

1-3 International Black Sea Symposium: a chance for extroversion of the Black Sea area as an influential crossroad between east and West, by Dr. Zefi Dimadama

EU

4 EU welcomes Russia's WTO accession after 18 years of negotiations
5 Statement by President Barroso following the adoption of the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism Reports for Romania and Bulgaria

Armenia

6-7 Meeting with President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan

Azerbaijan

7 X Round of talks on Azerbaijan's membership on WTO scheduled preliminarily for 30 November

Bulgaria

7-8 José Manuel Durão Barroso President of the European Commission
Statement by President Barroso following his meeting with Boyko Borissov, Prime Minister of Bulgaria

BSEC

8-9 PRESS RELEASE ON THE INFORMAL MEETING OF THE BSEC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Georgia

9-10 Georgia, Romania keen on agri pipeline construction
10 European Commission announces new support for agriculture and food safety in Georgia

Greece

10-11 Statement of Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Dimitrios Avramopoulos, after his meetings in the context of UN General Assembly

11-12 José Manuel Durão Barroso President of the European Commission
Statement by President Barroso following his meeting with Mr Antonis Samaras, Prime Minister of Greece

International Black Sea Symposium: a chance for extroversion of the Black Sea area as an influential crossroad between East and West, by Dr. Zefi Dimadama

The **International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS)** launched the first International Black Sea Symposium in 2008, in the context of an ever more pressing need for multilateral and transnational cooperation and dialogue in the wider Black Sea region. Ever since, the Symposium has grown and developed along the conviction that unless cooperation is fostered, long-standing animosities and unresolved differences will continue to wreak their unsettling effects on local populations but also on the entire region. The need for increased cooperation becomes ever more evident amidst the raging financial crisis that has smitten the global community, but traditionally affects more acutely countries prone to introversion like those in the region (Greece is only one example).

In the face of such challenges, the **International Black Sea Symposium project** was conceptualised to promote dialogue, understanding and cooperation in the wider Black Sea region. Since 2010, the ICBSS has clearly set out its priorities and objectives under

Romania

12 Remarks following the meeting of President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy with President of Romania, Traian Basescu

Russia

13–15 Meeting of the Commission for Strategic Development of the Fuel and Energy Sector and Environmental Security

16-17 The Speech of the State Secretary – Russian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs G. B. Karasin at the International Forum “Peacekeeping Operation on the Dniester in the Context of Geopolitical Challenges of the Present”

Turkey

17-18 Speech Delivered by Mr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey at the Opening Session of the Kabul Ministerial Conference of the Istanbul Process

19 Recent Publications on the Black Sea Region

20-21 ICBSS News and Events

the same concept; aiming at strengthening collaboration among the Black Sea countries as an integrated region with shared cultural characteristics as well as common trade, energy and transport policies. In this context, now in its fifth year, the Symposium builds on the success and positive impact of its previous four editions to bring together the next generation of stakeholders with an interest in the Black Sea area, introducing a new dimension, that of **extroversion of the Black Sea area as an influential crossroad between East and West.**

The region has always been a crossroad of political, economic and diversified societal cultures. In the present, it plays the role of an economic, geo-political and trade hub, and it serves as a crucial energy trade corridor connecting Asia with Europe. At the same time, specific interest for the Black Sea region with respect to energy and security is expressed by major global actors from both sides of the Atlantic (the USA and the EU), the neighboring countries of Eastern Europe, Central Asia, South Caucasus, the Mediterranean Sea and the Far East (e.g. China, India, et. al.).

Enhancing stability, fostering economic cooperation, promoting energy security and integrating environmental aspects in

all sectoral policies constitute the main priorities of the ICBSS with a view to fostering Sustainable Development in the Black Sea area in the future.

Within this framework, fifteen young professionals from the Black Sea countries, the EU Member-States and the US attended an intensive three-day course where 22 renowned international experts addressed a wide spectrum of issues, such as energy efficiency, environmental governance, security, innovation, science technology, economic relations, culture and education, that currently form the framework within which many cooperation schemes and synergies have been promoted.

Participants, speakers and observers used the Symposium to network and to form ideas for new joint projects; to discuss; to exchange views and to enhance the dialogue among “domestic” and “external” knowledge.

EU welcomes Russia's WTO accession after 18 years of negotiations

22 August 2012, [Link](#)

[...]

After 18 years of negotiations, Russia joins the World Trade Organisation (WTO) as its 156th member today. This accession is particularly important for the EU, as the EU is Russia's first trading partner and Russia is the EU's third trading partner. For the first time both entities will be bound by multilateral rules and obligations for their mutual trade.

"Today's WTO accession is a major step for Russia's further integration into the world economy", said EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht. "It will facilitate investment and trade, help to accelerate the modernisation of the Russian economy and offer plenty of business opportunities for both Russian and European companies. I trust that Russia will meet the international trading rules and standards to which it has committed."

The WTO accession will have a positive impact on the conditions of trade and investment between Russia and the European Union. The geographical position of Russia and the importance of its market in terms of volume and growth make it a very important trading partner of the EU. As a consequence of the WTO accession, Russia will amongst others lower its import duties, limit its export duties, grant greater market access for EU services providers and facilitate rules and procedures in many areas affecting bilateral economic relations. Of particular importance will be regulations on customs procedures, the use of health and sanitary measures, technical standards and the protection of intellectual property.

