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### Armenia

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   READ MORE: [http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1615539.html](http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1615539.html)
   
   YEREVAN – The recent joint statement by Turkey and Armenia for a normalization of their relations is being met with increasing opposition in Armenia, RFE/RL's Armenian Service reports. The Armenian Revolutionary Federation – Dashnaksutiun party on April 23 discussed pulling out of the country’s governing coalition, calling the Turkish Armenian “road map” in a statement “unacceptable and condemnable.” Giro Manoyan, a senior Dashnaksutiun official, told RFE/RL that in signing the road map, President Serzh Sarkisian has accepted Turkish preconditions on disputed issues such as the Nagorno- Karabakh conflict and the border closure by Turkey.

2. **Armenia Excited about Eastern Partnership**
   
   21.04.2009, thenews.pl
   
   
   Head of Armenia’s Upper House of Parliament arrived in Warsaw today to meet with Polish Senate Speaker Bogdan Borusewicz on issues regarding the Eastern Partnership, amongst other things. Hovikiem Abrahamyan, head of the Armenian delegation, is very pleased with to-date Polish-Armenian relations, and is especially excited to be involved in the Eastern Partnership, the Polish-Swedish initiative to create a cooperation between the European Union and its eastern neighbours.

3. **European Parliament Members Visit Jailed Armenians**
   
   08.04.2009, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty
   
   READ MORE: [http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1605010.html](http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1605010.html)
   
   YEREVAN, April 8, 2009 (RFE/RL) – Members of the European Parliament visited jailed Armenian opposition leaders this week, RFE/RL’s Armenian Service reports. The opposition leaders were arrested after last year’s disputed presidential election and the Council of Europe’s Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) has requested that they be released of "seemingly artificial or politically motivated charges."

### Azerbaijan

1. **Over 10 Billion Cubic Meters of Gas Produced from Shah Deniz Field**
   
   27.04.2009, Today.Az
   
   
   So far, volume of gas production from the offshore Shah Deniz gascondensate field in the Azerbaijani section of the Caspian Sea has totaled billion cubic meters, State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic First Vice President on geology, geophysics and development of fields Khosbaxt Yusifzade said at the third Caspian oil and gas tradetransport conference in Baku on April 27. Production in this field began in late 2006.

2. **Baku and the Turkish Armenian Thaw**
   
   15.04.2009, ETH Zurich
   
   READ MORE: [http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/layout/set/print/content/view/full/73?id=98968&lng=en](http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/layout/set/print/content/view/full/73?id=98968&lng=en)
   
   Is Azerbaijan ready to cause geopolitical problems over the Turkish Armenian thaw? Shahin Abbasov asks for EurasiaNet. By Shahin Abbasov in Baku for EurasiaNet Hope is laden with peril in the South
Caucasus these days. After decades of enmity, Armenia and Turkey appear ready to make peace. But Azerbaijan - Turkey’s ally and Armenia’s enemy - has made it known that if the developing rapprochement does not take Baku’s interests into account, then it is ready to blow up the region’s present geopolitical and economic balance.

3. 

Romania is Ready to Bring its Contribution to an EU Programme for Speed up the Solving of the Nagorno Karabakh Conflict – Ambassador
07.04.2009, Trend News


Interview by H.E. Mr. Nicolae Ureche Ambassador of Romania to the Republic of Azerbaijan for Trend News – How do you evaluate the present level of the bilateral relations between Romania and Azerbaijan and the forthcoming visit to Romania of Mr. Ilham Aliyev, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan? I have no hesitations in saying that Romanian-Azerbaijani relations are excellent. Since the very beginning of establishing diplomatic relations, in 1992, a long and productive series of political contacts at all levels and especially at the level of the President, consolidated these excellent political relations between our countries. The dialogue of the presidents of our countries constantly pushed up the bilateral cooperation.

III. BULGARIA

1. 

Bulgaria in Energy Play Between East and West, Comments in Russian Press
27.04.2009, FOCUS Information Agency

READ MORE: http://www.focus-fen.net/print.php?id=n179126

Moscow. The EU’s poorest member state Bulgaria has turned into a center of a big play between Russia and the West, Russian Pravda daily writes. Moscow plans to build South Stream gas pipeline on Bulgarian territory, which will bypass problematic Ukraine. For its part the West, which fears excessive gas dependence on Russia, wants to build Nabucco gas pipeline. It is to cross Turkmenistan under the Caspian Sea, via Caucasus countries, Turkey and Bulgaria, reducing the dependence of the EU 27 on Russian natural gas. On April 24th and 25th, the daily recalls, at the initiative of President Georgi Parvanov Bulgaria hosted an international summit Natural Gas for Europe: Security and Partnership. The main topic was Europe’s energy security. It was attended by the representatives of 28 countries from Europe, Black Sea region, the Caucasus, Central Asia, Middle East, Russia, the US and many western financial institutions. One of the major problems under discussion was how to avoid the repetition of the January gas war between Russia and Ukraine, which hit European consumers. The West has an answer to this question – Nabucco. Actually, the answer is virtual because it exists only on paper. The problem is that investors are not certain whether Nabucco will be enough.

2. 

Bulgaria says Putin Skips Visit on Gas Dispute
22.04.2009, Forbes


Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin will not attend an international energy summit here this week because of a dispute natural gas pipeline dispute between the two countries, Bulgaria's foreign minister said Wednesday. Foreign Minister Ivalio Kalfin said Russia had linked Putin's trip to Bulgaria to progress on the South Stream project to transport Russian natural gas under the Black Sea to Bulgaria and on to other European countries.
3. Bulgarians Rally against Trans-Balkan Oil Pipeline

22.04.2009, REUTERS

READ MORE: http://uk.reuters.com/articlePrint?articleId=UKTRE53L2LS20090422

SOFIA (Reuters) - Dozens of people from a Bulgarian Black Sea town protested against the planned construction of a trans-Balkan oil pipeline on Wednesday, concerned about the environmental damage it may cause. About 100 people from Pomorie rallied in front of the construction ministry in Sofia to press the government to abandon the project, due to carry Russian oil to Greece, because they expect it to harm sea water, tourism and the local economy. Residents of the Black Sea port of Burgas have also staged a series of protests in the past year, fearing that the 1 billion euro ($1.29 billion) pipeline will put off holidaymakers, their main livelihood.

IV. GEORGIA

1. Georgian Foreign Ministry Deny Breach of Military Group from Georgia to Northern Caucasus

27.04.2009, Trend News


Georgian Foreign Ministry categorically denies the possibility of a breakthrough of military groups from Georgia to the North Caucasus, Foreign Minister Zurab Kachkachiashvili said at today's briefing groups from Georgia to Chechnya. Last week, Russian media released that a terrorist group of 60 people were attempting to breakthrough. "The accusation was aimed to blame Georgia for support of terrorism and use this misinformation to justify any action against Georgia," Kachkachiashvili said.

2. Artists, Scientists and Sportsmen Discuss Crisis in Georgia

27.04.2009, The Messenger


“As Mikheil Saakashvili’s unbalanced and adventurous policy has created a crisis of world importance in Georgia and in the whole Caucasus region, and has enabled Russia to return the civilized world to the conditions of the Cold War, the Georgian people has taken the intelligent and only proper decision, to unconditionally remove Saakashvili from his post,” a resolution adopted by representatives of the arts, science and sports field says. The meeting which drafted this resolution, initiated by the Georgian Academy and Society Hall, the name the group of representatives has adopted, was held on April 24 in the Courtyard Marriott Hotel. The resolution says that only after Saakashvili’s resignation should free and fair elections be held. “In conditions of political diversity and transparency civilized institutional reforms should start and the civil society which the wise and patient Georgian people deserve should be created,” the resolution notes.

3. Georgia’s Saakashvili Urges Opposition to Negotiate


READ MORE: http://en.rian.ru/world/20090423/121272036-print.html

Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili called on the opposition on Thursday to end street protests in the capital and join efforts to tackle economic problems. The opposition started the protests on April 9, vowing to hold them daily until Saakashvili steps down. "I am prepared to cooperate with all the political forces, including the most radical of them," Saakashvili told workers at a factory near Tbilisi. "Georgia now needs our unity, not conflicts." Saakashvili pledged to iron out political differences and create jobs in the ex-Soviet Caucasus state, which has been hard-hit by the global financial crisis.
4. Georgia Protests Enter Fifth Day
13.04.2009, BBC NEWS
READ MORE: http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/europe/7996970.stm
Thousands of opposition supporters in Georgia have begun a fifth day of protests, calling on President Mikhail Saakashvili to step down. The demonstrators gathered outside the parliament in Tbilisi, before marching on to the presidential palace, where they plan to hold an ongoing protest. Correspondents say turnout is falling and the opposition seems increasingly unsure of how to continue its campaign. Mr Saakashvili says Russian oligarchs are financing the Georgian opposition.

5. Format, Agenda for Political Dialogue in Georgia Remains Unclear
READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1607252.html
The Georgian opposition parties that launched a wave of protest on April 9 to demand the resignation of President Mikheil Saakashvili decided on April 11 to suspend further actions for 24 hours to mark Palm Sunday. Opposition leaders have retreated slightly from their initial categorical rejection of the dialogue that senior officials have repeatedly called for over the past two weeks.

6. Opposition Launches Another Offensive at Mass Rally in Tbilisi
10.04.2009, Jamestown Eurasia Daily Monitor
READ MORE: http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=34846
Opposition groups drew some 60,000 participants (by average estimates) for a rally in Tbilisi on April 9 and threatened to continue rallying on a daily basis. All Georgian television channels covered the advance preparations for the rally, as well as the event itself and the speeches, in full detail in their broadcasts (Rustavi-2, Imedi, Public Broadcaster channels, April 9).

7. Georgian President Defies Opposition Ultimatum to Step Down
READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1606459.html
It is still too early to predict the outcome of the ongoing standoff in Tbilisi between embattled Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili and opposition supporters demanding his resignation. The opposition responded on April 10 to Saakashvili's failure to step down by the deadline (3 p.m. local time) they set the previous day by vowing to continue protest actions until he bows to the "will of the people." They also announced the start of a campaign of civil disobedience, beginning in Tbilisi, and that would be extended to the rest of Georgia, Caucasus Press reported.

8. Georgia: on the Right Track
09.04.2009, New York Times
Salomé Zourabichvili, a former foreign minister of Georgia, wrongly suggests the Georgian government is not serious in its pursuit of democracy ("A fresh start in Georgia," Views, April 4). Zourabichvili asserts that democracy is faltering in Georgia, maintaining that the 2008 elections were marred by antidemocratic irregularities. But election monitors from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the O.S.C.E. Parliamentary Assembly, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the European Parliament concluded that the elections represented "the first genuinely competitive presidential election" in the country. The US Congressman, Alcee Hastings, president emeritus of the O.S.C.E. Parliamentary Assembly, concurred, calling the elections "a triumphant step" on Georgia's path
toward democracy, adding that they were “a viable expression of free choice of the Georgian people.”

Georgia’s Protests
09.04.2009, The Economist
READ MORE: http://www.economist.com/agenda/PrinterFriendly.cfm?story_id=13474577

The opposition in Georgia hopes that mass protests will topple the government of President Mikheil Saakashvili. Georgia’s opposition is about to begin nationwide protests aimed at forcing the president, Mikheil Saakashvili, to resign. The latter has lost support since adopting heavy-handed tactics against opposition demonstrators in November 2007, and his problems have been compounded by the war with Russia last August and the onset of recession. The opposition hopes to mobilise several hundred thousand of Georgia’s 4.6m people. However, the major source of concern is that violence will break out and then escalate; the fact that elements on each side have accused the other of harbouring violent intentions is ominous. Georgia’s opposition parties have buried their long-standing differences, at least on the surface, to jointly organise anti-government rallies starting on April 9th. The date has resonance in the country because it is the anniversary of the death of independence protestors at the hands of Soviet authorities in 1989, and of the declaration of independence in 1991.

