the Commission is invited to submit its opinion.

2. Recalling the renewed consensus on enlargement as expressed in the conclusions of the

European Council of 14/15 December 2006, the Council reaffirms that the future of the

Western Balkans lies in the European Union. It reiterates that each country's progress towards the European Union depends on its individual efforts to comply with the Copenhagen criteria and the conditionality of the Stabilization and Association Process.

3. The Council reiterates that a constructive approach towards regional cooperation is essential. The Council also calls for progress in the process of dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, under the facilitation of the EU and its High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, welcomed in the United Nations General Assembly resolution of 9 September 2010 as a factor for peace, security and stability in the region.

4. The Council recalls that Serbia's full cooperation with ICTY is already required by the Stabilization and Association Agreement, as well as by the Interim Agreement. In line with the political criteria of Copenhagen full cooperation with ICTY is an essential condition for membership of the EU. In the context of Serbia's application for membership of the European Union on 22 December 2009, the EU underlines that at each stage of Serbia's path towards EU accession, following the decision re-

ferred to in paragraph 1, further steps will be taken when the Council unanimously decides that full co-operation with the ICTY exists or continues to exist. In this context, the Council will closely monitor the progress reports by the Office of the Prosecutor. The EU and its Member States recall their readiness to assist Serbia in this respect.

5. The Council calls upon Serbia to implement recommendations presented by the ICTY Office of the Prosecutor to the United Nations Security Council in June 2010 concerning Serbia's support in ongoing trials and appeals and Serbia's assistance in the key matter of the arrest of the two remaining fugitives, Ratko Mladic and Goran Hadzic, which would be the most convincing proof of Serbia's efforts and cooperation with the ICTY."

Meeting of the Ministers of Energy of the BSEC Member States, Nafplion Declaration on the "Green Energy Development Initiative" for the Black Sea Region

Nafplion, 12 October 2010

We, the Ministers of Energy of the BSEC Member States, met in Nafplion on the 12th of October 2010, to consider steps for promoting sustainable energy policies on the basis of Green Growth for the BSEC region, in order to enhance energy security and protect and manage the unique natural resources and environment in the wider Black Sea area and

Emphasizing the role of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation as a mechanism for developing multilateral energy cooperation in the region;

Reaffirming our commitment to the provisions of the BSEC Declarations on cooperation in energy adopted in Baku (19 September 2003) and Alexandroupolis (4 March 2005), the Joint Statement adopted in Sochi (27 September 2006), the Declaration on the occasion of the 15th Anniversary Summit of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation adopted in Istanbul (25 June 2007), the Declaration on Cooperation between BSEC and the EU adopted in Kiev (9 April 2008), the Yerevan Declaration (20 March 2009), the Declaration of the Ministers of Energy of the BSEC Member States adopted in Sofia (28 January 2010) and emphasizing the need for their expeditious practical implementation;

Conscious of the growing importance of the Black Sea region as a key international energy trade, transit and transportation area and of the environmental challenges posed therein;

Taking into account the interdependence of energy producing, consuming and transit countries;

Recalling the importance of safeguarding security of energy supply through the diversification of resources and transport routes and, in this context, of our gradual transition to a clean energy economy by promoting the use of natural gas and renewable energy resources;

Noting the need for sustainable energy policies, in order to gradually move towards a low carbon economy, taking into account the need for sound resource management, rising demand, the effects of climate change while contributing to the economic development and prosperity of the region;

Aiming at the further expansion of our current cooperation in the fields of energy efficiency and green energy including environmentally friendly energy technologies;

Recognizing that energy efficiency measures and renewable energy policies contribute to tackling the negative effects of climate change;

Considering the need to promote resource management, environmental sustainability, energy efficiency measures and renewable energy sources at the regional level;

Acknowledging the important role that the business, industry and banking sectors and academia could play in promoting the Green Energy Development Initiative;

Have agreed to:

1. Set up a Green Energy Development Initiative Task Force, within the BSEC Working Group on Energy, with the aim to:

(a) Identify common aspects of the Green Growth policies pursued by each Member State and specify relevant issues within which regional cooperation can be most effective.

(b) Explore ways to promote Green Energy investments with an emphasis on energy efficiency, renewable energy sources and environmentally friendly energy technologies.

(c) Promote innovative Green Energy projects through the Project Development Fund and the BSEC Hellenic Development Fund that will facilitate the use of environmentally friendly technologies and generate additional economic value by creating synergies with other sectors (e.g. tourism, transport) and thus leverage other public and private sector financing.

(d) Facilitate the development of a network between administrative bodies and / or centres in the Member States mandated to promote renewable energy sources and energy efficiency measures, with a view to exchange and transfer technical know-how and promote the necessary legislative and regulatory reforms in their respective countries, in order to reduce non-technical barriers.

2. Encourage investments and support market based energy infrastructure in the region to increase interconnect-

tivity and link it to the global market for the benefit of the BSEC Member States by promoting environmentally sustainable and economically viable projects, taking into consideration environmentally vulnerable areas, to further diversify sources and routes and reinforce Green Growth.

3. Encourage further opening of cross-border trade of natural gas and electricity in the region based on market principles and rules, in order to secure uninterrupted supply of energy for domestic markets.