Russia will be subject to WTO rules in all these areas, including its monitoring and enforcement mechanisms. The EU, together with its international partners, is in contact with Russia to ensure that it respects these WTO commitments. Certain recently implemented or proposed legislation seems to be at odds with Russia's commitments and would stand in the way of other WTO members fully realising the benefits expected from Russia's WTO accession. The EU is particularly concerned about the proposed

new legislation providing for a car recycling fee which could discriminate against imported vehicles and hopes that this legislation will not be adopted.

Background

Russia is the third trading partner of the EU and the EU the first trading partner of Russia.

EU exports to Russia in 2011: €108.4 billion

EU imports from Russia in 2011: €199.5 billion

Total trade in goods in 2011: €308 billion

The main exports of the EU to Russia are cars (€7 billion), medicines (€6 billion), car parts (€3.5 billion), telephones and parts (€2.5 billion) and tractors (€1 billion). The EU imports from Russia cover mainly raw materials. The main imports are oil (crude and refined: €130 billion) and gas (€24 billion). For these products, as well as for other important raw materials, Russia committed to limit its export duties.

The main changes related to the WTO accession of Russia concern market access improvements for goods and services. The import duties for goods will decrease from a current average of 10% to an average 7.8%. In some important sectors, such as automotive, the import duty reductions are more significant (decreasing from currently 30% to 25% upon accession and to 15% after 7 years). It is estimated that the overall tariff reduction will result in savings of €2.5 billion annually in import duties for EU exporters. Furthermore the reduced tariffs are estimated to stimulate €3.9 billion of additional EU exports to Russia per year.

In the telecommunications sector, Russia will phase out its current equity caps (49%) for foreign investors within 4 years. Furthermore, the WTO accession of Russia covers a range of regulatory issues including sanitary and phytosanitary rules, customs and intellectual property rights.

The EU is the largest foreign investor in Russia, with investments worth around €120 billion in 2010. Russian investments in the EU amounted to €42 billion in 2010.

Statement by President Barroso following the adoption of the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism Reports for Romania and Bulgaria

Brussels, 18 July 2012, [Link](#)

[...]

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Over the last three weeks, exceptional events in Romania have been a major source of concern for the Commission and for the European Union. We have discussed these developments this morning in the context of the adoption of the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism Reports and there was unanimous support to the reports as presented.

In every member state of the European Union we need a well-functioning, independent judicial system, and respect for democratic institutions and the rule of law. The European Union is based on the principle of respect of the rule of law and democratic values.

Events in Romania have shaken our trust. Challenging judicial decisions, undermining the constitutional court, overturning established procedures and removing key checks and balances have called into question the Government's commitment to respect the rule of law.

Party political strife cannot justify overriding core democratic principles. Politicians must not try to intimidate judges ahead of decisions or attack judges when they take decisions they do not like. The competences of a Constitutional Court cannot be changed overnight.

This is why it was so important to meet the Prime Minister of Romania at short notice. We needed immediate answers.

There is a principle in the treaty (Article 4) of "sincere cooperation" between member states and the EU institutions. Prime Minister Ponta responded to my request and has acted immediately. We had a good meeting last Thursday and we have spoken over the last couple of days to reach agreement, for that I want to pay tribute to the Romanian Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Ponta has confirmed in writing his agreement to implement all of the measures addressing our con-

cerns, including revoking the key emergency ordinances to restore the competences of the Constitutional Court and implement its rulings over the forthcoming referendum. These developments are fully reflected in the Cooperation and Verification reports we adopted this morning.

I have underlined to Prime Minister Ponta that the urgent and rigorous implementation of recommendations under the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism is very much in the interests of Romanians - over 90% of Romanians see shortcomings in the judicial system and corruption as major problems. The report adopted today recognises progress made during the last years - and indeed there was relevant progress - but contains recommendations in order to complete the implementation of the benchmarks. Following these recommendations will not only mean a more solid judicial system. It will also help to ensure a stable, credible and investment-friendly economic environment and to reassure financial markets.

Romania has stepped back from the edge, but we cannot yet say that we have reached the end of the process. These commitments now need to be effectively observed and implemented.

This is in the best interests of Romania and Romanian citizens. We are convinced that the Romanian citizens are fully committed to the principle of the rule of law and democracy.

We will continue to monitor the situation closely and I have asked for a further report to be prepared on Romania by the end of the year. In this report, we will look at whether our concerns regarding the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary have been addressed.

To conclude, a brief word on Bulgaria: taking a five-year perspective, relevant progress has been achieved with the adoption of the basic legislative framework and the creation of important new institutions.

The report recommends that the focus should now shift to filling the remaining gaps in this legal and institutional framework, implementing the legislation and carrying through action so that wrongdoing is seen to be uncovered and addressed. We need to see convincing results against high-level corruption and organised crime. The Commission will present its next report at the end of 2013 and will continue to monitor the situation closely. Thank you.

Meeting with President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan

Moscow, 08 August 2012, [Link](#)

[...]

Vladimir Putin held talks with President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan, who is in Russia on a working visit.

The two leaders discussed bilateral relations, issues on the international and regional agendas, in particular Russia and Armenia's cooperation in the CIS and Collective Security Treaty Organisation, and security in the Caucasus region.

PRESIDENT OF RUSSIA VLADIMIR PUTIN: Mr President, colleagues, friends,

It is a great pleasure to see you here in Moscow. Thank you for accepting our invitation.

We are celebrating two symbolic dates this year: 20 years since our two countries established diplomatic relations, and 15 years since we signed the Treaty on Friendship [Cooperation and Mutual Assistance].