Georgian Court Sentences Armenian Activist to 10 Years in Prison
08.04.2009, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty
READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1604843.html

On April 7, a court in the Akhaltsikhe district of southern Georgia sentenced Vahagn Chakhalian, a local activist who for several years has campaigned on behalf of the region’s predominantly Armenian population, to 10 years’ imprisonment on charges of illegal possession of weapons, participating in mass disorders, resisting arrest, and “hooliganism.” Chakhalian’s father Ruben and his younger brother Armen were fined 5,000 laris ($3,000) and 2,000 laris ($1,200) respectively. Armenian civil rights organizations consider the charges to be unsubstantiated. The three men were taken into custody in July 2008, days after an explosion near the home of the police chief in the neighboring district of Akhalkalaki, in an operation carried out by Georgian special-service personnel, in the course of which an Armenian police officer reportedly died in circumstances that remain unclear.

GEORGIA – RUSSIA

Abkhazia Warns NATO over Exercises in Georgia
READ MORE: http://en.rian.ru/world/20090427/121326522-print.html

Abkhazia has urged NATO member states not to go ahead with a planned military exercise in Georgia, expressing deep anxiety and concern over the plan, the South Caucasus republic’s foreign ministry said on Monday. The Cooperative Longbow 09/Cooperative Lancer 09 command-and-staff exercise, led by the Western military alliance, will be held from May 6 through June 1, but will not feature light or heavy weaponry. The ministry said it viewed such exercises as "a politically motivated act" that could destabilize the situation in the region. The former Georgian republic said last Friday it could hold its own military exercises in response to NATO’s planned drills in Georgia.

Abkhaz Leadership Assesses Time Frame for International Recognition
READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1615399.html
Both Abkhaz President Sergei Bagapsh and Foreign Minister Sergei Shamba have said over the past week that they see little point in trying to accelerate artificially the formal recognition by European states of Abkhaz independence. Shamba made clear at the same time that he nonetheless hopes to sustain, and if possible build on, the intensive contacts established between the Abkhaz leadership and the European Union in 2007-08. Speaking at a press conference in Moscow on April 17, Bagapsh said the Abkhaz leadership will not seek to impel other countries to extend formal recognition of Abkhazia as an independent state, "Novy region" reported on April 18. Bagapsh said negotiations with unspecified countries are continuing to that end, and predicted that "they will recognize us sooner or later."

3.
Russia to Pay 4.7 Billion Rubles to Servicemen who Fought August War with Georgia
23.04.2009, mosnews.com
The Defense Ministry is doubling the amount to be paid to Russian soldiers who fought in the 5-day war in Ossetia last August. In 2009, the budget funds allocated for these payments have doubled against the initial amount of 2.4 billion rubles, and will reach 4.7 billion rubles ($138 million), Mikhail Motorin, head of the Ministry's financial planning department, told Interfax news agency on Thursday. The money will be paid as traveling expenses to the military staff who were in South Ossetia and Abkhazia during the conflict.

4.
Medvedev Tells the West to Keep Out of Georgia
23.04.2009, Jamestown Eurasia Daily Monitor
READ MORE: http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=34891&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=7&cHash=10cee5a7b3
Russia has reacted angrily to the forthcoming NATO-led Partnership for Peace (PfP) exercises in Georgia. President Dmitry Medvedev called the decision to hold the exercises "shortsighted and not worthy of true partnership." He warned that tensions in the region will rise, saying: "these actions are a clear military demonstration, a buildup of military muscle, *and* that Russia *shall be following everything that will be happening there in the most attentive way, and, if need be, take this or that decision* (ITAR-TASS, April 17).

5.
Georgian Foreign Minister Accuses Russia of Taking Advantage of Country's Internal Strife
23.04.2009, Helsingin Sanomat
READ MORE: http://www.hs.fi/english/print/1135245397612
Russia has sent new forces and armoured vehicles to the South Ossetia region. Some of them have been placed just 40 kilometres from the Georgian capital Tbilisi. According to Georgian Foreign Minister Gregory Vashadze, who was on a visit to Helsinki on Wednesday, Russia is trying to take advantage of internal strife within Georgia. Thousands of opposition supporters have demanded the resignation of President Mikhail Saakashvili in demonstrations that began a couple of weeks ago.

6.
"Nashi" Foray into Georgia Stopped in Time
17.04.2009, Jamestown Eurasia Daily Monitor
READ MORE: http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=34871&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=7&cHash=ac5d25ca9d
On April 16, Georgian authorities prevented the Kremlin-coordinated youth group, Nashi, from provoking incidents at the South Ossetia demarcation line and in Tbilisi. A convoy of five vehicles carrying 20 Nashi activists, the "Moscow- Tskhinvali-Tbilisi Motorcade," had set off from Moscow on April 10, reaching Tskhinvali (via the Roki Tunnel) on April 15, and planned to continue into Tbilisi
or, alternatively, stage an incident at the demarcation line. Georgian Internal Affairs Minister personnel detained Nashi “commissar” Aleksandr Kuznetsov in a hotel in the city of Gori, situated in Georgia’s interior near the demarcation line, during the night of April 15-16. Kuznetsov’s video recorded statements, excerpted on Georgian television channels (Rustavi-2 TV, Imedi TV, April 16) overlap with Nashi spokesmen’s statements in Moscow at the motorcade’s start (Interfax, RIA Novosti, April 10).

7.
Words Flare between Georgia and Russia
16.04.2009, REUTERS
READ MORE: http://uk.reuters.com/articlePrint?articleId=UKTRE53F5E120090416
Georgia and Russia accused each other on Thursday of building up troops and armour at the de facto borders between their forces, and preparing "provocations." Each side said the other was looking to take advantage of heightened political tensions in Georgia, where the opposition has been protesting in the streets for a week demanding the resignation of President Mikheil Saakashvili. Russia sent troops into South Ossetia to crush a Georgian assault on the separatist region in August last year, and then officially recognised it and another rebel region of Georgia, Abkhazia, as independent states.

8.
Russian Forces Deploying for Possible Action in Georgia
16.04.2009, Jamestown Eurasia Daily Monitor
READ MORE: http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=34862&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=7&cHash=ed1ae9941f
Last week Georgian opposition parties prepared to mount street protests to force President Mikhail Saakashvili to resign, while Russian forces began military exercises in the Caucasus that might be a direct preparation for an intervention in Georgia -in response to the country being further destabilized. Massive rallies by opposition supporters have not forced Saakashvili to yield and tension is mounting in Tbilisi (EDM, April 14). The possibility that radical elements on either side of the political divide in Georgia might provoke violence is high, while Russia seems to be ready to intervene to defend a brotherly Christian Orthodox Georgian nation from the Saakashvili regime, which it considers as an ultimate enemy. After the war with Georgia last August, President Dmitry Medvedev declared in an interview with Italian RAI TV, "For us president Saakashvili does not exist, he is a political corpse" (www.kremlin.ru, September 2, 2008). While in a recent BBC interview, Medvedev reiterated: "We love and value the Georgian people. I do not want to have any relations with president Saakashvili and will not communicate with him. But if as the result of democratic processes power in Georgia changes, we are ready for discussions" (www.kremlin.ru, March 29).

9.
Georgia Recalls Soviet Crackdown
09.04.2009, BBC NEWS
READ MORE: http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/europe/7986282.stm
"Like a scene from a medieval battle," is how one of the Soviet soldiers involved remembers the dawn hours of 9 April 1989. He was referring to the violent clashes between troops and protesters on the main square in front of the Georgian government building, on Rustaveli Avenue, in the heart of the Georgian capital, Tbilisi. The clashes left 20 people dead, mainly young women.

10.
Moscow and Tskhinvali Finally Agree Russian Federal Aid Deal for South Ossetia
06.04.2009, Jamestown Eurasia Daily Monitor
READ MORE: http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=34818&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=13&cHash=7da76966c7
It took an eleventh-hour lobbying effort by the separatist leader of South Ossetia Eduard Kokoity to
avert a serious fiscal crisis in the breakaway republic. On March 26, Kokoity led a delegation from South Ossetia to meet the Minister of Regional Development, Victor Basargin and representatives from Russia's audit agency - the Accounts Chamber of the Russian Federation (Vedomosti, March 27; www.polit.ru, March 27). This was immediately followed by a meeting of the interagency commission, established under the aegis of the Ministry of Regional Development on August 18, 2008, as a primarily consultative body responsible for overseeing the reconstruction efforts in South Ossetia (Vedomosti, March 16). Prior to this, the scheduled meetings of the interagency commission were postponed on at least four occasions, including February 27 and March 16, because the Russian Finance Ministry representative failed to attend (Vedomosti, March 16; www.lenta.ru, March 16; Kommersant, March 16, 18).

VI. MOLDOVA

1. Moldova’s ‘Wannabe Democracy’ is Worth Rescuing
   04.2009, Centre for European Policy Studies
   READ MORE: http://shop.ceps.eu/BookDetail.php?item_id=1832
   The consequences of the post-electoral impasse in which Moldova finds itself after the parliamentary elections on 5 April 2009 are immense for the EU’s relations with Moldova and for the success of its European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and Eastern Partnership (EaP). Despite many problems, Moldova is considered one of the ‘frontrunners’ as regards ENP implementation and is poised to negotiate an Association Agreement and a deep and comprehensive free trade agreement in the coming months. Yet the violent protests that rocked the Moldovan capital, Chisinau, on 7 April 2009, and the authorities’ subsequent violent arrests and beatings of protesters, journalists and opposition figures, may have negative repercussions on Moldova’s European integration efforts. The reversal in Moldova’s transition to a Western-style democracy may accelerate, failing a resolute response by the EU. This policy brief argues that first, the EU should put pressure on Moldova to stop its crackdown and investigate human rights violations, and second, the EU should make an attractive offer of increased cooperation and assistance if Moldovan authorities seek an agreement with the opposition and show progress in implementing democratic reforms. Failing this, the EU may witness yet another undoing of democratic reforms by one of its Eastern neighbours.

2. OSCE: Moldovan Elections Less Democratic Than 2005
   24.04.2009, Taiwan News Online
   An OSCE report on Moldova’s elections this month said they were less democratic than the country’s 2005 ballot, with serious questions emerging about how voting lists were prepared. The results of the April 5 vote, giving the governing Communist Party a victory, led to large protests and riots in Moldova that left two people dead and more than 90 injured. Election monitors from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe noted irregularities in both the run-up to the elections and the vote itself, according to the agency’s official report, obtained Friday by The Associated Press. By contrast, the 2005 elections were considered “mostly” free and fair.

3. Topolanek Calls for EU-Led Investigation in Moldova
   23.04.2009, EUobserver
   READ MORE: http://euobserver.com/24/27986?print=1
   Czech premier Mirek Topolanek on Wednesday called for an EU-led probe into the post-election violence in Moldova, while maintaining his invitation to Moldovan authorities for the Eastern
Partnership in two weeks time in Prague. "I have recommended establishing an investigation committee with representatives of the European Commission and the opposition," he said after separately meeting opposition leaders and the country's president Vladimir Voronin in Chisinau.

4. **OSCE Sees Room for Moldova Postelection Talks**

23.04.2009, REUTERS

READ MORE: [http://www.reuters.com/articlePrint?articleId=USLN977365](http://www.reuters.com/articlePrint?articleId=USLN977365)

Europe's biggest security organisation said on Thursday it saw room for negotiation between Moldova's authorities and opposition after violent protests against a Communist election victory. Philip Remler, mission chief to Moldova for the Organisation for Security for Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), was speaking a day after a European Union envoy called for talks between the two sides though he saw little sign of readiness to compromise. EU officials said the 27-nation bloc's foreign policy chief, Javier Solana, would visit Moldova, a former Soviet state wedged between Ukraine and Romania, on Friday. He would report back to the EU's Council of Ministers next week. "All sides are posturing now and especially appealing to outsiders," Remler told reporters after the release of the OSCE's interim report on the April 5 election.