4. Encourage the BSEC Related Bodies, namely the Parliamentary Assembly of BSEC, the BSEC Business Council, the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank and the International Centre for Black Sea Studies to undertake initiatives, with the involvement of academic, business, industrial and banking stakeholders, in order to promote the objectives of the Green Energy Development Initiative, by promoting investment and trade activities, as well as the development and transfer of know-how to interested parties.

5. Enhance further cooperation with the EU and other relevant international organizations and institutions, in order to develop practical and purpose-oriented cooperation in the fields of energy efficiency and renewable energy.

The Participants expressed their gratitude to the Authorities of the Hellenic Republic for their hospitality and excellent organization of the Meeting.

European Commission – External Relations, Civil Society Forum Working Groups Meetings

Brussels, September/October 2010 [Link](#)

Four CSF Working Groups (WGs) met in Brussels between 3 September and 8 October 2010. One of the aims of the meetings was to discuss the state of play of the implementation of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) and to plan upcoming activities, in particular the second meeting of the Civil Society Forum (18-19 November 2010).

During the meeting of WG 4 on contacts between people held on 3rd September 2010 the participants were informed about the last developments of the EaP Platform on contacts between people as well as about the funding opportunities for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) offered within the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI). Other topics of discussion included plans for lobbying activities directed towards EaP Countries, EU Member States and the Euro-

pean Commission (EC). The group also held a discussion on a mechanism for effective communication and interaction among the participants. The meeting became a space of cooperation and the sharing of ideas in the fields of education and research, youth, mass media and culture.

The meeting of WG 3 on environment, climate change and energy security took place on 10th September. Its main objective was to present the developments in the field to date and draft a plan for future actions. Consequently, representatives of the EC presented the progress of the EaP Platform on energy security and the Environmental Panel as well as discussed with the participants the question of how the CSF can provide input to the work of the Platform. Furthermore, the participants elaborated a wide range of recommendations on energy and environment issues, which should be addressed within the EaP. The discussions also included the progress of the Flagship Initiative on Environmental Governance.

The WG 2 on economic integration and convergence with EU policies was held on 1st October 2010. Representatives of EaP Countries and EU Member States also participated in the meeting. Its main objective was to discuss the state of play of the EaP platform on economic integration and possible input from the CSF into its activities. EC representatives briefed participants on the Small and Medium-size Enterprises (SME) Flagship Initiative which has been designed to address the constraints that affect this sector in the Partner Countries. Another important issue discussed was the progress of the negotiations on creating a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA). Additionally, the EC presented basis modalities of the Comprehensive Institution Building Programmes on the example of Ukraine.

The WG 1 on democracy, human rights, good governance and stability met on 7-8 October. The meeting was divided into five thematic sections: judiciary reform, public administration reform, fight against corruption, visa facilitation and media. The representatives of EaP Countries and EU Member States were invited to exchange views with CSOs on the practical aspects of the implementation of the EaP and a role for the Forum in this process. The discussions were aimed at drafting a plan for the future activities of the CSF as well as a list of subjects that should be raised during the Forum's meeting in November 2010. The participants were also informed by the representatives of the EC about the funding opportunities for CSOs under European financial instruments, including Cross-Border Cooperation Programmes implemented within the frameworks of the ENPI.

The meetings of the Civil Society Forum Working Groups created a vibrant platform for the exchange of opinions among the participants.

Štefan Füle European Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy, Opening Remarks on Cross Border Co-operation under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, European Parliament Plenary Session

Strasbourg, 23 September 2010 [Link](#)

Mr. Van Nistelrooij, Honourable Members of the European Parliament,

Cross Border Co-operation has been one of the main innovations under the Instrument for European Neighbourhood Policy (ENPI). Back in 2006 we adopted a Regulation which, for the first time, saw the “full” transposition of EU Cross Border Co-operation experience in an external relations environment.

We wanted the new programmes to be jointly designed and jointly managed by Member States and Partner countries. We wanted to fully involve local actors and ensure that projects were jointly selected and implemented. We saw this as a way of empowering local authorities, promoting local development and ultimately strengthening local democracy.

We never said that this was going to be easy. We never said that this was going to be quick. Borders are basic elements of sovereignty.

The benefits of CBC and the way it works had to be explained to partner countries, its implementation mechanisms adapted to take into account their administrative and legal constraints. A way around sensitive “foreign policy” issues had to be found... and this was not always possible:

It was not possible to persuade Morocco to participate in programmes where Ceuta and Melilla were eligible.

It was not possible to persuade Azerbaijan to participate in the Black Sea Programme alongside Armenia.

It was not possible to find a way to overcome the political and technical obstacles which led Russia to decide not to participate in the Baltic Sea Programme.

This is regrettable, but as you can see we are confronted here with long-standing policy issues reflecting core national interests.

But the glass is more than half full. As we speak we have 13 programmes operational. They cover the entire EU land border, the sea crossing between Italy and Tunisia and the three big Sea Basins the EU shares with its neighbours: the Black Sea, the Baltic Sea and the Mediterranean Sea.

Russia has also agreed to co-finance the programmes in

which it participates with over 100 million Euros.

Under all of these programmes we have now launched calls for proposals for an amount of 275 million Euros. The response to these calls for proposals has not been poor. On the contrary it has been excellent. We are receiving hundreds of applications. Almost six times more than we can finance. 598 proposals were submitted under the 'accompanying measures' programme (MEDA) only.

We expect that the funds will start to flow to the beneficiaries soon and we foresee no absorption problems.

The Commission is now in the process of undertaking a Mid Term review of the CBC Strategy Paper and the Indicative Programme. There are a number of adjustments we need to make including to the budget.