Our relations are developing in practically all areas, through the regular contacts at presidential, government, and parliamentary level. The Intergovernmental Commission will start work very soon. Following the changes in Russia's Government Cabinet we have appointed a new co-chairman: on the Russian side this work will now be headed by Transport Minister Maxim Sokolov.

Our colleagues on both sides will meet in autumn. I think they have the very appropriate task of drafting the road-map for developing our economic relations through to 2020.

Our economic ties are doing well overall. We have practically come back to the pre-crisis level of around \$1 billion in trade turnover, and our bilateral trade posted a very good increase of 32% for the first half of this year.

Russia is in solid place as Armenia's biggest trade and economic partner. What's more, we have quite broad and

diversified economic relations. The money that Armenian citizens living in Russia send home is a considerable support for the country and its people as a whole and, at around \$1 billion, accounts for a sizeable part of the country's GDP.

Whenever needed, we always gave Armenia a shoulder to lean on during the difficulties the crisis created. Thankfully, we have already put many of these difficulties behind us now.

We are very happy to see you and to have this chance to discuss all of the different aspects of our relations.

PRESIDENT OF ARMENIA SERZH SARGSYAN: Mr President, thank you for the invitation and for your kind words. We value greatly the strategic partnership between our countries.

Our past and present relations are based on the friendly ties between our peoples. This is something that cannot be destroyed. It is our peoples' historic choice and something that we value, and this is why we work consistently to deepen our relations.

This is our first meeting since Russia's presidential election. As we mark the 20th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between our countries, I can say that we have built up solid results in all areas, and you can take a lot of the credit for this.

We implement a consistent policy of deepening relations with Russia and we want to develop our political dialogue at every level.

In this respect, this has been a fruitful month with five senior Russian officials making official visits to Armenia. Although we are still coming out of the crisis, our trade has reached the \$1-billion mark, and I think that we can do even better and double or even triple this figure over the next 2-3 years.

We have good cooperation in the humanitarian sector, and the big humanitarian agreement we signed a few months ago has given a boost to our ties in this area.

Our military technical cooperation is also increasing. We extended the lease of the Russian military base in Armenia in 2010, and we think that having a Russian military

base on our soil is in the interests of our country's security. Armenia will host CSTO military exercises this autumn. I think this deepening of our relations will help to strengthen peace and security in the Caucasus.

Thank you very much.

VLADIMIR PUTIN: There is another very important area in our relations – investment. Total Russian investment over the last 12-15 years comes to...

SERZH SARGSYAN: It comes to 50 percent of all foreign investment in our country.

VLADIMIR PUTIN: I want to thank you for the fact that the Armenian leadership has always supported our investors and not only does not discriminate against them in any way compared to other investors, but always provides them with the needed administrative support and backup.

SERZH SARGSYAN: Russian capital will always feel at home in Armenia.

VLADIMIR PUTIN: That is indeed so.

X ROUND OF TALKS ON AZERBAIJAN'S MEMBERSHIP IN WTO SCHEDULED PRELIMINARILY FOR 30 NOVEMBER

27 September 2012, [Link](#)

[...]

Azerbaijan, which held in Geneva on 24 February the 9th meeting of the working groups on admission to the WTO, has a chance to conduct another round of talks this year.

Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmud Mammadgulyev has stated that the WTO Secretariat appointed preliminarily the X meeting of the working groups on Azerbaijan's accession to the WTO for 30 November.

"The date may be specified, but the above-mentioned is planned currently. As 30 November is Friday, we plan to conduct the entire previous week our bilateral negotiations with WTO members and hold a round of multilateral negotiations on issues of agricultural support," Mammadgulyev said.

He added that the answers to the WTO members' questions asked during the IX round have been already submitted to the WTO Secretariat. "On their basis, for two or three weeks the Secretariat will prepare and submit to the Azerbaijan the actual summary on the progress of country's joining the organization," Mammadgulyev said.

On 27-28 July, Azerbaijan held consultations in Geneva with the WTO Secretariat and bilateral negotiations with the United States, Canada, Brazil and China.

Some progress has been achieved during bilateral negotiations, but the sides are not yet ready to announce their completion.

This February bilateral talks with WTO members and multilateral talks on issues of agricultural sector support were also held. Participants of negotiating process noted a little progress of Azerbaijan on the way to full membership in WTO and called it to work further in this direction.

The VIII meeting of the Working Group on Admission of Azerbaijan took place in Geneva on 18-22 October 2010. Multilateral talks were not held in 2011. Azerbaijan has been negotiating about its WTO membership since 1999.

José Manuel Durão Barroso President of the European Commission Statement by President Barroso following his meeting with Boyko Borissov, Prime Minister of Bulgaria

Sofia, 31st August 2012, [Link](#)

[...]

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to be back in Sofia to participate in the opening of the second line of Sofia metro and meet also with my good friend Prime Minister Boyko Borissov.

The impressive new metro lines we have just opened are a symbol of Bulgaria's modernisation and desire to improve the quality of life for its citizens. It shows what we can do together in the European Union and what can be achieved through the European structural and cohesion funds.

Today we have discussed how we can work together to maintain the momentum for reform to help people through-

out the country. I am pleased to say that Bulgaria and Prime Minister Borissov are tackling the economic crisis and have already taken a number of important measures in terms of fiscal consolidation. That is why we have been able to remove Bulgaria from the Excessive Deficit Procedure. I understand that it must be extremely difficult in this current moment to pursue these fiscal consolidation efforts. I want to tell you that we consider they are fundamental and in the very interest of the country because Bulgaria, by keeping this line of fiscal consolidation, can keep the confidence of the financial markets, can be sure to go to the financial markets and borrow at acceptable interest rates, can finance its future. Also this is the way to attract more Foreign Direct Investment, because sound macro-economic policy is a prerequisite for confidence. Finally, for social reasons, because every euro or every lev, that is spent paying interest rates of the debt is a euro or a lev that cannot be spent in social services, cannot be addressed for productive investment. So, this is why it is very important that the line of macro-economic rigour is kept.