5. **Fading To Black Moldova's Would-Be Color Revolution Fails. Chalk One Up for the Kremlin.**

20.04.2009, Newsweek

READ MORE: [http://www.newsweek.com/id/193438/output/print](http://www.newsweek.com/id/193438/output/print)

Seen from the Kremlin, the scenes of protesters overrunning Moldova's parliament and ransacking its president’s office looked chillingly familiar. More than five years ago, young pro-Western protesters toppled Moscow-friendly regimes in Georgia and Ukraine. Those "color" revolutions marked the nadir of Russia’s power in the region and became the cornerstone of Kremlin policy ever after. At home, Moscow stamped out foreign-funded NGOs, abolished local elections and concocted youth groups to counter the possibility of anything similar happening inside Russia. Abroad, the Kremlin's priority has been asserting its right to a sphere of influence and fighting back the tide of Western influence. The outcome of Moldova’s latest unrest, then, is about much more than a disputed election: it’s a key test of both Russia’s soft and hard power in the region.

6. **Moldova’s Crisis: More than a Local Difficulty**

17.04.2009, Chathamhouse


To most of Europe, the Republic of Moldova has been a zone of unhappiness rather than interest. It is Europe’s poorest country, but whilst some of its migrants are unwelcome, they are hardly a flood. It is the venue of the most dormant of the former USSR’s notoriously misnamed ‘frozen conflicts’, but until the Russia-Georgia war of August 2008, the conventional wisdom inside the EU was that the prospects of conflict resolution were improving. Its breakaway territory on the left bank of the Dniester, the so-called Transnistrian Moldovan Republic, represents the typical post-Soviet amalgam of politics, security services, business and crime, if in an atypically uncompromising form. Nevertheless, the work of the EU Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM) and its cooperation with neighbouring Ukraine has persuaded all but the congenitally sceptical that the pathology – and Transnistria’s black market trade – is containable. Transnistria is also host to a 1,200-strong Russian military contingent, but it is a shadow of the former 14th Army and despite Russia’s OSCE commitment to withdraw the contingent by 2002, its presence has been implicitly legitimised by the three-party (Moldovan-Transnistrian-Russian) Joint Control Commission and the so-called 5+2 process, which institutionalises the participation of the key external players, the OSCE, the EU, Russia, Ukraine and the United States in the process of conflict settlement.
7. Moldova Threatens Europe’s Eastern Overtures  
16.04.2009, Financial Times  
READ MORE: http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/e68dea9a-2abf-11de-8415-00144feabdc0.html  
Just before Easter, as European diplomats were packing for the holidays, a crisis erupted in the forgotten and usually quiet Moldova that will require their intervention to sort out. Without a quick political solution, the European Union could face a new consolidated autocracy like Belarus on its border. Relations with Russia would deteriorate further and the launch of the eastern partnership initiative, under which the bloc aims to strengthen ties with six ex-Soviet states, would be undermined.

8. Moldova’s Crackdown, like Georgia’s Standoff, Leaves Protesters Fuming  
16.04.2009, The Economist  
READ MORE: http://www.economist.com/world/europe/PrinterFriendly.cfm?story_id=13497056  
IDEALISTIC youngsters demanding their country’s faster integration with Europe were a rarity even before the Moldovan authorities beat and jailed hundreds, and killed two, after a spree of protests against electoral fraud. But the limp European Union reaction to the crackdown will not encourage others to follow in their footsteps. Few emerge with credit from the protests. Some participants rioted, storming and burning public buildings. The opposition parties loosely linked to the protesters are a lightweight lot with some questionable leaders. What unites them is anger over alleged ballot-rigging in the April 5th parliamentary election. The ruling Communists (in reality, a centre-right party) would probably have won even without bullying their rivals, skewing media coverage and inflating voter lists. With half the vote, they took 60 of the 101 seats in the unicameral parliament. This week, the government began an election recount.

9. Moldova: No Revolution this Time Around  
15.04.2009, ISN Security Watch  
READ MORE: http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/layout/set/print/content/view/full/73?id=98971&lng=en  
There is much debate as to whether the recent post-election protests in Moldova are the start of another ‘color revolution,’ but important distinctions point to status quo for now, Aldiyar Autalipov writes for ISN Security Watch. On 7 April, the day after the announcement of the results for Moldova’s parliamentary elections, thousands of young protesters took to the streets of the capital Chisinau, fighting with police and ransacking the parliament over what they saw as rigged elections.

10. A Wake-Up Call for the Kremlin  
10.04.2009, The Moscow Times  
For the first time in recent memory, the heavy hitters of international election monitoring – the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe’s Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the Council of Europe and the European Parliament – were in agreement with Russia-led observers from the Commonwealth of Independent States: Moldovan parliamentary elections on Sunday were run more or less in accordance with accepted norms.

11. Moldovan PM Warns of New Riots and Casualties  
09.04.09, REUTERS  
READ MORE: http://uk.reuters.com/articlePrint?articleId=UKL947044120090409  
The prime minister of Moldova said on Thursday that authorities in the former Soviet republic were prepared to use all means including weapons, if new opposition protests turn violent.
Greceanii, in a television address to the nation, said the opposition was planning to stage new rallies on Friday and Sunday against the Communist Party's election victory last weekend and warned that the rallies could lead to casualties. "Organisers of the biggest crime in Moldova's history are preparing tomorrow and on Sunday to again use our children to organise a rampage in the government building," she said.

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<td>Crowds of young rioters overran, ransacked, and set on fire the presidential and parliament buildings in Moldova's capital Chisinau on April 7. This outbreak may serve to embolden radical groups in Georgia on the eve of their April 9 demonstration, the declared goal of which is to force a change of government in Tbilisi. Political violence was deemed unthinkable in Moldova until now. The nominally Communist Party won the parliamentary elections for the third consecutive time on April 5 - this time with 49.5 percent of the votes cast - in a balloting assessed positively overall by Western observers and international organizations (EDM, April 7). The opposition's three nominally liberal parties seek to force the cancellation of the election results and called for public protests, which they seemed to expect to run peacefully. The opposition leaders, however, quickly lost control of the events they had helped trigger. Their resort to incendiary rhetoric was followed by the incendiary assault in the literal sense against the main state institutions. Equally inept, the authorities were blindsided and lost control of the situation.</td>
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<td>Russia stepped up its support Thursday for the government of Moldova in the wake of disputed elections, signalling it is determined to cement its growing influence in the former Soviet republic. Moldova's ruling Communist Party has accused Romania, a member of the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, of helping plot a failed coup d'etat. Russia has backed calls for an investigation into those claims, saying that the elections are legitimate. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov chided Western governments for not denouncing protesters who trashed and looted government buildings in Moldova earlier this week. &quot;I don't know why European parliaments are not expressing their opinion at all about what happened,&quot; he said. He denies Russia is trying to claw back its influence in the post-Soviet space.</td>
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<th>Russia Furious with EU over Twitter Revolution</th>
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<td>09.04.09, The Independent</td>
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<td>The crisis in Moldova, dubbed the &quot;Twitter Revolution&quot;, was last night threatening to turn into another showdown between Russia and the West. Just weeks after Barack Obama's government spoke of &quot;pressing the reset button&quot; with Russia, the conflict risks derailing the fragile diplomatic truce. Russia gave its backing yesterday to Moldova's President, Vladimir Voronin, when he accused EU and Nato member Romania of backing a coup attempt, and expelled the Romanian ambassador. Mr Voronin promised &quot;harsh punishment&quot; would be meted out to the organisers of protests which rocked the capital Chisinau on Tuesday after the ruling Communists claimed victory in weekend parliamentary elections.</td>
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15. **Moldova Burning**  
08.04.2009, The Economist  
READ MORE: http://www.economist.com/world/europe/PrinterFriendly.cfm?story_id=13447119  
THE poorest country in Europe is used to being neglected by the rest of the world. But protests against vote rigging in elections held on Sunday April 5th brought Moldova some attention this week. In the past few days youthful demonstrators, who were organised via Twitter and other social-networking sites, stormed parliament and the presidential offices in the capital city, Chisinau. Some threw rocks, broke windows and started fires. As the police belatedly tried to restore order, scores were injured and one person died. Nearly 200 people had been arrested by Wednesday. Amid allegations of foreign mischief-making, Moldova expelled the Romanian ambassador.

16. **An EU Response to Moldova’s ‘Twitter Revolution’**  
07.04.2009, The European Council on Foreign Relations  
READ MORE: http://ecfr.eu/content/entry/commentary_an_eu_response_to_moldovas_twitter_revolution_popescu/  
Moldova is the latest country in Europe to collapse into crisis after a contested election. Some 15,000 people, communicating through web-sites like ‘Twitter’, took to the street to protest against unfair elections taking control of the Parliament and Presidential Palace. The protests follow on from Georgia’s Rose revolution in 2004, Ukraine’s Orange Revolution in 2005, and the killing of ten protestors against election fraud in Armenia in March 2008.

17. **Ten Reasons why the Communist Party Won Moldova’s Elections again**  
07.4.2009, Jamestown Eurasia Daily Monitor  
READ MORE: http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=34821  
As anticipated (see EDM, March 13, 16) the Communist Party has won Moldova’s parliamentary elections on April 5, far outdistancing the parties that ran on anti-communist platforms. On paper at least – and every fourth year in real practice – Moldova is a parliamentary republic. The new parliament will approve the country’s government and elect a new president in place of the incumbent Vladimir Voronin, who has served out his second and final term of office.

18. **Protesters Storm Moldovan Parliament**  
Anti-communist protesters stormed Moldova’s parliament on Tuesday, hurling computers through shattered windows and setting fire to furniture in a violent demonstration against what they said were fraudulent elections. Police fired water cannons on the protesters, but were unable to stop them breaking into the parliament and an adjacent presidential office. Chisinau Emergency Hospital doctor Iuri Baziluc said 50 police officers and protesters were injured in the clashes, two days after the Communist Party won re-election in one of Europe’s poorest nations.

**VII. RUSSIA**

1. **Zagorski: Tough Task ahead for EU Russia Talks**  
22.04.2009, EurActiv  
READ MORE: http://www.euractiv.com/en/enlargement/zagorski-tough-task-ahead-eu-russia-
Energy, trade, investment and security will be at the heart of EU Russia partnership negotiations, Andrei V. Zagorski told EurActiv Slovakia in an interview. The Russian expert predicts that negotiations will be difficult as the EU Russia relationship is "not going through the best time". But the Russian academic is hopeful that agreement can be struck, citing substantial "mutual interests".

Russia Seeks EU Backing for Gas Pipeline
21.04.2009, EurActiv
An energy summit to be held in the Bulgarian capital on 24-25 April is expected to boost the South Stream gas pipeline project favoured by Russian state monopoly Gazprom, the Bulgarian press reports.

Medvedev Experiments with Liberalism as Economy Plunges
20.04.2009, Jamestown Eurasia Daily Monitor
READ MORE: http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=34880&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=7&cHash=869d54a5a0
On April 15 President Dmitri Medvedev created a sensation by granting an exclusive interview to Novaya Gazeta, known, in his own words, for "not licking up" to anybody, and then held meetings with the Council for Civil Society Institutions and Human Rights and the Association of Russian Lawyers. He was careful not to say anything controversial, but his readiness to take sharp questions and listen to the frank views of human rights activists inevitably created an impression that the regime is softening (www.gazeta.ru, April 15; www.grani.ru, Ezhednevny Zhurnal, April 16). It was the start of Medvedev's "liberal week" which might explain this trend: he also paid a visit to the Institute of Contemporary Development and the experts, including Yevgeni Gontmakher, presented propaganda-free assessments of the evolving recession, focusing particularly on unemployment (Vedomosti, April 15).