Firstly the two programmes between Spain and Morocco will be cancelled. The European Regional Development Component of the budget will go back to Spain to be used by Spain in accordance with the Structural Funds Regulation. The ENPI component has been reallocated to other ENPI programmes in the Southern Neighbourhood.

Secondly we are considering reducing the ENPI allocation to the Baltic Sea programme. This may provide some extra funds to increase the budget of other Sea Basin programmes. Given the small amount involved we do not expect equivalent matching funds from ERDF.

I understand you have concerns about duplication of financing between CBC and other ENPI programmes. We will also review that aspect, but I have to say that the risk is small because

- (a) CBC programmes have a clear territorial focus and
- (b) we systematically screen all the selected projects to avoid that problem.

The Commission is about to start a reflection on the ENPI in view of the legislative proposal for a revised regulation that it intends to table in late 2011. In this context we will consult practitioners and stakeholders to see what shortcomings have been identified and how they can best be addressed.

Mr. Van Nistelrooij, Honourable Members,

Implementing the ENPI CBC component has been an enormous challenge. We have lived up to it and we are about to see the results. I am persuaded that it will be a success.

We are about to review the way ENPI works, and there we share the same goals: the Commission as much as the European Parliament wants to have programmes that are easier to prepare and can be implemented faster.

The Commission is ready to work in close consultation with the practitioners, the stakeholders and the European Parliament to that effect.

Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly: The Functioning of Democratic Institutions in Ukraine

Strasbourg, 20 September 2010 [Link](#)

[...]

Summary

The Monitoring Committee welcomes the increase in legislative activity in Ukraine in the wake of the 2010 Presidential election, and especially the priority given by the new authorities to honouring Ukraine's remaining accession commitments. However, the committee is concerned that the current relative stability is fragile, as the underlying systemic causes of the instability that has plagued the country in recent years have not been addressed. Moreover, it is concerned that the hasty manner in which the authorities are implementing the reforms could negatively affect respect for proper democratic principles and, ultimately, the quality of the reforms themselves.

In support of the efforts of the authorities to honour Ukraine's remaining accession commitments, the committee has outlined a series of recommendations for the reforms, which in its view are crucial to ensure that the reforms will meet European standards and principles. In that respect, the committee stressed that it will not be possible for Ukraine to implement the reforms necessary for the country to fulfil its accession commitments without first reforming the constitution. It therefore calls upon the authorities and opposition to jointly implement a constitutional reform package that addresses the current constitutional shortcomings.

Lastly, the committee expresses its concern about the increasing number of allegations that democratic freedoms, such as freedom of assembly, freedom of expression and freedom of the media, have come under pressure in recent months. It therefore calls upon the authorities to investigate all allegations of infringements of rights and freedoms and remedy any violations found, and stresses that any regression in the respect for or protection of democratic freedoms and rights would be unacceptable.

A. Draft resolution

1. The Parliamentary Assembly welcomes the increase in legislative activity in Ukraine in the wake of the 2010 presidential election and the establishment of a new governing coalition, which could lead to political stability. It considers that political stability is an essential condition for the consolidation of democracy in Ukraine. However, it is concerned that this relative stability is fragile, as the underlying systemic causes of the instability that has plagued the country in recent years have not been ad-

dressed.

2. The Assembly reiterates that the only manner in which lasting political stability can be ensured is through constitutional changes that establish a clear separation of powers, as well as a proper system of checks and balances between and within the executive, legislative and judicial branches of power.

3. Noting the concerns expressed with regard to the concentration of power by the new authorities in Ukraine, the Assembly considers that the consolidation of power by a newly established administration is understandable, and in many cases even desirable, but warns that such consolidation should not lead to the monopolization of power by a single political force, as this would undermine the democratic development of the country.

4. The Assembly warmly welcomes the priority given, and political will displayed, by the authorities to honouring Ukraine's remaining accession commitments to the Council of Europe. The Assembly offers its full support to the authorities in their efforts to implement the ambitious and far-reaching package of reforms that are necessary to honour Ukraine's accession Council of Europe commitments and membership obligations.

5. The Assembly is concerned that the hasty manner in which the authorities are implementing these reforms could negatively affect respect for proper democratic principles and, ultimately, the quality of the reforms themselves. The fulfilment of the remaining accession commitments entails the implementation of a series of far-reaching and complex reforms, which will have a deep impact on Ukrainian society. The successful implementation of these reforms is therefore only possible if they are based on wide political consensus and public support. This, in turn, is only possible if respect for parliamentary procedures and democratic principles is strictly observed.

6. Close co-operation with the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) is crucial to ensure that the legislative reform packages that are currently being developed are fully in compliance with European standards and values. The Assembly therefore calls upon the authorities and leadership of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to ensure that the Venice Commission is asked for an opinion on the final versions of draft laws before they are adopted in a final reading.