At the same time it is important to continue along the path of structural reforms, in line with the Commission's recommendations from June. A real push is needed on pension reform, the fight against poverty, youth unemployment and administrative capacity to improve living standards and keep the Bulgarian economy growing.

Much of our discussion today has been, and we will continue it now during our working lunch, on how we can best use the European funds still available which amounts to roughly €1,5 billion that is unallocated. I welcome the steady increase in the absorption of funds over the last year and I know the attention that personally the Prime Minister has been dedicating to this issue. So, there has been indeed progress in terms of absorption of the funds, but we have to recognise that there are still unused funds and we have discussed how unused funds can be used for other priority infrastructure projects.

We have also discussed the crucial importance of administrative capacity, including what is needed like audit capacity and a simplification of procedures and reforms in the area of public procurement.

I have also reiterated the Commission's unequivocal support for Bulgaria joining the Schengen area. Bulgaria meets the

necessary conditions and we need to find a way to resolve this as quickly as possible so that Bulgarian citizens have the full benefits of EU membership.

I have also encouraged the Prime Minister to continue the reform efforts in the areas of judicial reform, the fight against corruption. Important steps have been made. To move further ahead, what we will need is a consistent political effort from the government and the Parliament, but also a real engagement from the leadership of key institutions, the judiciary, the media, all the society. Everyone needs to be pushing in the same direction.

This is why for instance the current process of choosing a new Supreme Judicial Council is so important. These are the people who will lead the judiciary over the next few years. And the same is true for the new Prosecutor General.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Each time I come to Bulgaria I am struck by the dynamic progress that is being made and the commitment of the government and the people I meet to the European project. Once again I would like to thank Prime Minister Borissov for his commitment to Europe, for the role he is playing in the European Union, for his clear understanding that it is together - Bulgaria and the European Union - that we can address so many of these issues. In fact, we have in Bulgaria probably the highest level of support and trust for the European Union.

It is very important to continue along this path, to promote the European values, the values of justice and freedom and all the features, all the elements of the truly pluralistic society.

This is indeed the commitment of the European Union and once again, Prime Minister Borissov, dear friend, thank you for the invitation and for giving me the opportunity to be today with you in what is I believe an important symbol of the commitment that we have together for the progress and the prosperity of Bulgaria.

PRESS RELEASE ON THE INFORMAL MEETING OF THE BSEC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

New York, 27 September 2012, [Link](#)

The Informal Meeting of the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs was held on 27 September 2012, in New York. The meeting took place on the sidelines of the 67th Session of the United Nations General Assembly general debate.

H.E. Prof. Dr. Ahmet DAVUTOĞLU, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, chaired the meeting in his capacity as the Chairman-in-Office of BSEC.

At this year's informal meeting, the Ministers addressed various issues, including the question of enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of BSEC; strengthening the project-oriented dimension of the Organization through developing and implementing high-impact joint projects which are of

interest to all Member States; increasing the visibility of BSEC; enhancing cooperation with the private sector and non-governmental organizations; implementing the BSEC Economic Agenda Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership which was endorsed at the level of Heads of State and Government during the BSEC 20th Anniversary Summit in Istanbul, on 26 June 2012; and BSECEU relations.

It has become customary practice for the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs to convene in an informal format every year in New York during the period of the general debate of the UN General Assembly.

Background Information:

BSEC was launched as a regionally owned initiative, with Turkey's lead, on 25 June 1992 at the Istanbul Summit, at a time when regional cooperation was most needed in the transformation process that the countries of the region were undergoing. The idea that stronger economic cooperation among the Black Sea countries would enhance peace, stability and prosperity in the region was the underlying philosophy behind BSEC. With the entry into force of its Charter in 1999, BSEC was officially transformed from an initiative into a regional cooperation organization.

Today, BSEC serves as a forum for cooperation in a wide range of areas and a platform for political dialogue for its 12 Member States¹. The BSEC countries encompass an area of approximately 20 million square kilometers with 330 million people. Transport, environmental protection, trade and economic development, energy, agriculture, banking and fi-

nance, migration management, combating organized crime, communications and information technologies, healthcare and pharmaceuticals, institutional renewal and good governance, education, science and technology, culture, tourism and customs matters are among the fields of cooperation within the framework of the Organization.

BSEC has recently commemorated its 20th anniversary with a Summit hosted by the Republic of Turkey in Istanbul, on 26 June 2012, at the level of Heads of State and Government. One of the main outcome documents of the Summit was the Istanbul Summit Declaration. With this Declaration, the Member States renewed their commitment to the BSEC process at the highest level. The Summit also endorsed a new Economic Agenda for the region. The Economic Agenda Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership has been introduced to face the new challenges and opportunities in the global and local environment. This comprehensive regional strategy sets goals in 17 priority areas of action. It also provides recommendations to further strengthen the Organization.

¹Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine.

Georgia, Romania keen on agri pipeline construction

Bucharest, 1st September 2012, [Link](#)

[...]