Gazprom Turns the Crisis into an Opportunity - and a New Crisis
13.04.2009, Jamestown Eurasia Daily Monitor
READ MORE: http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=34850&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=13&cHash=1fa7e3dbd8
Russia's economy has achieved a modicum of stability after the meltdown that had spread with devastating force from the stock exchange to the financial sector and to industry. Prime Minister Vladimir Putin in his report (rather resembling an instruction session) to the State Duma praised the government's efforts at arresting the recession (skipping conveniently over their too obvious inefficiency) and pointed to the "light at the end of the tunnel" (Nezavisimaya Gazeta, April 7; Vedomosti, April 10). Finance Minister Aleksei Kudrin, in the meanwhile, speaks about the 'second wave' of the crisis coming in the fall, and deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov ventures a guess that the crisis will continue for three years (Gazeta, Novye Izvestiya, April 9). As confusion reigns in macro-economic forecasting, most over-sized state corporations created within the past two years are paralyzed with bad debt and falling demand - except the almighty gas monopoly Gazprom.

Russia Warns US Against Competition for Allies
READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1605419.html
Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said the United States and Russia should not force former
Soviet republics to choose between an alliance with Washington and Moscow, RIA news agency has reported. In remarks which appeared to refer to political disturbances in ex-Soviet Moldova, Lavrov said there should be no "hidden agendas" in relations between the United States and Russia. "It is inadmissible to try to place a false choice before them – either you are with us or against us – otherwise this will lead to a whole struggle for spheres of influence," Lavrov was quoted as saying by the agency.

The EU and Russia: How to Move Forward
06.04.2009, eu-russiacentre.org
READ MORE: http://www.eu-russiacentre.org/our-publications/column/eu-russia-move.html

EU-Russia relations are governed to a large extent by three major problems that do not seem to have improved in recent years. The first and most persistent is a perception problem with both parties speaking past each other, rather than to each other. This is compounded by disagreement about terminology and recent history. The EU is anxious about Russia's increasingly assertive policy in many areas of mutual interest, especially in the common neighbourhood, or what is called near abroad in Russian official rhetoric. At the same time, the Russian political elite continues to perceive EU as a threat, often not distinguishing its actions and motives from those of NATO. In the eyes of the largely Kremlin-controlled media, still the main source of information for the vast majority of Russians, the EU is presented as a defunct and inefficient bureaucracy with enormous and irresolvable internal contradictions. Furthermore, the EU is portrayed as taking an aggressive stance towards Russia. While 37% of Russians view the EU as friendly, 45% continue to believe that it can pose a potential threat and intends to deprive Russia of its natural resources and even territories.

VIII. TURKEY
1.

Culture, Energy Unite Turkey and Azerbaijan
23.04.2009, REUTERS
READ MORE: http://www.reuters.com/articlePrint?articleId=USTRE53M3VX20090423

Turkey and Armenia have agreed on a framework to normalize ties after nearly a century of hostility, a move that could stabilize the volatile, oil-rich Caucasus but may affect European energy security plans. Oil-producing Azerbaijan said the deal, likely to include the opening of the Turkey Armenia border, risked raising tensions in the region if it goes ahead before a dispute over an Armenian-backed enclave inside Azerbaijan is solved.

2.

Russia Turkey Wars of Supremacy in Azerbaijan

Although the storm in Turkish-Azerbaijani relations has settled following assurances from Ankara that it will not open its borders with Yerevan before a breakthrough in Armenian-Azerbaijani issues is made, it seems difficult for the short term to eradicate the crisis of confidence erupted recently between Ankara and Baku. Ankara and Yerevan came very close to a deal that would normalize relations between the two countries but the process came to a sudden halt following reaction from Azerbaijan, which is opposed to the opening of the border without progress in the Nagorno Karabakh issue. Turkey closed its borders with Armenia after the Armenian occupation of the Azerbaijani enclave Nagorno Karabakh, as well as other regions surrounding the enclave.
3. Turkey's Energy Minister Pressures Nabucco Partners
20.04.2009, Jamestown Eurasia Daily Monitor
READ MORE: http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=34882&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=228&cHash=a297298633
On April 17 Turkey's Energy Minister Hilmi Guler, attended a meeting on the future of the Turkish energy sector where he highlighted the need to invest in renewable energy resources and diversify its hydrocarbon supplies. In that context, Guler sent important messages to Turkey’s Nabucco partners. Asked about the current standing of the Nabucco project, he said that draft intergovernmental and host government agreements had been conveyed to Ankara’s partners. "We told them that if we receive their response this month, we are ready to sign the agreement in June...we have full confidence that we can conclude the project, provided that our partners respond to the letter promptly" (www.haberturk.com, April 17).

4. Turkey's Dangerous Shift
10.04.2009, Washington Times
After attending three summits - of the Group of 20 richest countries, NATO and the European Union - President Obama ended his European trip in Turkey. His messages there highlight the importance Washington attaches to this regional player bridging Europe and Asia, a veteran NATO ally, and an influential Muslim country. In his speeches, Mr. Obama emphasized that Turkey is a Muslim nation that respects democracy, the rule of law and is founded on a set of modern principles. In view of the Islamist Justice and Development Party's (AKP) stranglehold on power, this may be an overstretch.

IX. TURKEY – ARMENIA
1. Armenia Blames Gov't for Obama Statement
27.04.2009, Hurriyet Daily News
The US president’s failure to use the word ‘genocide’ is blamed on the Armenian government’s handling of the issue. Most Armenian commentators believe that ‘the road map’ turns the matter toward Turkey’s favor.

2. 'We Are All Armenians'
READ MORE: http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124077768575856957.html
President Barack Obama trod a fine moral line this month between his past campaign promises to use the word genocide to describe the World War I massacres of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and his present opportunity to nurture normalization between Armenia and Turkey. But his compromise was no capitulation to the realpolitik of US Turkish strategic interests, as some Armenians may suspect and some Turks may hope. It is actually a challenge to both parties to move beyond the stalemates of history.

3. Crisis Warms Turks to Opening Armenia Border
26.04.2009, Teheran Times
Hit by a bruising economic crisis, residents of Kars, in eastern Turkey, are increasingly warming to
the idea of opening the border with Armenia, hoping that revived trade links would provide a lifeline to the impoverished region. The border’s closure in 1993 – ordered by Turkey to back Azerbaijan in a territorial conflict with Armenia – has had heavy economic consequences not only for Armenia but also this Turkish city of 80,000. The border crossing, some 70 kilometres (43 miles) away, was once massively used to export cattle – Kars’ main wealth – to the Caucasus and Russia through the only railway linking Turkey to its northern neighbours. The halt of trade has cost the province of Kars nearly one-twelfth of its population, which dropped from 356,000 to 326,000 between 1990 and 2000.

4. Turkey Objects in Part to Obama’s Armenia Statement
READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1615791.html
Turkey’s President Abdullah Gul has said he disagrees with parts of US President Barack Obama’s statement the previous day on the mass killings of Armenians in 1915, adding hundreds of thousands of Turks and Muslims also died. Obama avoided using the word "genocide" when describing the killings of Armenians by Ottoman Turks in 1915, and welcomed efforts by Turkey and Armenia to normalize relations. Turkey accepts that many Christian Armenians were killed by Ottoman Turks but denies that up to 1.5 million died and that it amounted to genocide. In Turkey’s first official reaction to the statement, Gul said: "There are points on which I disagree. Hundreds of thousands of Turks and Muslims also died in 1915. Everyone’s pain must be shared," according to state-run news agency Anatolian.

5. Are Predictions that Armenia Turkey Rapprochement Doomed Overstated?
READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1613722.html
The publication in the Turkish daily “Hurriyet” in late March of a report that Armenia and Turkey had reached the final stage of drafting a protocol on the conditions and time frame for establishing formal diplomatic relations and opening their common border gave rise to widespread euphoria and unrealistic expectations that such a deal could be finalized within weeks.

6. Turkey and Armenia Delay Re-Opening the Border
17.04.2009, Jamestown Eurasia Daily Monitor
READ MORE: http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews%5BBtt_news%5D=34874&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=407&no_cache=1
On April 16 Turkish Foreign Minister Ali Babacan attended the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) Foreign Ministers Council in Yerevan. Following his BSEC meetings, Babacan discussed the recent developments between Turkey, Armenia and Azerbaijan. President Barack Obama’s historic visit to Turkey earlier this month had triggered media speculation that Ankara would deepen its rapprochement with Armenia despite Yerevan’s differences with Baku. Some claimed that Turkey might announce the re-opening of its border with Armenia during Babacan’s visit to Yerevan (Wall Street Journal, April 2). However, political realities have since diminished expectations for a rapid breakthrough.

7. Turkey and Armenia: Opening Minds, Opening Borders
READ MORE: http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=6053
Turkey and Armenia are close to settling a dispute that has long roiled Caucasus politics, isolated Armenia and cast a shadow over Turkey’s European Union (EU) ambition. For a decade and a half,
relations have been poisoned by disagreement about issues including how to address a common past and compensate for crimes, territorial disputes, distrust bred in Soviet times and Armenian occupation of Azerbaijani land. But recently, progressively intense official engagement, civil society interaction and public opinion change have transformed the relationship, bringing both sides to the brink of an historic agreement to open borders, establish diplomatic ties and begin joint work on reconciliation. They should seize this opportunity to normalise. The politicised debate whether to recognise as genocide the destruction of much of the Ottoman Armenian population and the stalemated Armenia Azerbaijan conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh should not halt momentum. The US, EU, Russia and others should maintain support for reconciliation and avoid harming it with statements about history at a critical and promising time.

8. The Turkish–Armenian Rapprochement: Implications for the South Caucasus
13.04.2009, Caucasian Review of International Affairs
READ MORE: http://cria-online.org/Caucasus_Update.html
Turkey’s recent and ongoing rapprochement with Armenia, addressed in last week’s Caucasus Update from the Turkish angle, has implications that could reverberate throughout the South Caucasus and beyond. Arguably, the normalisation of ties between Armenia and Yerevan would be an event of equivalent regional significance as the Russo-Georgian war of last August.

9. Turkey Backtracks on Talks with Armenia
READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1606918.html
Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan confirmed on April 8 that Nagorno-Karabakh’s status must be resolved before Turkey and Armenia can open full diplomatic relations. "The Azerbaijan-Armenian dispute should be resolved first," Erdogan told reporters. "Then problems between Turkey and Armenia can be solved, too." Armenian Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian called the statement an attempt to scuttle the talks. US President Barack Obama pressed for an agreement between the two neighbors during his two day visit to Turkey this week, but Azerbaijani parliament deputy Vahid Ahmedov said on April 8 that the prospect of Armenian-Turkish normalization "is stabbing Azerbaijan in the back."

10. Armenian President Hopes Turkey Border Reopens Before Oct 7
10.04.2009, Hurriyet Daily News
Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan said he hopes the Armenian-Turkish border will be reopened before Oct. 7, when a return football match between the national teams of the two countries will take place, according to a report on Friday. (UPDATED) "Armenia and Turkey are approaching the final stage of negotiations. As you know, we agreed to start negotiations with Turkey without preconditions," PanArmenian.net quoted Sargsyan as saying in an interview with Russia’s Vesti TV Channel. Turkey and Armenia have no diplomatic relations and their border has been closed since 1993 over Armenia’s invasion of 20 percent of Azerbaijani territory – a frozen conflict legacy of the Soviet Union known as Nagorno-Karabakh.