7. The different areas that are covered by the recent reform initiative have already been extensively addressed by the Assembly in previous resolutions dealing with Ukraine. Reaffirming its position on these reforms, the Assembly, with regard in particular to:

7.1. Electoral reform:

7.1.1. reaffirms its recommendation that a Unified Election Code be adopted in Ukraine and welcomes that a

draft for such a Unified Code has now been tabled for adoption in the Verkhovna Rada;

7.1.2. considers that electoral reform should not only entail the adoption of a new election code but also of a new electoral system, and reaffirms its recommendation that an electoral system be adopted that consists of a proportional system based on open lists and multiple regional constituencies;

7.1.3. reaffirms that the imperative mandate that was introduced with the constitutional amendments of 2004 runs counter to European democratic standards;

7.1.4. calls upon all political forces to make good on their promise to reform the legal framework for elections and to demonstrate the commensurate political will to adopt a Unified Election Code and a new electoral system, in line with recommendations of the Venice Commission and the Assembly, well before the next parliamentary elections;

7.1.5. urges the authorities to adopt a law on political party financing that is in line with European standards and to consider the possibility of state funding for political parties to decrease their dependence on economic interests.

7.2. Reform of the Prokuratura:

7.2.1. recalls that Ukraine, upon accession to the Council of Europe, made the following commitment: “the role and functions of the Prosecutor’s Office will change (particularly with regard to the exercise of a general control of legality), transforming this institution into a body which is in accordance with Council of Europe standards”, and regrets that this commitment still remains to be implemented;

7.2.2. reaffirms that the general oversight function of the prosecutor’s office in Ukraine runs counter to European standards and that, also as a result of that function, it has powers that far exceed those necessary in a democratic state;

7.2.3. calls upon the authorities and the Verkhovna Rada to adopt, as soon as possible and in close consultation with the Venice Commission, a law on the public prosecutor’s office that is fully in line with European standards and values;

7.2.4. considers that constitutional amendments are essential to remove the general oversight function from the prosecutor’s office and reform this institution in line with Ukraine’s accession commitments;

7.2.5. recommends that, as an alternative to the oversight function, the role of the ombudsperson is strengthened and a system of free legal aid put in place.

7.3. Reform of the justice system:

7.3.1. considers that the reform of the judiciary and jus-

tice system is essential for the consolidation of the rule of law in Ukraine and welcomes the priority given by the authorities to these reforms;

7.3.2. considers that the Law on the Judicial System and the Status of Judges of Ukraine is a cornerstone of the reform of the justice system and a key to ensuring the independence of the judiciary. It therefore deeply regrets that this law was adopted and enacted in great haste in July 2010, without waiting for the opinion of the Venice Commission that had been requested by the Minister of Justice of Ukraine;

7.3.3. asks the authorities to ensure that the Law on the Judicial System and the Status of Judges and the Law on Amendments to Legislative Acts concerning prevention of abuse of the right to appeal take into account any recommendations, or concerns addressed, in the forthcoming Venice Commission opinions, by amending the Laws as required;

7.3.4. considers that without constitutional amendments it will not be possible to reform the judiciary in line with European standards and values;

7.3.5. urges the authorities to reform the bar and establish a professional bar association in line with the accession commitments of Ukraine to the Council of Europe;

7.3.6. asks the authorities to adopt, as soon as possible, the new Criminal Procedure Code and to request an opinion of the Venice Commission on the draft of this code, and address any possible concerns before it is adopted in final reading;

7.3.7 calls upon the authorities to ensure that the justice system is sufficiently funded from the state budget, as the current situation of chronic underfunding increases the potential for corruption and undermines the rule of law.

7.4. Fight against corruption:

7.4.1. regrets the decision of the Verkhovna Rada to postpone, until 2011, the entry into force of the package of anti-corruption laws that were developed with the assistance of the Council of Europe, as well as the vetoing by the former President of the anti-money laundering law;

7.4.2. welcomes the priority given by the new president to the fight against corruption and urges him to ensure that the aforementioned package of anti-corruption laws is now enacted without further delay and that all the recommendations made by the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) in its joint first and second round evaluation report are now promptly implemented.

7.5. Civil society:

7.5.1. highlights the importance of civil society for Ukraine’s democratic development and therefore asks the authorities to speed up the adoption of a new law on civic organisations with a view to addressing the deficiencies noted in the current legal framework for non-

governmental organisations;

7.5.2. asks the Verkhovna Rada to adopt the Law on Order of Organising and Conducting of Peaceful events, on the basis of the comments and recommendations of the Venice Commission.

8. The Assembly notes that the reforms are constrained in many areas by the current constitutional provisions. Therefore, it will not be possible to implement the reforms necessary for Ukraine to meet its commitments to the Council of Europe without first reforming the constitution. The Assembly therefore calls upon the authorities and opposition to jointly implement a constitutional reform package that addresses the current shortcomings, as well as the underlying causes of the systemic political instability, in line with its previous recommendations. In this respect, the Assembly reiterates its previous recommendation that the current constitution should be amended instead of an entirely new constitution being adopted.

9. An increased respect for democratic freedoms and rights has been one of the main achievements in Ukraine's democratic development in recent years. Any regression in the respect for and protection of these rights would be unacceptable for the Assembly.

10. The Assembly expresses its concern about the increasing number of allegations that democratic freedoms, such as freedom of assembly, freedom of expression and freedom of the media, have come under pressure in recent months. It therefore calls upon the authorities to investigate all allegations of infringements of rights and freedoms and remedy any violations found. In addition, it recommends that the authorities review any decision or appointment that could lead to conflict of interest, especially in the field of law enforcement and the judiciary.

11. Media freedom and pluralism are cornerstones of democracy. The Assembly is therefore concerned about recent developments that could undermine these principles. It calls upon the authorities to take all necessary measures to protect media freedom and pluralism in Ukraine and to refrain from any attempts to control, directly or indirectly, the content of the reporting in the national media.