Georgia and Romania will continue to cooperate in the construction of AGRI (Azerbaijan-Georgia-Romania Interconnector) pipeline to transport liquefied natural gas from the Caspian Sea to Europe, Georgian GHN news agency reported.

This agreement was reached during a meeting in Bucharest of Romanian Foreign Minister Titus Corlatean with his Georgian counterpart Grigol Vashadze.

“During the meeting we discussed a number of issues of energy cooperation between Romania and Georgia, including the continuation of cooperation in AGRI gas pipeline construction, which will allow to arrange liquefied natural gas

supplies from the Caspian Sea area to Europe,” Corlatean stressed.

In addition to the pipeline, the foreign ministers also discussed the construction of a ferry crossing between the sea ports of Romania and Georgia in the Black Sea.

AGRI is currently at the stage of a feasibility study development, so the estimated amount of investment that will be needed to implement it has not yet been determined.

The feasibility study will be ready in fall, presumably in September, after which the economically reasonable location for construction of a terminal for liquefied natural gas on the Black Sea coast of Georgia will be selected. Based on this document, the amount of investment required for the planned activities on the territory of Georgia will be determined.

The feasibility study of the project is being prepared by British engineering company Penspen, which was determined on the basis of a tender.

At this stage, the project participants are four states — Azerbaijan, Georgia, Romania and Hungary. In February 2011, the parties established a joint venture for the project – SC AGRI LNG Project Company SRL.

European Commission announces new support for agriculture and food safety in Georgia

Brussels, 29 August 2012, [Link](#)

[...]

In the framework of the Eastern partnership the European Commission has provided new funding to modernise Georgia's agriculture, as well as build up the institutions responsible for preparing its political association and economic integration with the EU.

The first part of the programme will provide support to Georgia's agriculture sector, with a particular focus on small farmers' associations. It will help prepare government institutions to respond more effectively to the needs of the rural economy. It will also support private farmers' associations, strengthen cooperation among farmers, and increase food safety through training and technical advice.

The second part of the programme will promote institutional reform in Georgia and strengthen the state institutions which have the job of preparing and implementing the EU-Georgia Association Agreements and the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (a new partnership set up to help liberalise trade in the area). This includes sharing advice and providing support to institutions which coordinate the negotiations, as well as equipping institutions such as the National Food Agency with specialised laboratories to fulfil future obligations under the Agreements; in particular to respect European norms and standards.

Background:

The Annual Action Programme 2012 provides €60 million of bilateral allocation to Georgia. This assistance comes through the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). The Annual Action Programme is composed of two components:

The European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD Georgia): a programme designed to enhance agricultural production and rural development. It supports the implementation of the national agriculture strategy and strengthens small farmers' associations. It is also important in terms of helping to improve food safety systems within the country, especially in view of a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area.

Support for EU-Georgia Agreements: to enhance the overall technical and coordination capacity of a number of core institutions preparing and later implementing the Association Agreement and the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area. This is part of the Eastern Partnership Comprehensive Institution Building.

The programme reinforces existing activities (i.e twinning, TAIEX - Technical Assistance and Information Exchange instrument and SIGMA – Support for Improvement in Governance and Management, as well as technical assistance).

Statement of Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Dimitrios Avramopoulos, after his meetings in the context of UN General Assembly

27 September 2012, [Link](#)

[...]

During the meeting of this General Assembly with various countries, in every level, multilateral and bilateral, we set a goal to promote our interests in all sectors, such as economy and energy, and additionally to explain the Hellenic positions on issues of particular national sensitivity for our country.

Simultaneously, we present in our interlocutors with plentitude and suaveness the Hellenic reality, regarding the economic crisis, and also the efforts made by Greek government and all of us, in order to reconfigure the Greek economy and contribute to the overall effort made in Europe so as to find its way.

José Manuel Durão Barroso President of the European Commission Statement by President Barroso following his meeting with Mr Antonis Samaras, Prime Minister of Greece

Athens, 26 July 2012, [Link](#)

[...]

Thank you very much.

I really want to thank my good friend Antonis Samaras for the invitation. I really appreciate our friendship and the Prime Minister's clear commitment to Europe. This is so crucial during these difficult times.

And I know that this aspiration and this determination are shared by the two other respective leaders of the coalition government Mr Venizelos and Mr Kouvelis and I want to thank them also for their strong pro-European commitment.

Today I want to send a clear message to the people of this great country, of Greece. I know that many people feel without hope. Many are making extremely difficult sacrifices. And many people ask why they should do more.

I understand those concerns. And I agree that some of the efforts seem unfair. But I ask people to recognise the other alternatives which will be much more difficult for Greece and will affect even more the most vulnerable in the Greek society. So this is why it is the right approach to ask Greece to reform, to increase its competitiveness to have a viable future, irrespective of the crisis. You, in Greece, with our support, need to rebuild your country, your structures, your

administration, your economy to increase the competitiveness of Greece. And the best hope of a return to growth and job creation is inside the euro area. Staying in the euro is the best chance to avoid worse hardship and difficulties to the Greek people, namely for those in a more vulnerable position

The Prime Minister has assured me that the coalition government will respect the commitments under the second programme and will speed up the key structural reforms that are needed, including the privatisation process and of course, also the reforms in the public administration, for instance, the reform against the tax evasion.

The key word here is: deliver. Deliver, deliver, deliver. The main issue is implementation to deliver results. To maintain the trust of European and international partners, the delays must end. Words are not enough. Actions are much more important. Following my meeting with Prime Minister Samaras, I am reassured that this delivery will happen.