11. Ankara Yerevan Rapprochement Strains Turkey’s Relations with Azerbaijan
09.04.2009, Jamestown Eurasia Daily Monitor
READ MORE: http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=34835&tx_ttnews%5Bpid%5D=27&cHash=9f2b7aae03
Rapprochement between Turkey and Armenia has been fast tracked as diplomats intensified their
work in the past two months on possible ways of addressing the issue (EDM, February 10, March 27). Ankara and Yerevan now appear poised to find a solution to their bilateral problems. However, Azerbaijan’s leadership is dissatisfied by the prospect of any rapid improvement in Turkey’s relations with Armenia. On April 2 Azerbaijan’s Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov said, "If the border is opened before Armenian troops withdraw from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, it will run counter to Azerbaijan’s national interests. We have conveyed this opinion to the Turkish leadership" (Hurriyet Daily News, April 2). Azerbaijan’s President Ilham Aliyev played the energy card and warned: “before finding a way to solve the Karabakh problem, if Turkey cuts a deal with Armenia we could cut off the natural gas flow to Turkey” (Referans, April 2).

12. US Clock Ticking for Turks and Armenians
08.4.2009, Hurriyet Daily News
The US president has urged Turkey and Armenia to speed up the normalization of relations, referring to the critical April 24 commemoration day and the pressure from Armenian lobbies to qualify the 1915 killings as genocide. President Barack Obama implied he wished neither to harm the ongoing peace efforts between Ankara and Yerevan, nor suffer a major backlash at home. President Obama had a bilateral meeting with Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian before Foreign Minister Ali Babacan joined them for a meeting on the margins of a reception in Istanbul late Monday, the Hürriyet Daily News & Economic Review has learned. Obama confirmed that his view on genocide recognition has not changed but he refrained from spelling out the word, and encouraged Babacan and Nalbandian to quickly seal a deal. But it is still not clear whether Obama will qualify the 1915 killings as genocide or support the resolution, a senior Turkish official said.

13. Azerbaijani Intellectuals Appeal to Turkish Intellectuals
06.04.2009, APA
Azerbaijani intellectuals appealed to Turkish intellectuals in connection with the opening of Turkey-Armenia borders, APA reports. The appeal says that Azerbaijani intellectuals are attentively following Turkey’s great diplomatic-political efforts aiming to restore peace, kind neighborhood and prosperity in the Middle East and Caucasus.

14. Russia Demands Turkey to Normalize Ties with Armenia
06.04.2009, PanARMENIAN.Net
READ MORE: http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=30173
Turkey is interested in expansion of its ties with CIS, and Russia demands normalization of ties with Armenia, Mikhail Alexandrov, Caucasus Department Head in Caucasus Institute told a PanARMENIAN.Net reporter. Turkey has already made decisions on creating political relations with the states in the region. “Yet, Ankara sets a number of conditions: Armenia’s mitigating its position on the international acknowledgment of the Genocide. Naturally, Armenia will never abandon its demands on Genocide recognition, yet Turkey insists on a softer position.

X. UKRAINE
1. Political Instability in Ukraine Raises Fears of Intervention by Security Forces
17.04.2009, Jamestown Eurasia Daily Monitor
READ MORE: http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews%5
On April 13 Parliamentary Speaker Volodymyr Lytvyn said on ICTV, "There is a potential threat of a forced takeover of power (in Ukraine)." A possible cancellation of elections could be part of an "attempt to maintain oneself in power by undertaking any risky action" Lytvyn added (ICTV, April 13). Ukrainian political consultant Kost Bondarenko warned that Ukraine was on the verge of "chaos and dictatorship" and that such a threat, "appears where there is the temptation to seek simple solutions to problems" (Ukrayinska Pravda, March 16). Ukraine, together with Latvia and Hungary, are the three post-communist countries hardest hit by the global financial crisis. Ukraine’s crisis is made worse by political instability and political in-fighting, as seen in the second failure on April 13 to adopt legislation required by the IMF before it releases the second tranche of its stand-by agreement to Ukraine.

2. Ukraine Planning Early Presidential Elections

Jamestown Eurasia Daily Monitor
READ MORE: http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=34858&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=13&cHash=fa801463cd

Ukraine's parliament has scheduled the next presidential election for October 25, 2009, three months earlier than expected. President Viktor Yushchenko went further, signaling his readiness to step down sooner if an early parliamentary election were held simultaneously. He sided with the opposition Party of Regions (PRU) which has been calling for early elections for several months in order to free the Prime Minister's post for its leader Viktor Yanukovych. Naturally this is opposed by the current Premier, Yulia Tymoshenko.

XI. BSEC

1. Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation: Meeting of the BSEC Secretary General with the UN Secretary General
09.04.2009, Girodivite
READ MORE: http://www.girodivite.it/stampa.html?id_article=11528

The Secretary General of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) Permanent International Secretariat (PERMIS) Ambassador Leonidas Chrysanthopoulos held consultations with the Secretary General of the United Nations (UN) Ban Ki-moon on 6 April 2009, on the margins of the Second Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations held in Istanbul. This constituted the first bilateral meeting between the Secretaries General of the two Organizations.

2. BSEC Working Group on Banking and Finance Holds a Sitting in Armenia
09.04.2009, Public Radio of Armenia
READ MORE: http://www.armradio.am/news/?part=eco&id=14743

The recurrent sitting of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) Organizations' Working Group on Banking and Finance kicked off in Yerevan today. During the two-day sitting representatives of Armenia, Russia, Bulgaria, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Georgia and Ukraine will discuss the latest developments in the field of banking and finance, the possible ways of overcoming the financial crisis and the measures taken by participating countries.
XII. NATO

1. Russia Pulls Out Of NATO Meeting
READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1613386.html

Russia has pulled out of a meeting with NATO military commanders set for next month but said it would stick to plans to resume formal political ties, a Russian diplomat and a NATO spokeswoman said. Russia’s envoy to NATO warned on April 20 of a pullout if the US-led alliance pressed ahead with planned exercises in Georgia, a former Soviet republic promised eventual alliance membership.

2. Dispute Threatens Russia’s Relations with NATO
16.04.2009, Financial Times
READ MORE: http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/ffd6e53c-2ab1-11de-8415-00144feabdc0.html

A new dispute erupted between Russia and Nato on Thursday, when Moscow called for Nato military exercises in Georgia next month to be postponed or cancelled. The development came against a backdrop of improving Russian ties with the west, with a separate announcement by Moscow on Thursday that talks would begin next week on a treaty with the US to reduce strategic nuclear weapons. Still, Moscow sees Nato’s 19-nation exercise as a sign of support for Mikheil Saakashvili, the president of Georgia, which it fought a war against last August. Sergei Lavrov, the Russian foreign minister, warned on Thursday that the exercises would not promote stability in the South Caucasus. Dmitry Rogozin, Russia’s Nato envoy, said they could derail the restoration of relations with the alliance after ties were cut in the wake of last year’s conflict.

3. Moscow Shows no Interest in Pushing a ‘Reset Button’ in Relations with NATO
08.04.2009, Jamestown Eurasia Daily Monitor
READ MORE: http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=34829&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=7&cHash=12146154d7

Anti-Americanism has noticeably mellowed in the Russian mainstream media since the London summit between presidents Barack Obama and Dmitri Medvedev. Some commentators emphasize that strategic arms control is the easiest problem to tackle, but the new positive tone in the dialogue makes the habitual US-bashing politically incorrect (Rossiiskaya Gazeta, April 7). There is, however, hardly any change of attitude towards NATO, so the jubilee 60th anniversary summit in Strasbourg/Kehl was portrayed as high on pomp and low on content with the prime focus on the violent demonstrations (Vremya Novostei, Kommersant, April 6). The Alliance’s intention to prioritize its relations with Russia did not impress Moscow, and Dmitri Rogozin, the Russian permanent representative at NATO, promised that discussions at the forthcoming meeting of the NATO-Russia Council would be dry and tough (www.newsru.com, April 6).

4. NATO Leaders Say they Will Try again with Russia
06.04.2009, New Europe
READ MORE: http://www.neurope.eu/print.php?id=93947

NATO leaders agreed to re-start direct talks with Russia, while simultaneously condemning the country’s military build-up in Georgia’s breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. “Despite our current disagreements, Russia is of particular importance to us as a partner and neighbour,” NATO heads of state and government said in a summit declaration issued in Strasbourg. Areas of common interest to NATO and Russia included the stabilisation of Afghanistan, efforts toward arms control and disarmament, the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism and drugs, as well as continuing anti-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia, leaders said.
XIII. OSCE

1. OSCE MG: The whole Region Would Benefit from Armenian Turkish Ties Normalization
27.04.2009, PanARMENIAN.Net
READ MORE: http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=30987
“The whole region would benefit from Armenian-Turkish ties normalization,” OSCE MG American Co-Chair told a news conference in Yerevan. The diplomat finds that the Armenian and Turkish Foreign Ministries’ recent statement on bilateral ties normalization reveals positive tendencies. “Such tendencies are essential to Karabakh settlement process. We hope that normalization of Armenian-Turkish ties and Karabakh conflict settlement will be separate, though parallel processes; hence we believe the paces of achieving a final outcome will be different,” M. Bryza noted.

2. Two OSCE Monitors Released
21.04.2009, Civil.ge
READ MORE: http://www.civil.ge/eng/_print.php?id=20765
Two OSCE monitors were released by the authorities in breakaway South Ossetia two and a half hours after their detention on April 21. Breakaway South Ossetia’s authorities said the two observers were detained “for illegal crossing of the South Ossetia’s border.” OSCE said that two of its unarmed monitors - one Hungarian and one Turkish national – were detained “near” the village of Nikozi. The village, which is under the Georgian control, is located in an immediate vicinity of the breakaway region’s administrative border. “I am relieved the two Military Monitoring Officers have been freed but their detention was wholly unacceptable and unnecessarily added to tensions in the region,” OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Greek Foreign Minister, Dora Bakoyannis, said in a statement. “It is crucial that all parties act constructively to contribute to security. This includes respecting the mandate, work and diplomatic immunity of the OSCE’s Military Monitoring Officers.”

3. Armenia Won’t Invite OSCE Observers to Mayoral Election
READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1605671.html
Armenia has said it will not invite the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to monitor next month’s mayoral election in Yerevan, RFE/RL’s Armenian Service reports. Last year’s disputed presidential election triggered a protest in the capital that ended with 10 deaths and hundreds of injuries, and the country’s main opposition group, the Armenian National Congress (HAK), has promised that the mayoral election will be a “second round” of that election.

XIV. EASTERN PARTNERSHIP

1. What the Economic Crisis Means for the EU’s Eastern Policy
04.2009, Centre for European Reform
The unfolding economic crisis will make it more difficult for the European Union to draw its neighbours in Eastern Europe closer. The EU’s eastern policy has encouraged neighbours to align their economies and political systems with its own. The Union uses the prospect of partial integration or full EU membership to spur the necessary reforms. Its latest attempt to forge tighter links with its neighbours, the ‘eastern partnership’ (EaP) for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, is due to be launched in Prague in May 2009. This promises, among other things, to increase EU assistance to the region, open the EU’s markets to the neighbours’ goods and simplify visa
2. **Eastern Partnership Opens Path to European Markets**  
*27.04.2009, Georgian Business Week*  
In expectation of the inaugural summit of the Eastern Partnership scheduled May 7, forecasters in Georgia are optimistic that closer ties with the European Union (EU) will help boost Georgian exports and increase earnings for local entrepreneurs. The program, which the EU offered last year to the six post-Soviet countries of Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, is seen as Europe’s response to increasing Russian aggression in the region, and is intended to simplify the visa process and improve free trade with EU countries, among other benefits.

3. **EU Foreign Ministers Discuss Growing Eastern Instability**  
*27.04.2009, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*  
READ MORE: [http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1616710.html](http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1616710.html)  
Keeping its eastern neighbors on the path to stability and prosperity has become a formidable test for EU foreign policy in recent months. As she unveiled an annual review of the bloc’s European Neighborhood Policy, EU External Relations Commissioner Benita Ferrero Waldner told the 27 EU foreign ministers it has been a “difficult year” – particularly in the east. But Czech Foreign Minister Karel Schwarzenberg, who chaired the meeting, said the EU is resolved to push on with its Eastern Partnership initiative, which is designed to forge closer ties between the bloc and six eastern neighbors.