12. The Assembly reaffirms its readiness to assist Ukraine in strengthening its democratic institutions and firmly establishing a society based on the principles of democracy, respect of human rights and the rule of law.

[...]

5. Conclusions

84. The presidential elections in Ukraine heralded a stability in the political environment that has been lacking in the country for many years. However, this stability is fragile and the authorities are urged to implement consti-

tutional reforms that would create a robust and stable political framework with a clear separation between the different branches of power and an effective system of checks and balances between them. This is especially essential as the polarization between political forces has not ceased in society and could easily result in renewed instability and political infighting. In this context, the consolidation of power by the ruling majority is understandable and, in the context of the years of political infighting between the different branches of power in Ukraine, possibly even desirable. However, utmost care should be taken that such consolidation of power does not turn into a concentration or, even worse, a monopolization, of power in the hands of one political group, as this would undermine the democratic development of the country.

85. The ambitious reform programme initiated with a view to fulfilling the remaining accession commitments, as well as ongoing membership obligations, to the Council of Europe should be strongly welcomed and supported. In that spirit, we have outlined our recommendations and, where necessary, expressed our concerns, for the main components of this reform. However, the haste in which these reforms are being implemented comes at the cost of proper democratic procedures and a proper deliberation and consultation process. This is a point of serious concern that should be addressed by the authorities. We would like to underscore that far-reaching reforms are needed to meet the remaining accession commitments, which by their nature should be based on an as wide a political consensus as possible and public support for them, in order for them to be effective. This is only possible if respect for parliamentary procedures and democratic principles is observed. In addition, we call upon the authorities and leadership of the Verkhovna Rada to ensure that the Council of Europe is consulted on the different reforms and, most notably, that the Venice Commission is asked for an opinion on the final versions of the laws before they are adopted in a final reading.

86. It is clear that the scope for reforms in many areas is limited under the current constitutional provisions. It will therefore not be possible to implement the reforms necessary for Ukraine to meet its commitments to the Council of Europe without satisfactorily implementing the constitutional reforms recommended by the Assembly. The main priority for the authorities should therefore be to implement the constitutional reform project, after which more specific legislation can be elaborated and enacted that is fully in line with European standards and values. In this respect, it should be emphasized that the Assembly, on several occasions, has recommended amending the current constitution, instead of adopting an entirely new one.

87. A clear and unwavering respect for democratic rights and freedoms has been one of the main achievements in

Ukraine's democratic development in recent years. Any regression in the respect for, and protection of, these rights would be unacceptable for the Assembly. The increasing number of allegations that democratic freedoms, such as freedom of assembly, freedom of expression and freedom of the media, have come under pressure in recent months is therefore of concern. However, while some incidents raise concern, and while we feel that any possible violation of democratic norms and human rights are in principle unacceptable and should be fully investigated and remedied, we feel that it is, as yet, not possible to discern any systematic trend that would suggest that the authorities are not committed to fully adhering to the principles of human rights and democratic freedoms. However, we would like to call upon the authorities to react more clearly and more pro-actively to these allegations than has been the case till now.

European Council, Conclusions on Relations with Strategic Partners

Brussels, 16 September 2010 [Link](#)

[...]

RELATIONS WITH STRATEGIC PARTNERS

[...]

Orientations for upcoming events

c. The European Council will take stock of preparations for the Cancun conference on climate change at its October meeting and agree on the EU position. Cancun should be a stepping stone in the international climate negotiations, agreeing on concrete deliverables for all participants to create momentum and stay on track for an ambitious final agreement.

d. The upcoming reflection on the implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy will provide an opportunity to deepen relations with the Union's eastern neighbours through the Eastern Partnership as well as with its southern neighbours. The smooth implementation of projects launched within the Eastern Partnership constitutes an outreach of EU values and promotes the legal, economic and social approximation of the countries concerned to the EU. The second summit of the Union for the Mediterranean will provide a timely opportunity to strengthen Euro-Mediterranean cooperation and support the resumption of direct negotiations between the parties in the Middle East Peace Process.

[...]

g. The upcoming summits with Ukraine in November and Russia in December should be used to deepen cooperation on areas of mutual benefit, so as to bring more stability and predictability to those two important rela-

tionships, as well as to promote human rights.

In particular, the summit with Ukraine should bring progress to the negotiations on the Association Agreement, including the deep and comprehensive Free Trade Agreement, and highlight the role of the EU in the economic and democratic reforms of this important neighbour.

The summit with Russia will provide an opportunity to enhance cooperation with Russia and to discuss in particular its modernization agenda. Cooperation should be enhanced on economic issues such as energy, investment and innovation, on security issues, including frozen conflicts, the combat against terrorism and organized crime, and on environmental issues, including climate change.

The October European Council will come back to the key messages of the European Union in these summits so as to ensure a fruitful outcome.

EU General Affairs Council, Conclusions on Cooperation and Verification Mechanism for Bulgaria and Romania

Brussels, 13 September 2010 [Link](#)

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"1. Reaffirming its earlier conclusions, the Council welcomes the Commission's reports on progress in Bulgaria and Romania under the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism. The Council commends the Commission on its work, on the methodology followed and fully shares the objective and balanced analysis and recommendations contained in those reports.