In return I have been unequivocal that the European Commission will stand by Greece. I am here as a friend of Greece. I have repeatedly stated that Greece can make it, together Greece and Europe will make it. Greece is part of the European family and the euro area and we intend to keep it that way. All the heads of state and government of the euro area have stated in the clearest possible terms that Greece should stay in the euro as long as the commitments made are honoured. And there has been solidarity towards Greece.

The European Union and the wider international community have shown unprecedented solidarity with the people of Greece. We need a new consensus on reform and development so that Greece can grow again for the benefit of its citizens.

The Commission's Task Force for Greece that was established at my initiative, is working to reform the public sector, cut red tape, improve the business environment and assist the Greek authorities in the mobilisation of European structural funds. I can confirm that 181 priority projects will be financed through €12 billion in structural funds for growth and jobs.

And of course in all the other policies there are also ways of supporting Greece. For instance we are now discussing the future Multiannual Financial Framework, the budget for the

next seven years, and certainly the European Commission will support. And indeed we are proposing a more integrated policy in Europe when it comes to migration issues so that we can have as much as possible a coherent response to the problems of illegal migration in many of our countries and this of course also applies to Greece.

So my message is: the Greek people do not stand alone. There is hope. And we will be there to help you. I come out of this meeting with a renewed sense of confidence that the coalition government is committed to the reform process and that this can be done.

Ladies and gentlemen,

To conclude, let me say a few words on the euro area more generally. We have taken important, fundamental decisions over the last couple of months to safeguard the stability of the euro area, and indeed we are now in the phase of implementation. A number of governments have embarked on a path of reform and fiscal consolidation that was unthinkable only very recently, and they have taken important decisions and I encourage them to keep this determination. These reforms are now being implemented and this effort must continue with credibility, with consistency, with coherence over time. As we said there will not be magic solutions. We need sustained efforts and determination.

At the same time, the existing financial backstops are being used as necessary. Most recently, the financial assistance to the recapitalisation of Spanish banks has been agreed and is ready for implementation.

At European level, the Commission is working intensively towards the creation of a banking union. In early September we will make a legislative proposal for a single supervisory mechanism. This will rely on the ECB as regards the euro area. We will propose to assign to the ECB supervisory tasks in full separation from its independent monetary policy responsibilities.

Giving to the ECB the ultimate responsibility for supervision of banks in the euro area will decisively contribute to increase confidence between the banks and in this way increase the financial stability in the euro area.

The euro area governments and the European institutions, including naturally the European Commission and the ECB,

will do whatever is necessary to secure the financial stability of the euro area.

And this I my final word to you: I think all of us in the Euro area and in the European Union should join hands and work together in Greece and in the other countries for the future of our common currency, for the future of our European project. Sometimes I fear that some people have not yet understood that we are all in the same boat. We are really all in the same boat in Europe. That is why together Greeks and all the other Europeans should show the same resolve for the very important commitments that have been taken.

I thank you for your attention.

Remarks following the meeting of President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy with President of Romania, Traian Basescu

14 September 2012, [Link](#)

[...]

Today, President Herman Van Rompuy and President Traian Basescu met to exchange views on the upcoming meetings in the European Council with a focus on the Economic and Monetary Union and the Multiannual Financial Framework. They also discussed the neconomic situation in the EU and recent developments in Romania.

President Van Rompuy encouraged all parties in Romania to work together in a constructive spirit and respecting the rule of law, the independence of the judiciary and the role of all institutions.

President Van Rompuy appealed for full implementation of the July Cooperation and Verification Mechanism (CVM) report by the European Commission and looks forward to good progress by the end of the year.

The two presidents also exchanged views on the Issues Paper on Completing the Economic and Monetary Union and, in particular, the single supervisory mechanism for banks. The Issues Paper will help structure the consultations next week with all Member States and the European Parliament in order to prepare the interim report for the European Council in October and the final report in December.

Meeting of the Commission for Strategic Development of the Fuel and Energy Sector and Environmental Security

Moscow, 10 July 2012, [Link](#)

[...]

Vladimir Putin chaired the first meeting of the Presidential Commission for Strategic Development of the Fuel and Energy Sector and Environmental Security, which focused on the Commission's priority areas of activity. The Commission was established in accordance with the President's executive order. Its objectives are to coordinate the activities of executive bodies at all levels and organizations on the development of fuel and energy complex, ensuring industrial, energy and environmental security, sustainable use and efficient replenishment of the country's mineral resources.

PRESIDENT OF RUSSIA VLADIMIR PUTIN: Good afternoon, colleagues,

You have such a formal atmosphere here, which is absolutely appropriate considering the gravity of the issues the newly established Commission will be working on and the importance of the energy sector for the economy today and in the future.

This is the first meeting of the Commission for Strategic Development of the Fuel and Energy Sector and Environmental Safety. The Commission is in charge of strategic coordination among all components of the Russian energy sector and promoting increased efficiency.

Let me emphasise straight away that the Commission's efforts must never be perceived as a replacement for the Government's work. The Government has its own prerogatives under the law, and this must and will be respected.

The Commission was created to coordinate our joint efforts in this crucial sector of the Russian economy, involving the direct participants of the energy market, scientists, representatives of public organisations and law enforcement agencies in order to analyse strategic development issues with the direct participation of the Government, which will be responsible for adopting the final decisions on various matters. Please keep this in mind.

On June 15 the Commission's regulations and members were approved. In preparation for the first meeting, the Commission's members submitted a number of proposals. I think that they should be analyzed and taken into account in the formulation of the current and long-term agenda. Today, we must focus on the priorities for future work.