4. **Synergies vs. Spheres of Influence in the Pan-European Space**  
*07.04.2009, The Centre for European Policy Studies*  
This report investigates whether and how the EU might, in its policies towards Russia, the Eastern partner countries and Central Asia, build stronger common programmes and projects across these three political ‘spaces’. The aim would be to secure synergies between actions that are presently segmented between these three spaces, and especially to induce Russia to become a genuinely cooperative positive-sum-game player in the wider European neighbourhood, rather than to continue its efforts to rebuild the former Soviet Union space as its sphere of influence.

5. **US Backs Eastern Partnership Eyeing Energy Independence**  
*06.04.2009, EUobserver*  
READ MORE: [http://euobserver.com/24/27920?print=1](http://euobserver.com/24/27920?print=1)  
The Obama administration backs the EU’s newest policy towards its eastern neighbours, especially the bloc’s bid to reduce its energy dependency on Russia, a senior US diplomat told EUobserver. "The Eastern Partnership is a positive sign that things are moving finally in the right direction," deputy assistant secretary of state Matt Bryza said in a phone interview. He added he was pleased to see that EU energy policy is moving more quickly towards diversification of natural gas supplies.
### XV. EUROPEAN NEIGHBORHOOD POLICY

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#### 1. ENP Progress Reports

23.04.2009, European Union

READ MORE: http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/documents_en.htm

#### 2. EU Unity and Divisions on the East


READ MORE: http://ecfr.eu/content/entry/commentary_euobserver_popescu_eastern_neighbourhood_eu/

It is almost trivial to see the EU divided: on Kosovo, the Perejil island crisis, or the Iraq war. But EU disunity has been most systematic and paralysing when it came to EU policies on Russia and the Eastern neighbourhood, as this power audit showed. Every time a crisis erupted in the eastern neighbourhood the EU was often incapacitated because of two factors. First, many EU member states hesitated to act assertively in the Eastern neighbourhood for fear of irritating Russia. For many EU states good relations with Russia are more important than developments in Ukraine, Georgia or Moldova. This often forced the EU to act at the lowest common denominator. Whenever it could, the EU shunned meaningful action.

#### 3. Europe’s Neighbours Falling Short on Democracy

23.04.2009, European Voice


External Relations Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner says democratic reforms have slowed. Several of the European Union’s immediate neighbours are deficient in democratic governance and respect for human rights, according to a review of the Commission’s European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), published today (23 April). Benita Ferrero-Waldner, the European commissioner for external relations, said that democratic reform had slowed across the neighbourhood, which highlighted the need for improved incentives.

#### 4. Analysis: Crises Test European Union Program for Ex-Soviet Republics

20.04.2009, Kyiv Post

READ MORE: http://www.kyivpost.com/world/39918/print

Crises in Moldova and Georgia have complicated Europe’s attempts to build closer ties with former Soviet republics without angering Moscow, but the European Union and NATO show no sign of changing course. Protests in Moldova and a row over NATO military exercises in Georgia have posed new challenges for Europe’s leaders as the EU prepares to launch its Eastern Partnership programme, intended to deepen ties with six former Soviet republics. The 27-nation Union is pressing ahead with the talks in Prague on May 7 and some politicians and analysts are calling for more direct involvement in the region, even though Moscow considers it part of its traditional sphere of influence. "We should not just follow business as usual – it should be more than business as usual," said Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, who chairs the European Parliament’s Committee on Foreign Affairs. Such an approach is unlikely to please Moscow, which has signalled its growing anger. NATO’s plans to hold military exercises in Georgia next month brought a tough response last week from Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, who called the decision "dangerous".
5. **Russian Roulette in the EU Neighborhood**


READ MORE: [http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1609146.html](http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1609146.html)

Russia has six bullets with which to wound or kill the European Union’s Eastern Partnership, and put the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy out of its misery in the process. It is generally accepted that the project is at the mercy of Moscow, the old colonial master of the six privileged European neighbors: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. As the EU scrambles to assemble those countries’ representatives for what is hoped to be a portentous launch summit for the project in Prague in early May, officials in Brussels fear to contemplate the consequences of failure. In recent months, EU fears of failure focused primarily on Belarus. But last week’s violent unrest in Moldova has driven home the point that each country represents a potential vulnerability. The unpredictable antics of Belarusian strongman Alyaksandr Lukashenka are merely the tip of the iceberg; massive structural problems lurk beneath the waterline.

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**XVI. BLACK SEA**

1. **Next Round of Ukrainian Russian Talks on Delimitation of Azov and Black Seas Opens in Moscow**

22.04.2009, BSANNA News


Moscow is hosting the next round of Ukrainian-Russian negotiations on the delimitation of the Azov and Black Seas, and the Kerch Strait, Ukrainian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Vasyl Kyrylych said at a briefing on Wednesday.

2. **‘Stinking Dutchman’ with Ukrainian Crew Adrift in Black Sea**

07.04.2009, [www.rian.ru](http://www.rian.ru)


A foul smelling ship, crewed by Ukrainian sailors, has been drifting in the Black Sea for four months, the NEWSru.Ua website said citing a local newspaper. The Beriks, dubbed the Stinking Dutchman by border guards, left the Georgian port of Poti in December 2008. Its cargo contains over 200 tons of decaying meat and poultry which started to rot after some of the ship’s refrigerators stopped working. Ukrainian authorities are refusing to let the vessel approach within 20 kilometers of the shore. The twelve merchant seamen on board are forced to wear breathing apparatus to enter the ship’s hold due to the stench and are reported to be running out of food and water.

3. **Georgia Impounds Russian-Crewed Ship in Black Sea**


READ MORE: [http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1604003.html](http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1604003.html)

The Georgian coast guard has impounded a ship with a Russian crew in its coastal waters near the Black Sea port of Batumi, RFE/RL’s Russian Service reports. Officials of Georgia’s border police told RFE/RL that the ship, sailing under a Cambodian flag, was stopped on April 6 on its way from the Turkish port of Hopa to Azov in Russia.

4. **The Allies Agreed to Support the Regional Priorities of Black Sea Countries**

06.04.2009, BSANNA News


Romanian President Traian Basescu told a news conference at the close of the NATO anniversary
summit meeting, that the allies agreed to support the regional priorities of the Black Sea countries, pointing out that this is a gain to Romania that has a special significance.

XVII. CAUCASUS

1. The Obama Administration's Emerging Caucasus Policy
27.04.2009, TurkishWeekly
READ MORE: http://www.turkishweekly.net/print.asp?type=1&id=74376
On April 20 the US State Department announced that Richard J. Morningstar had been appointed special envoy on Eurasian energy issues to Secretary Clinton (State Department, April 20). Morningstar will "provide the Secretary with strategic advice on policy issues relating to development, transit, and distribution of energy resources in Eurasia". He is certainly well qualified for the job – he served as special advisor on Caspian basin energy diplomacy in 1998-1999, prior to which he served as a special advisor on assistance to the former Soviet Union.

2. Analysis: Turkish Armenian Political Thaw Could have Major Impact on Caspian Energy Exports
27.04.2009, UPI
READ MORE: http://www.upi.com/Energy_Resources/2009/04/27/Analysis-Turkish-Armenian-political-thaw-could-have-major-impact-on-Caspian-energy-exports/UPI-47081240870996/
During the past year, at a time of record-high energy prices, many European officials have decried what they see as Russia's state-owned Gazprom natural gas company being used as a tool to promote the Kremlin's policies by indulging in hardball "pipeline politics." Gazprom's favored tool is variable prices being used to send political signals to recalcitrant former Soviet republics such as Ukraine and Georgia, with the pressure ramping up in direct proportion to a government's inclination to look westward. Of all the former Soviet republics, Armenia receives the most preferential pricing; effective April 1, Armenia pays a mere $154 per thousand cubic meters for Russian gas. In contrast, three months ago Gazprom Deputy Chairman Alexander Medvedev noted, in reference to Gazprom's intention to ramp up Ukraine's cost from $179 per tcm to $250 per tcm, "The rest of Europe pays more than $400 for each thousand cubic meters of gas it gets from Russia."

3. Thaw Shifts Alliances in South Caucasus
25.04.2009, Financial Times
READ MORE: http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/51ec6dee-3127-11de-8196-00144feabdc0.html
A rapprochement between Turkey and Armenia this week provided further evidence of a shift in the balance of power in the South Caucasus that is propelling gas-rich Azerbaijan closer to Russia, analysts said. The process that began when Georgia went to war with Russia last summer over its breakaway territories of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, could jeopardise European plans to reduce dependence on Russian gas by importing extra Caspian supplies. Azerbaijan views the announcement on Wednesday by its ally Turkey and historic foe Armenia of plans to normalise ties as a betrayal that would leave it isolated in the South Caucasus, where Armenia already enjoys strong ties with Russia and Iran.

4. South Caucasus Presents Tangled Web of Shifting Allegiances
READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1615160.html
Anticipation is in the air in the Armenian village of Margara. Roads are being repaired. Visitors are inquiring about real estate prices. Talk abounds of new hotels, shops, and restaurants. A sleepy
A border hamlet of just 1,500 people, Magara is the site of the only bridge linking Armenia with Turkey – a bridge that has not been used since Ankara closed the border and cut off diplomatic relations with Yerevan in 1993 over the war in Nagorno-Karabakh. Now, with talk of an impending Armenian-Turkish rapprochement reaching a fever pitch, locals like 70-year-old Demaxia Manukian are hopeful that their isolation is at an end.

5.

Turkey Engaged in Comprehensive Efforts to Ensure Peace in Caucasus

Turkish President Abdullah Gul said Tuesday his country is involved in efforts to solve the problems between Azerbaijan and Armenia, in addition to discussions over the normalization process with Yerevan. Turkey aims to ensure peace, stability and normalization in the Caucasus by solving the region’s frozen conflicts, including the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute, Gul told reporters before departing for Bahrain. "Within this framework, as discussions on issues with Yerevan continue, we are also involved in efforts to solve the problems between Azerbaijan and Armenia," he said, adding that diplomacy did allow him to speak publicly about the steps being taken regarding the issue.

6.

Eastern Partnership will Help Eliminate Differences among South Caucasus Countries: EU Special Representative
06.04.2009, Trend News

The European Union special representative on the South Caucasus says the EU Eastern Partnership will help eliminate differences among the South Caucasus countries. The EU program is very important for Azerbaijan and its remaining members. It will help to establish closer ties between the program members states, European Union special representative on the South Caucasus Peter Semneby said during his visit to Baku on April 6. Eastern Partnership has been initiated by Poland and Sweden as a part of the neighborhood policy which aims to improve EU relations with the post Soviet countries. Eastern Partnership will cover six EU neighbor states – Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus. The EU will allocate €600 million for neighbor states in 2009-2013.

XVIII. ENERGY

1.

Ankara Denies Baku Planning Gas Price Hike
27.04.2009, Today’s Zaman
READ MORE: http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/detaylar.do?load=detay&link=173604

Turkish Energy Minister Hilmi Güler yesterday denied media reports that Azerbaijan was set to increase the price of the natural gas it sells to Turkey, saying the existing contracts do not allow it. "These reports are not true; I have been holding meetings with the Azerbaijanis for two days. No such thing has been said; there is no rise. We have a contract, so they cannot do it," Güler was quoted as saying by the Anatolia news agency yesterday, in response to a question as he was leaving a meeting at the headquarters of the ruling Justice and Development Party (AK Party).

2.

Turkish Government Stalls on Nabucco Project ahead of Critical Deadlines
27.04.2009, Jamestown Eurasia Daily Monitor
READ MORE: http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=34908&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=407&no_cache=1
The high-level conference on energy in Sofia, held on April 25 (BTA, April 24 - 26) and the European Union's summit in Prague on May 7 are survival opportunities for the Nabucco gas pipeline project. This project, a centerpiece of the EU planned Southern Energy Corridor, finally began moving forward with the Nabucco Summit in Budapest in January 2009, after years of stagnation.