2. Recalling the importance of an unequivocal and sustained political commitment to meet the objectives set under the mechanism, the Council acknowledges the efforts made by these two Member States. The existence of an impartial, independent and effective administrative and judicial system, with sufficient resources, is indispensable for EU policies to function properly and for citizens to benefit fully from all the opportunities offered by membership of the Union.

3. The Council welcomes the strong reform momentum now established in Bulgaria and its new partnership with the Commission. The new strategy for judicial reform offers a blueprint for a comprehensive, long-term reform of the judiciary. Its adoption by the government demonstrates political determination. The Council also recognizes other achievements, notably the reform of the penal procedures, the increasing number of indictments for cases involving high-level corruption and organized crime, as well as progress in the first emblematic case involving fraud of EU funds.

Important deficiencies remain, however, in particular

with regard to judicial and professional practice at the level of the prosecution and courts. The transparency within and the accountability of the judiciary needs to be strengthened. The anti-corruption strategy, the law on conflict of interest and the public procurement procedures need to be properly and fully implemented. A more efficient judicial follow-up of organized crime cases, e.g. through the use of dissuasive sanctions and asset forfeiture, should be ensured. Full and timely implementation of the new strategy for judicial reform should be treated as a matter of priority.

4. The Council welcomes the adoption of the Civil and Criminal procedures Codes in Romania on 22 June, as well as progress on the implementing laws. The entry into force of these codes, scheduled for October 2011, will provide an important opportunity for a thorough reform of the Romanian judicial system. The National Anti-Corruption Directorate (DNA) continues to show a good, stable track record in the investigation of high level corruption. The National Integrity Agency (ANI) has a promising track record of cases. The Council welcomes Romania's swift adoption of a revised ANI law, in response to the Commission's report, and of the amendment to the Law on the Constitutional Court, and looks forward to their implementation. Efforts by the General Prosecutor to enhance the fight against corruption are beginning to deliver results.

However, the Commission's assessment also points to important shortcomings. Little effective progress has been achieved as regards the efficiency of the judicial process, consistency of jurisprudence and the accountability of the judiciary. Human resources remain a major challenge. A coordinated anti-corruption policy across the different sectors of government is missing. Substantial improvements are required in the field of conflict of interest. In this regard, Romania should aim, building on recent progress, to further improve public procurement legislation. Romania should establish close and constructive cooperation between the different political and judicial actors and to strengthen the commitment of the judiciary to reform. In order to sustain the reform process, Romania needs to strengthen broad-based political support in favour of transparency and the effective protection against corruption and conflict of interest.

5. Recalling that the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism has now entered its fourth year, the Council encourages Bulgaria and Romania to intensify their reform efforts as a matter of urgency. In this light, the Council stresses the need for Bulgaria and Romania to take immediate action in order to address all the recommendations set out in the Commission reports, so as to achieve concrete and lasting results, especially in the areas highlighted by the Commission reports.

6. The Council notes that the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism is an appropriate tool to assist Bulgaria

and Romania in their reform efforts. The other Member States are ready to continue to grant every necessary assistance in order to meet as soon as possible the objectives set under the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism. Pending the results

expected in this framework, the Mechanism stays in place. In this context, the Council recalls that the Mechanism underpins Bulgaria's and Romania's efforts to fully implement EU policies. The Council will continue to pay careful attention to developments in this area."

Council of the European Union, EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) in Georgia, Press Release

Brussels, 12 August 2010 [Link](#)

The Council adopted today a decision extending the mandate of the European Union monitoring mission in Georgia (EUMM Georgia) by twelve months until 14 September

2011 (11863/10).

EUMM Georgia seeks to provide civilian monitoring of parties' actions, including full compliance with the six-point agreement and subsequent implementing measures throughout Georgia, working in close coordination with partners, particularly the United Nations (UN) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and consistent with other EU activity, in order to contribute to stabilization, normalization and confidence building whilst also contributing to informing European policy in support of a durable political solution for Georgia.

EU Foreign Affairs Council, Conclusions on European Neighborhood Policy, Press Release

Brussels, 26 July 2010 [Link](#)

[...]

European Neighbourhood Policy – Council conclusions

"1. Recalling its Conclusions of 18-19 June 2007 and of 18 February 2008, the Council thanks the Commission for its Communication taking stock of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), of 12 May 2010, welcomes the progress made so far and confirms the strategic importance for the European Union of building strong relations with its neighbours based on common values. The Communication provides a useful basis for reflection by the Council on the further implementation of the ENP,

with a view to making it more effective and more attractive to all ENP partners.

2. Since its launch in 2004, the ENP as a single policy framework, based inter alia on

partnership and joint ownership, as well as performance-driven differentiation and tailor made assistance, has brought tangible benefits both for ENP partners and the EU. Moreover, the Eastern Partnership and the Union for the Mediterranean have added a regional dimension. The ENP has also led to deepening of relations and to significant progress in strengthening bilateral cooperation with Mediterranean and Eastern partners, which are of strategic importance to the EU. The EU stands ready to work further on these developments. At the same time, partners need to make further tangible progress towards good governance and political reform, as these constitute core elements for the development of enhanced relations with the EU. A stronger relationship requires enhanced commitments in all areas of the relationship, including democracy, human rights and the rule of law. The EU will continue to work with the ENP partners on implementation of these commitments.

3. The Council notes the benefits which market opening has brought both the EU and ENP partners and aims at further trade liberalisation, including greater market access.