We are all aware and proud of the fact that Russia is one of the leading global energy powers. We have large energy reserves and impressive facilities for their processing and transportation. Our task is to use this bounty for the benefit of the Russian people, to promote economic development and social services, and strengthen the export potential of our country.

I want to highlight that in recent years the fuel and energy sector not only made a full recovery from the global economic crisis, but has also shown a growth pattern. Oil production has stabilised: it is about 510 million tons (you know this since all of you are experts here), and natural gas production in 2011 reached a historical high, exceeding 670 billion cubic metres.

The long-term foundation for the development of the fuel and energy sector is in place, the energy strategy up to 2020 is being implemented, the oil and gas industry development plans have been adopted, as well as the distribution of energy facilities and the coal industry development programme.

Experts estimate that in the coming decades energy demand, as well as the demand for derivatives will remain stable, both within Russia and in the global markets. Our goal is to provide a clear and uninterrupted operation of all mechanisms in the fuel and energy sector and decide on the parameters of its development. In this regard, I would like to draw your attention to the following key points.

First. We must expand the geography of hydrocarbons production in the coming few years. We have repeatedly said that the rate of raw materials replenishment is insufficient. We must actively start work offshore, while at the same time maximising the returns on existing projects.

Geological prospecting and exploration work must become more effective. This will strengthen Russia's resource base and attract new investments, technology and the latest scientific developments to this area. This topic should be con-

sidered at the Commission's future meetings.

I should add that the Government has already adopted a number of decisions aimed at stimulating the production of hydrocarbons on the shelf. We hope that this will give a strong impetus to the emergence of new oil and gas regions and the development of the industry as a whole.

Second. The fuel and energy sector of tomorrow is above all a high-tech industry. We have often been told that we are all too dependent on oil (and this is certainly true to some extent) and that we must develop high technology (this is also true), but we must not forget that today's oil and gas sector is nothing other than a high-tech industry. Both production and processing should use modern equipment based on the latest technologies, including energy efficient and resource saving technology.

The third important task is the expansion of international cooperation in the energy field. It is obvious that its economic attractiveness is very high. We all know that well. Moreover, we expect that it will grow even more after Russia's accession to the World Trade Organisation. Therefore, we must make greater use of various forms of cooperation, more actively attract foreign capital and advanced technology, and follow the route of exchanging assets in the fuel and energy sector and related industries.

We already have such examples, they are widespread and appear very attractive and impressive, even by global economic standards. I have already mentioned (and you know about such examples in the electricity sector), that we have asset exchanges in the gas industry and in the petroleum industry. It is essential to provide stable rules of the game for our energy markets. This will enable foreign businesses to make long-term plans and implement large-scale investment programmes.

In turn, Russian companies should be more ambitious in offering their services on the international energy markets and more energetic in searching for new niches. In general, work in this area is quite active, and many colleagues here are making good progress in the markets of third countries. But I am sure more can be done.

Special attention will be given to developing energy cooperation with CIS countries. In this regard I want to note that the CIS is our special priority in many areas, both in our for-

eign policy and in the economy. I very much hope that energy industry professionals will do their best to promote our interests and the interests of our partners in order to accelerate the integration processes in the former Soviet Union.

Today I would like to hear your reports on advanced joint projects with our partners in the Commonwealth, including the possibilities of achieving a new, mutually beneficial partnership with individual countries. For example, in Kyrgyzstan we have such large-scale projects as the construction of Kambarata-1 hydroelectric power plant, Upper Naryn cascade of hydropower plants, as well as the construction of a coal thermal power station to guarantee energy supply in

the autumn-winter period, when the risk of water shortages is high. Just recently, the President [Almazbek Atambayev] and I discussed those projects, and I know that very active analysis of all these areas of cooperation is currently underway.

I think that in future the Commission should discuss specific projects of strategic importance and with strong investment potential.

Next. Russian oil and gas companies are operating in global energy markets and are often leaders in attracting foreign investment. About 25% of the industry are currently owned by foreign investors.

I want to draw your attention to this, ladies and gentlemen: not all countries where the energy sector is as vital as in Russia, where we can say that it plays the most important role in the economy, have such a state of affairs. In this sense we have largely liberalised the state policy on fuel and energy: 25% is owned by foreign businesses. Look at the other major oil-producing countries. Which of them have the same situation?

The state will continue to pursue the policy of privatising state assets in line with the previous decisions (I want to stress this) and certainly taking into account the special significance of the fuel and energy sector's contribution to the federal budget and energy security. We must pay special attention to this. Naturally, environmental protection should be at the forefront in deciding such policy matters.

I would like to ask you that in the course of our discussion today you state your views on the participation of Rosneftegaz oil and gas company in privatisation projects. I have

followed the expert discussion on this subject closely. Of course, strictly speaking, the participation of Rosneftgaz in the acquisition of state companies' shares can't be termed privatisation in the true sense of the word. Nevertheless, we must proceed from the fact that we will act in compliance with the existing legislation with regard to the shares which Rosneftgaz could acquire and their amount. That is the first point.

Second. We must bear in mind that certain government decisions that were previously adopted have limited the revenues of some of our companies, and now they are in need of additional capitalisation. You should assist them in obtaining reasonably cheap loans to develop their activities.

And third: it does not mean that we should stop at Rosneftgaz' participation in privatisation. Absolutely not. Let us discuss this topic today, too.

There is another aspect that we should pay attention to. Our objective is clean privatisation; this process must be completely transparent and honest with respect to our citizens and the state.