3.

Nabucco not only Solution to EU's Energy Security: US Energy Envoy
25.04.2009, XINHUANET.COM


The gas pipeline Nabucco is important for Europe, but not the only solution to the problem of energy security to the European Union and any pipeline in itself is not a panacea, the US special envoy on energy issues in Eurasia, Richard Morningstar, said at a press conference after the closure of the Sofia Energy Summit on Saturday. Morningstar participated in the two-day energy summit dubbed "Natural Gas for Europe: Security and Partnership," organized under the initiative and auspices of Bulgarian President Georgi Parvanov.

4.

National and EU-Level Estimates of Energy Supply Externalities
24.04.2009, Centre for European Policy Studies

READ MORE: http://shop.ceps.eu/BookDetail.php?item_id=1834

Energy security is a topic that is of increasing importance to policy-makers and yet is a relatively under-researched area. Although macroeconomists have noted that there may be external costs associated with energy security measures, there is no definitive methodology for calculating or assessing these externalities. This paper presents an overview of the theoretical externalities and develops estimates for the size of the external costs of energy arising from energy insecurity. In particular, the research centres on the costs of electricity production and oil.

5.

South Caucasus Emerges as 'Crossroads of Energy-Exports'

READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1615342.html

If all the proposed energy-export projects envisioned for the South Caucasus were to be built, hundreds of billions of dollars of oil- and natural-gas revenues could be flowing through the region annually. Once considered a "crossroads of civilization," the South Caucasus has emerged as a crossroads of energy-export routes – spurring renewed competition in the region. Nestled amid regions to the south and east that possess huge hydrocarbon wealth, and regions west and north that desire energy resources, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia find themselves in an enviable geographic location, making fierce competition for their favor inevitable.

6.

Gazprom Seeks a Gas Pipeline to Bypass Ukraine


Gazprom began a campaign in Brussels on Thursday to push for a gas pipeline that would bypass Ukraine to supply customers in Europe. The project, which is called South Stream, would run under the Black Sea and link Russia directly to Bulgaria. The project also is hitting a roadblock at the European Union's border with Bulgaria. Prime Minister Vladimir V. Putin of Russia cancelled his appearance on Friday at an energy summit meeting in Sofia, because of slow progress over negotiations concerning a vital part of the route for the pipeline, according to news reports. The negotiations are important for Russia because Bulgaria could force Gazprom to build a costly new network to transport the gas rather than allow it to use Bulgaria's existing facilities.
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<td>Bulgaria Rebuffs Russian Pressure over Pipeline</td>
<td>24.04.2009, EurActiv</td>
<td>READ MORE: <a href="http://www.euractiv.com/en/energy/bulgaria-rebuffs-russian-pressure-pipeline/article-181616?Ref=RSS">Link</a></td>
<td>The Bulgarian foreign minister said today (24 April) that his country had been the object of &quot;inadmissible&quot; Russian pressure to sign commitments for its section of the South Stream gas pipeline, seen as Moscow's alternative to the EU backed Nabucco project.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Vote Planned for Burgas Alexandroupolis</td>
<td>23.04.2009, UPI</td>
<td>READ MORE: <a href="http://www.upi.com/Energy_Resources/2009/04/23/Vote-planned-for-Burgas-Alexandroupolis/UPI-29211240503660/">Link</a></td>
<td>The seaside resort town of Pomorie, Bulgaria, plans to hold a May 16 public referendum on the Burgas Alexandroupolis oil pipeline. Greece, Russia and Bulgaria signed a memorandum of understanding on the pipeline from the Black Sea to the Aegean Sea in 2005. Initial capacity is estimated to reach 257 million barrels per year, with plans to increase that volume by more than 100 million barrels. The pipeline is to bypass Turkey's Bosporus and Dardanelles by traversing an overland route.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Inter-State Committee Approves Energy Corridor</td>
<td>23.04.2009, BSANNA News</td>
<td>READ MORE: <a href="http://bsanna-news.ukrinform.ua/newsitem.php?id=8972&amp;lang=en">Link</a></td>
<td>BELGRADE, April 23 (Tanjug). Participants in the inter-state committee that is following the realization of the project on the Pan-European Oil Pipeline (PEOP) have supported, at a meeting in Belgrade, an initiative for setting up an energy corridor from Constanza, Romania, to Trieste, Italy, which envisages the possibility of the construction of a gas pipeline along the planned route of the PEOP oil pipeline.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>European Commission President Attends Sofia Energy Summit</td>
<td>23.03.2009, emportal</td>
<td>READ MORE: <a href="http://www.emportal.rs/en/news/region/86230.html">Link</a></td>
<td>Energy security is among key priorities for European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso, said Thursday Mark Grey, spokesman for the Commission, in a statement to Bulgarian reporters. EC President Barroso has rescheduled his programme and will take part in the Energy Summit in Sofia. He considers energy security among his priorities and is concerned to make sure that Bulgaria will not be cut off from Europe in a future disruption of natural gas supplies, Grey said.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Bulgaria, Russia to Train Jointly Experts for Energy, Oil and Gas Industry</td>
<td>23.03.2009, emportal</td>
<td>READ MORE: <a href="http://www.emportal.rs/en/news/region/86231.print.html">Link</a></td>
<td>SOFIA, April 23 (BTA) - Before the end of the third quarter of 2009, Bulgaria and Russia will hold negotiations on the setting up and functioning of a Bulgarian-Russian school for training of experts in energy and the oil and gas industry, the Government Information Service said on Thursday.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin recently explained: "Russia enjoys vast energy and mineral resources which serve as a basis to develop its economy; as an instrument to implement domestic and foreign policy. The role of the country on international energy markets determines, in many ways, its geopolitical influence" (Ukrayinska Pravda, 4 Feb 2009). Putin was the architect of Russia's use of energy as a foreign policy tool. He is now threatening to use Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) as Russia's new energy weapon. In essence, this will be utilized as a means of coercing the EU in order to achieve de facto recognition of a Russian "sphere of influence" within the former Soviet Union.

### Russia Unveils New Global Energy Treaty Blueprint

22.04.2009, EurActiv


The Kremlin yesterday (21 April) published Russia's proposal for new rules on international energy cooperation, following a dispute with Ukraine over transit in January which left millions of Europeans without heating in the heart of winter.

### The Strategic Implications of Russian Move against Hungary's MOL

22.04.2009, Jamestown Eurasia Daily Monitor

READ MORE: http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=34889&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=7&cHash=ec18597eba

The European Union remains a passive bystander to Russia's attempted capture of MOL, the Hungarian oil and gas company (EDM, April 3, 6). The Kremlin-connected Surgut Neftegaz became the single largest shareholder in MOL, literally overnight, through surreptitious acquisition of Austrian OMV's entire 21.2 stake in MOL on March 30. Surgut, a company known to lack transparency, has hinted that it intends to take over MOL in due course through vertical integration. Whether this intention is real, or a cover for another Russian entity that would step in after Surgut remains unclear.

### Russia Sees no Need for Oil Cuts as Shortage Looming

22.04.2009, The Guardian

READ MORE: http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/feedarticle/8468182/print

MOSCOW, April 22 (Reuters) - Russia believes global oil output cuts will have a shortlived effect and made no sense given a looming global supply shortage in the medium term, Energy Minister Sergei Shmatko said on Wednesday. "According to various estimates, there will be a serious shortage of oil supply, maybe in one, maybe in two-three years," Shmatko told reporters. "It will coincide with the end of the global economic crisis and will lead to serious instability, including in the pricing of oil," he said. "A simple cut in production can, in our view, have only a short-lived impact." Russia repeatedly hinted it could join OPEC's oil output cuts when oil fell close to $30 per barrel last year, thus exposing the state budget and the Kremlin's social obligations to major risks.

### Black Sea: Turkey and Romania Assess Their Offshore Potential

21.04.2009, Petroleum Economist


Dependent on Russian gas supply, Turkey and Romania are exploring and drilling offshore in the hope of increasing indigenous oil and gas reserves, and their energy security. State-owned TPAO will begin drilling for gas in Turkey's western Black Sea waters, in partnership with Brazil's Petrobras, by
the end of this year. Seismic surveys suggest that the area holds as much as 1.5 trillion cubic meters (cm) of gas – a significant amount for a country with proved reserves of only 9bn cm and that relies on Russia to meet nearly 64% of its gas-import requirement. Additionally, the country’s central and eastern Black Sea waters may hold oil, with TPAO saying surveys indicate large reserves, of up to 10bn barrels. The firm has joint exploration agreements with Petrobras and ExxonMobil for development of one block each in the central Black Sea region and hopes to begin drilling as soon as possible. However, the blocks are in deep water and any decision to drill depends on the investment programmes of the foreign partners, says TPAO chief executive officer (CEO) Mehmet Uysal.

17. Azerbaijan and Russia Edge Closer to Gas Deal
20.04.2009, EurActiv
Europe’s hopes of securing natural gas from Azerbaijan via the Nabucco pipeline were further dampened on Saturday (18 April) when Azerbaijan’s President Ilham Aliev said he wanted Russia to serve as a transit route for selling gas to Europe.

18. Russia Stares Down OPEC
20.04.2009, New Europe
READ MORE: http://www.neurope.eu/print.php?id=94031
The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is frustrated with the fact that Russian oil production is not falling as Moscow promised at a December meeting, but there is little the oil cartel can do, leading experts in Moscow and London told New Europe. As OPEC makes its biggest oil production cuts on record, Russia is pumping more, threatening to send crude back below USD 50 a barrel as the oil market is heading for a period of weakness due to demand worries and the rising dollar.

19. Cash-Rich China Courts the Caspian
18.04.2009, Asia Times
READ MORE: http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Central_Asia/KD18Ag01.html
The global downturn is spreading to Central Asia. It may lead to a marked shift of fortune in the Great Game for control of Caspian energy reserves. On the surface, the intensity of the rivalries may appear to have subsided, as the principal protagonists - Russia and the West - brood over the precarious state of their own finances and prioritize fixing their domestic economies. But the slowing down of the Great Game bears a deceptive appearance. China gains out of any changing equations. Of all the major economies of the world, it is in China that the government’s 4 trillion yuan (US$585 billion) stimulus package may have begun.

20. Oil Production Puts Russia on Collision Course
16.04.2009, Moscow News
READ MORE: http://mnweekly.rian.ru/business/20090416/55374322.html
OPEC is squaring up for a spat with Moscow as it becomes increasingly frustrated with Russia’s reluctance to curb oil output as agreed with the international cartel. Oil prices continued to hover around the $50-a-barrel mark despite a statement from the International Energy Authority (IEA) that demand would fall more than expected. However, OPEC is becoming for prices above $60 and is frustrated with Russia for not reducing its exports in line with the cartel’s record cuts this year. Russia’s oil exports increased 6.3 per cent in February and 2.2 per cent in March, including by 10-fold to the United States. At the same time US imports from OPEC fell by 14 per cent, or 818,000
21. **Obama Backs Turkey's Strategic Energy Role**  
14.04.2009, EurActiv  
Speaking before the Turkish parliament yesterday (6 April), US President Barack Obama said America would continue to support Turkey's central role as an East-West oil and gas corridor, and highlighted new economic opportunities offered by clean energies. EurActiv Turkey reports.

22. **Gas Interconnectors in Europe: More than a Funding Issue**  
14.04.2009, Centre for European Policy Studies  
READ MORE: http://shop.ceps.eu/BookDetail.php?item_id=1829  
Gas interconnectors play a pivotal role in opening up the European gas markets to competition and so to create a single market for natural gas in which consumers are free to choose their own supplier. Moreover, in linking different gas transmission systems throughout Europe, interconnectors increase the flexibility of the gas network benefiting Europe's security of supply.