Regulatory alignment is particularly important in this regard and ENP partners should do more to capitalise on the advantages this brings. Furthermore, the EU will continue to pursue the establishment of Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (DCFTAs) with ENP partners, following a thorough economic analysis and once they have met the necessary conditions.

4. The Council recalls the importance of people-to-people contacts as a means to promote mutual understanding as well as business, civil society and cultural ties. It welcomes the progress reached so far in this field with several ENP partners. Bearing in mind the importance of a secure environment, the EU stands ready to promote well-managed mobility of citizens of Eastern Partnership and Mediterranean partners.

5. The Council acknowledges the need to accompany market opening, economic integration and regulatory convergence as well as the process of strengthening bilateral relations, throughout the neighbourhood, with appropriate financial support, technical assistance and capacity building. The Council recalls that financial envelopes are determined "using transparent and objective criteria and taking into account the specific characteristics and needs of the country and the region concerned, the level of ambition of the EU's partnership with a given country, progress towards implementing agreed objectives, including on governance and reform, and the capacity of managing and absorbing Community assis-

tance"¹. The Council will return to the issue of financial support in the context of discussions on the next multi-annual financial framework. Furthermore, the Neighbourhood Investment Facility has proved to be a useful initiative to support the economic development of ENP partners and their interconnection with the EU.

6. The Council notes with satisfaction the progress made on the multilateral initiatives of the ENP, notably the implementation of the multilateral track of the Eastern Partnership, the establishment of the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean, and looks forward to the further implementation of concrete regional projects.

7. The Council notes with concern that unresolved conflicts in the Neighbourhood continue to hamper the economic and political development of ENP partners as well as regional cooperation, stability and security. The EU will continue to seek ways of developing and using all relevant policy tools in a concerted fashion, while taking into account agreed negotiating formats and processes.

8. The Council invites the High Representative and the Commission, on the basis of the Commission Communication, to initiate a reflection on the future implementation of the ENP and conduct consultations to this end inside the Union and with ENP partners, in view of a comprehensive discussion by the Council in the first half of 2011."

Recent Publications by the ICBSS



Dimadama, Zefi and Timotheou Alexia. "Greening the Black Sea: Overcoming Inefficiency and Fragmentation through Environmental Governance." *ICBSS Policy Brief*, no. 21. Athens: ICBSS, November 2010. [Link](#)

Black Sea countries are endowed with an invaluable natural heritage, but fragile enough to be threatened by numerous environmental challenges. The divergent, yet developing, economies of the region, the fragmented sectoral policies that are not compatible with environmental sustainability, and the systems of hierarchical government that lack of transparency and participation have accelerated the environmental degradation of the area. The case is not lost as long as new cooperative initiatives emerge, new administrative reforms are attempted, and funds are allocated.

In order to overcome inefficiency and fragmentation there is a need for "greening" the Black Sea through environmental governance. This strategic policy implies the incorporation of the horizontal environmental perspective into all sectoral policies, with a view to achieving legal compliance, efficiency, legitimacy, and networking.

Other Recent Publications on the Black Sea Region

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

December 2010

- European Commission, *Implementation of the Eastern Partnership: Report to the Meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers*, 13 December 2010. [Link](#)
- Turan, Ilter. "Zero problems with Greece: Grounds for Optimism." On Turkey. Washington, D.C.: GMF of the US, 6 December 2010.
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- Anderson Jr., Richard D. "When the Centre Can Hold: The Primacy of Politics in Shaping Russian Democracy." *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*

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- Hashim, Mohsin S. "Power-loss or Power-Transition? Assessing the Limits of Using the Energy Sector in Reviving Russia's Geopolitical Stature." *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 43, no 4 (December 2010): 263-274.
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News and Events

New ICBSS Leaflet

Under the new ICBSS leadership, which changed on the 17th of July 2010 when Dr. Zefi Dimadama took over, the ICBSS revised its promotional leaflet. The document (see our new [leaflet](#)) is based on continuity but with a fresh approach in line with the vision of “A Green Black Sea”.

Black Sea Business Forum

In parallel to the meeting of BSEC Foreign Ministers in the framework of the Hellenic Chairmanship, the BSEC



and SEV (Hellenic Federation of Enterprises) invited ICBSS to organise and moderate the 4th Session on ‘**Research and Innovation in the Black Sea region**’ which was devoted to the *New Era of Green Entrepreneurship* and took place in Thessaloniki, 26 November 2010.

This business gathering of stakeholders of the Black Sea region provided participants with the unique opportunity to gain knowledge on challenges and opportunities ahead regarding green development and business prosperity in the wider area. It focused on a broad spectrum of fields such as energy and renewable sources, wind and solar power, photovoltaics, energy efficiency, biomass and bio-fuels, water management and wastewater treatment, waste management, construction projects, innovative construction materials, financing of green development and the role of financial institutions, use of research and innovation to advance green entrepreneurship.

Fifth ICBSS Annual Lecture by Mr. Achim Steiner, Under-Secretary General of the United Nations, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, on “Opportunities for a Transition to a Green Economy in the Wider Black Sea Region”

On Wednesday, 24 November, the International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) organised its Fifth Annual Lecture that was imparted by



United Nations Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Mr. Achim Steiner, with title “Opportunities for a Transition to a Green Economy in the Wider Black Sea Region”.

Opening the event, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic, Mr. Spyros Kouvelis, congratulated the ICBSS for taking the initiative to organize the lecture and emphasized on the dynamic presence of Greece as a member-state of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC). “Just a while ago, we have decided on the promotion of an agreement that will be officially adopted on Friday, in Thessaloniki, where the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Black Sea countries will meet and they will sign a mutual Declaration for the adoption of a new model of development, an eco-friendly model, that will deal with climate change and will set new foundations for Green Development in the wider region” stated Mr. Kouvelis referring inter alia to the priorities of the Hellenic Chairmanship of the BSEC “Black Sea turns Green”.



The ICBSS Director General, Dr. Z. Dimadama, opened her speech thanking the audience for their attendance and highlighted the new goals and strategy of the ICBSS, which are in line with the priorities defined by the Hellenic Chairmanship of the BSEC. “The future of the Black Sea should be re-established under a new model of economic growth and cooperation that will use opportunities and will promote innovative policies for sustainable development, in favour of economic, social and territorial cohesion” argued Dr. Dimadama.

During his speech, Mr. Steiner underlined the importance of the adoption of a “green economy” even by countries affected by the global economic crisis, since, as he stressed, the current economic model erroneously sees nature and the environment as a bottomless resource.

Regarding the Black Sea area that is currently facing serious environmental challenges, the UN Under-Secretary General and UNEP Executive Director pointed out that a green economy does not constitute a necessity due to environmental circumstances, but also a unique chance for the Black Sea countries to promote regional cooperation that will generate new opportunities for development in the years to come. Continuing, Mr. Steiner pronounced himself optimistic regarding the BSEC Hellenic Chairmanship’s campaign under the motto “The Black Sea turns Green”, as he believes that it will contribute to the emergence of opportunities in the wider Black Sea region.

Concluding, Mr. Steiner emphasized the geostrategic position of Greece and underlined the country’s important role in the region, arguing it should foster the development of renewable energy as, according to his words, the day after the crisis is of vital importance.

Workshop in the Thematic Priority of FP7 “Socioeconomic Sciences and Humanities”

The workshop on EU-EECA cooperation in the field of ‘Social Sciences and Humanities, was organised by the ICBSS in the context of the EU co-funded project S&T International Cooperation Network for Eastern European and Central Asian Countries (IncoNet EECA), and took place in Athens, on 26-27 October 2010.

The objective of the Workshop was to bring together researchers from both EU and EECA countries in order to identify topics of mutual EECA – EU interest that could be included in the future Calls of FP7. The Workshop focused on ‘Europe in the World’, and on areas such as i) ‘Interactions and interdependencies between world regions and their implications’ with particular emphasis on the collective challenges for the EECA region and regional cooperation strategies between EU and EECA (in sectors such as trade, migration, education, research innovation);

ii) Conflicts, peace and human rights’ with particular emphasis on the impact of local conflicts on the economic cooperation between EU and EECA.

Seminar on “(Inter-)Regional civil society cooperation: Challenges and future perspectives in the Mediterranean, Baltic Sea and Black Sea regions”

The ICBSS is a partner in the project “Facilitating Political Dialogue in the Baltico-Mediterranean Axis” led by the The Finnish NGDO Platform to the EU, Kehys ry. The project is co-funded by the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures (ALF) and is scheduled to run until 1 June 2011.

Within the framework of the project, a seminar on (Inter-) Regional Civil Society Cooperation was held in Athens on 20 October 2010. The seminar examined the preconditions, challenges and possibilities for civil society cooperation in and between the Mediterranean, Baltic Sea and Black Sea regions. The ICBSS actively participated making a presentation on “Civil society cooperation in the Black Sea region.”

Briefing to European Commission Officials

The ICBSS participated in an Information Programme for European Commission officials organised in Athens by the Greek Diplomatic Academy and the Directorate General for Personnel and Administration of the European Commission in the week of 11-15 October 2010. The ICBSS welcomed the 16 Officials at its premises on 14 October 2010 giving a presentation of the Centre and its work followed by a brief question time.

Issue no. 16—July 2010

- “The Commission on the Black Sea and its Recommendations,” by Dimitrios Triantaphyllou
- Presentation of the Priorities of the Hellenic Chairmanship-in-Office of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (June 1, 2010 – December 31, 2010)
- Statement by the Spokesperson of HR Catherine Ashton on Nagorno-Karabakh
- European Union Signs Visa Facilitation Agreement with Georgia
- EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council - Fourteenth Meeting
- EU Foreign Affairs Council, Conclusions on Relations with the South Caucasus
- EU-Russia Summit, Joint Statement on the Partnership for Modernisation
- ENP Country Progress Report 2009 – Armenia
- ENP Country Progress Report 2009 - Azerbaijan
- ENP Country Progress Report 2009 - Georgia
- ENP Country Progress Report 2009 - Republic of Moldova
- ENP Country Progress Report 2009 - Ukraine
- European Commission, 2010 Annual Action Programme – Georgia
- European Commission, 2010 Annual Action Programme – Moldova
- Statement by HR Catherine Ashton on the Adoption of Negotiating Directives for Association Agreements between the EU and Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia

Issue no. 15—April 2010

Issue no. 14—January 2010

Issue no. 13—September 2009

Issue no. 12—July 2009

Issue no. 11—May 2009

Issue no. 10—January 2009

Issue no. 9—November 2008

Issue no. 8—September 2008

Issue no. 7—April 2008

Issue no. 6—December 2007

Issue no. 5—July 2007

Issue no. 4—June 2007

Issue no. 3—March 2007

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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.