23. **Turkey Opens 2 Electric Grids to Privatisation**  
10.04.2009, REUTERS  
READ MORE: http://uk.reuters.com/articlePrint?articleId=UKLA23795720090410  
ANKARA, April 10 (Reuters) - Turkey's Privatisation Administration has begun the sales process for two electricity distribution grids with the last date for bids set for October 20, the agency said on Friday. Applications for pre-qualification in the tenders are due by July 15. One grid serves 927,000 customers in the provinces of Trabzon, Rize, Giresun, Gumushane and Artvin in northeastern Turkey, along the country's Black Sea border. The other has approximately 1.16 million customers in the western provinces of Afyonkarahisar, Bilecik, Eskisehir, Kutahya and Usak.

24. **Is the EU in Danger of Losing Azeri Gas?**  
10.04.2009, European Voice  
There is a very real risk that Azerbaijan's rapprochement with Russia might reduce the EU's prospects of energy diversification. The EU struggled long and hard at its spring summit before it agreed to provide funding for the Nabucco pipeline, even though this gas route from Azerbaijan is one of the central elements of its bid to diversify its sources of energy.

25. **As Gazprom Threatens the EU, Iran Presents an Alternative**  
10.04.2009, Jamestown Eurasia Daily Monitor  
READ MORE: http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=34847&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=13&cHash=a492fc05ce  
On April 1 Iran's Oil Minister, Gholam-Hossein Nozari took another step in promoting his country's goal of becoming a major natural gas supplier to the EU when he announced in Damascus that, "In accordance with a project being developed, Iranian gas will be supplied to European countries via Iraq, Syria and the Mediterranean Sea and further onto Greece and Italy" (RIA Novosti, April 1). Nozari supplied few details, but added that Iran had been in contact with its European partners and that a trilateral agreement between Iran, Syria and Iraq was needed in order to make the project viable. "Iran will transfer gas to Greece and Italy through Iraq, Syria and the Mediterranean Sea,"
Nozari told reporters after meeting with his Syrian counterpart Sufiyan al-Aw (www.presstv.ir, April 1).

**26.**

**Pipeline Blast Halts Turkmen Gas Exports to Russia**

09.04.2009, REUTERS

READ MORE: http://uk.reuters.com/articlePrint?articleId=UKL959981620090409

A pipeline blast in Turkmenistan on Thursday fully halted Turkmen gas exports to Russia, which said the accident would have no impact on its customers in Europe. Turkmenistan, however, in a burst of undiplomatic language, blamed Russia for the pipeline disruption, saying Russia's gas export monopoly Gazprom (GAZP.MM: Quote, Profile, Research) had "irresponsibly" cut imports of gas and caused the accident. Gazprom declined immediate comment on the accusation, while analysts were sceptical that low imports could have caused the explosion. Gazprom's CEO Alexei Miller, who made a statement to reporters in the Kazakh commercial capital Almaty, did not mention the accident, but stressed the importance of cooperation with Turkmenistan.

**27.**

**Nabucco Partners Unveil Gas Pipeline Timeline**

08.04.2009, EurActiv


Construction of the EU-supported gas pipeline project Nabucco will begin in 2011, according to Reinhard Mitschek, managing director of Nabucco Gas Pipeline International. In an interview with Dnevnik, EurActiv's partner in Bulgaria, Mitschek gave more details of the consortium's plans.

**28.**

**Mitschek: Nabucco Consortium Making Headway**

08.04.2009, EurActiv


Significant progress has been achieved with Turkey on moving forward the Nabucco gas pipeline project, Reinhard Mitschek, managing director of Nabucco Gas Pipeline International, told the Dnevnik daily, EurActiv's partner in Bulgaria.

**29.**

**Surgut's Move against MOL: A New Stage in Russian Acquisition Strategy in Europe**

06.04.2009, Jamestown Eurasia Daily Monitor

READ MORE: http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=34816&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=7&cHash=6d9b9a9488

Russian expansion into European energy industries stands poised to cross a new threshold with the stealthy acquisition of a large stake in Hungary's privately owned MOL by Russia's Kremlin-controlled Surgut Neftegaz (EDM, April 2). This move entails a number of bold novelties. First, Surgut's lack of transparency is deep even by Russian standards, with its ownership structure largely undisclosed. Second, this oil company is seen as linked with Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, who is rumored to be a major shareholder directly or indirectly in Surgut. Thirdly, European collaborators have been enlisted to hand over that stake in MOL practically overnight to Surgut, behind the back of EU member countries and EU regulatory authorities, and ignoring the energy-security implications of this move. And, fourthly, the cash-rich Surgut may be acting as a half-way house for larger, but currently cash-strapped Russian companies, who may repurchase this MOL stake from Surgut at a later stage.
30.

**Blast Reminds the EU of Moldova Balkans Gas Transit Pipeline**

06.04.2009, Jamestown Eurasia Daily Monitor

READ MORE: http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=34819

Deliveries of Russian natural gas to Balkan countries via Ukraine and Moldova are down by approximately one half, following the April 1 explosion on the transit pipeline in Moldova. The blast is attributed to a landslide that followed days of heavy rain. It crushed the pipeline near the point where it crosses onto the right bank of the Nistru River from the secessionist-controlled left bank. The explosion, in an open field, caused a 150 meter high flame but no casualties. Two parallel backup lines do not seem to have been affected. Repair work on the ruptured section is expected to take several days (Basapress, April 1, 2).

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**IXX. FROZEN CONFLICT**

1. **Matthew Bryza Says it's Possible to Settle Karabakh Issue in Coming Few Months**

27.04.2009, Today.Az

READ MORE: http://www.today.az/print/news/politics/51813.html

OSCE MG co-chair Matthew Bryza considers it possible to settle the Karabakh issue in the next few months. "We can not say it exactly but I hope it is possible in the next few months", he told reporters in Yerevan. In turn, OSCE MG co-chair of France Bernard Fassier announced that the resolution of the Karabakh problem mainly depends on the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia. "There has appeared an impression that the heads of the two states are not inclined to prepare their public for the problem solution. Yet, today we are fully confident that the Presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia are inclined to preparing their public to the need for peaceful co-existence", noted he.

2. **Armenia, Azerbaijan Confirm May 7 Meeting OSCE Minsk Group**

27.04.2009, rian.ru

READ MORE: http://en.rian.ru/world/20090427/121327257-print.html

The Armenian and Azerbaijani leaders have confirmed the date for their next meeting as May 7 in Prague, the French co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group said Monday. Over the past few days, co-chairs of the Minsk Group have visited Yerevan and Baku and met with the Armenian leader Serzh Sargsyan and Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev. "Both presidents agreed the date that we have offered on May 7 in Prague," Bernard Fassier was cited by Azerbaijani media as saying at a press conference. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group was created in 1992 to encourage a peaceful resolution to the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Nagorny Karabakh. Nagorny Karabakh, a region in Azerbaijan with a largely Armenian population, declared its independence from Azerbaijan in 1983. The ensuing Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict claimed some 35,000 lives. A ceasefire was signed in 1994. The area technically remains part of Azerbaijan, but has its own de facto government.

3. **Svante Cornell: “Without Solving the Nagorno Karabakh Problem You Can’t Solve the Broader Problems in the Caucasus”**

18.04.2009, APA


APA’s interview with Research Director of the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program Svante E. Cornell
Moldova's Breakaway Region Asks Russia for Loan
15.04.2009, REUTERS
READ MORE: http://uk.reuters.com/articlePrint?articleId=UKB52957920090415
Moldova's breakaway region of Transdniestria has asked Russia for a loan to help ease the impact of the global economic crisis, Russia's Interfax news agency reported on Wednesday. Russia has maintained troops in Transdniestria since 1992 when they stopped fighting government forces and separatists. About 1,200 troops remain in the largely industrial sliver of land hugging the river Dniester on Moldova's eastern border with Ukraine, despite pledges to leave.

The Persistence of the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict is a Major Obstacle to Peace and Stability in the South Caucasus Region, NATO Special Representative
09.04.2009, Trend News
The interview of Trend News with NATO Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia, Ambassador Robert Simmons

Leave no Stone Turned - Microstates Flourish because Big Countries Need Them
09.04.2009, The Economist
READ MORE: http://www.economist.com/world/europe/PrinterFriendly.cfm?story_id=13438067
RICH and powerful people in Russia and Ukraine clearly find the “Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic”—more commonly known as Transdniestria—a useful entity. If they didn't, they would close it down. That is something that the European Union, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and others like to point out in a finger-wagging kind of way. The puppet states of South Ossetia and Abkhazia are the same. A flick of the switch would turn off the power. A turn of the tap would stop the gas. A telephone call would close the border. And the regimes would fall soon afterwards.

XX. SECURITY
1.
Black Sea Partnership Exercise Begins in Turkish Northern Port Town
27.04.2009, turk.net
READ MORE: http://haber.turk.net/ENG/2265961/print.asp?id=2265961
The first stage of the Black Sea Partnership-2009, a concerted exercise of the Turkish Naval Forces within the framework of the Partnership for Peace (PfP), was launched in Ereğli port town of the northern province of Zonguldak. The exercise will be performed in Western Black Sea, particularly the Ereğli and Istanbul ports, and end on May 4.

2.
Russian President Dismisses Military Spy Chief
READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1615256.html
President Dmitry Medvedev has dismissed the head of Russia's powerful military intelligence service, the Kremlin said. The Kremlin said Medvedev had signed a decree to dismiss Valentin Korabelnikov, a 63-year-old spymaster at the helm of the military intelligence service (GRU) since 1997. The Kremlin gave no reason for the dismissal.

3.
Russia: Black Sea Fleet Doesn't Damage Ukraine's Interests
21.04.2009, Kyiv Post
The presence of Russia’s Black Sea Fleet in Crimea does not damage Ukraine’s interests, said Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman Andrei Nesterenko. "Russia strictly ensures that the fleet will not damage Ukraine’s security, or infringe on its interests," Nesterenko said in answer to reporters’ questions. Nesterenko’s answers were posted on the Foreign Ministry’s website on Tuesday. Moscow and Kyiv "have been able to resolve all practical problems connected with the fleet’s maintenance, fully-fledged functioning and presence in Ukraine," he also said.

4.

CIS Council Secretary: Russia, Ukraine Should Look for Common Ground on Black Sea Fleet
18.04.2009, Kyiv Post

READ MORE: http://www.kyivpost.com/nation/39856/print

Russia and Ukraine should be guided by "something that unites us" in considering the presence of the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Crimea, said Lt. Gen. Alexander Sinaisky, the secretary of the council of the CIS defense ministers. "This is an issue of not multilateral military cooperation but an issue of purely bilateral intergovernmental military-political relations," Sinaisky said on Echo Moskvy radio on Saturday.

5.

Challenges and Prospects for the EU’s Area of Freedom, Security and Justice: Recommendations to the European Commission for the Stockholm Programme
16.04.2009, Centre for European Policy Studies

READ MORE: http://shop.ceps.eu/BookDetail.php?item_id=1830

The upcoming Swedish presidency of the EU will be in charge of adopting the next multi-annual programme on an Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (AFSJ), during its tenure in the second half of 2009. As the successor of the 2004 Hague Programme, it has already been informally baptised as the Stockholm Programme and will present the EU’s policy roadmap and legislative timetable over these policies for the next five years. It is therefore a critical time to reflect on the achievements and shortcomings affecting the role that the European Commission’s Directorate-General of Justice, Freedom and Security (DG JFS) has played during the last five years in light of the degree of policy convergence achieved so far. This Working Document aims at putting forward a set of policy recommendations for the DG JFS to take into consideration as it develops and consolidates its future policy strategies, while duly ensuring the legitimacy and credibility of the EU’s AFSJ within and outside Europe.

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The contents of the BSNU are exclusive responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the ICBSS.

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