For example, large-scale projects in the electricity sector are being launched. Experts say that the current market capitalisation of RusHydro, for example, is \$7.5 billion, which, of course, is too low. We know what kind of projects they are going to launch soon. We know the Boguchanskaya Hydroelectric Station and the Sayano-Shushenskaya Hydroelectric Station will be completed and the Far Eastern assets will be consolidated, so in the coming years the company's capitalisation will grow to \$40 billion. So we cannot sell now something that will absolutely certainly be worth \$40 billion for \$7.5 billion!

We must take all of that into consideration. I believe that the approach to these issues should be fundamental, market-based and totally balanced, and we must proceed from the reality of the economic situation in the world and in Russia.

I stress that the sale of state-owned shares should make economic sense for the country and bring economic and systemic benefits. It is hard to tell which is more important; both the systemic and economic effects are vitally important, and the fiscal benefits must be absolutely obvious. Therefore, we must proceed, I repeat, from the real situation on the market.

Another matter that I would like to draw your attention to is the need to improve the management of companies with state participation. I would like to suggest that such companies consider increasing dividend payments, as Rosneft has already done. I do not insist on this, but I want you to focus on this matter and analyse your potential.

Next. We need to create the conditions for transparent functioning of the entire economic chain in the electricity industry, in particular, to bring order to the payment system. I would like to hear your concrete suggestions on ways to improve the payment system at all stages of pricing. Let me remind you that we have discussed this issue on numerous occasions, yet the consumers have not seen any benefits so far.

Finally, we must focus on protecting the environment as we develop the fuel and energy sector. All new projects must comply with the current environmental regulations and standards, and pass the relevant inspections. This logic must be incorporated in the new territorial development programmes.

I hope that the Commission will actively contribute to addressing these problems, and that its work will be filled with concrete strategic and systemic content, and in some cases, for example, those related to resource management, it is time to move on from discussions to legislative consolidation and final decisions.

What do I mean? Strategic deposits of federal importance (with reserves of over 70 million tons of oil and over 50 billion cubic metres of gas) should be allocated through auctions, without tenders. Tenders are inefficient and, most importantly, they are not transparent. There is another aspect, one that is purely fiscal. As we all know, the budget gets higher revenues from tenders, but still the transparency of the procedures is more important.

In conclusion, I will repeat: our task is to build a high-tech fuel and energy industry. It should become a factor in the growth of Russian economy, stimulate the creation of new and highly skilled jobs, and in general, work for the benefit of national development. If our efforts are consolidated, we are certain to achieve this goal.

Let us proceed directly to the discussion.

The Speech of the State Secretary – Russian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs G. B. Karasin at the International Forum “Peacekeeping Operation on the Dniester in the Context of Geopolitical Challenges of the Present”

Tiraspol, 28 July 2012, [Link](#)

[...]

Dear friends,

I am truly glad to welcome in this hall participants in the representative forum, dedicated to the 20-th anniversary of cessation of the armed actions on the Dniester, establishing of the peacekeeping operation and weakening of such events in the current context.

The Treaty on the principles of settlement of the armed conflict in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova, on the basis of which the peacekeepers have immediately undertaken their responsibility for securing of the Safety area regime, has become a long-term landmark in the process of forming of the legal base of the Transnistrian settlement.

Special meaning was given to the document by the fact that the obligations, taken by the parties and based on respect of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and Session for Security and Cooperation in Europe, from the very beginning were claimed to be a component of the process of settlement of the conflict by peaceful, political means.

The subsequent experience demonstratively proved the viability of such integration that has determined the components of the mandate of the Joint Peacekeeping Forces operation: prevention of military actions, maintenance of stability, securing conditions for political negotiations.

Despite all the peripetias in the course of development of the relations between the conflict side, their acknowledgement of inadmissibility of the sanctions and blockades preserves a mobilizing legal and moral and political meaning.

I want to state here today that as the country ensuring implementation of the agreements between Chisinau and Tiraspol, the Russian Federation is proud with the actions daily performed by its military men, together with their Moldavian, Transnistrian and Ukrainian fellow soldiers to maintain

the civil peace, international consent and strengthening of the common European security.

The operation mandate is active, it is hard to shatter it, because it would disclose intentions of those who directly sets up such an aim.

The pain, inflicted to the people in 1992, has not calm down. Today it was reminded by the atmosphere of the opening the Memorial sign in honour of the peacekeepers in Bender. This event better than any words prove that among all concerns, ordinary people are worried with, the first place belongs to the aspiration to secure guarantees for a peaceful life, exercise a right to be independently governed in the complex present-day world, as the generations` experience dictates. Such an experience has always been accrued by the Transnistrian citizens at a heavy cost and therefore is well adopted.

It is quite typical that all the attempts to prove the necessity to close the peacekeeping operation look like the Carthage incantation. They do not go much into reasoning. If the conflict is not settled, it means the operation is not efficient. It is concealed that the real compromise, presented after signing of the Moscow Memorandum 1997 and according to the results of agreement in 2003 with the conflict sides - the “Kozak Memorandum” were ruined. Everything results in a simple formula on the short-term police operation, which is said to “settle everything”. It makes us remember the other saying: “The longest and hardest road begins with the words “I know a simple and short way”.

Fully understanding these issues and the general background of the situation on the Dniester, the Russian Federation has consistently facilitated the negotiation process restart. Though many people hurry to predict its results, there are no reasons to hope for its rash spurt.

Our activities, as the intermediary in the negotiations, in accordance with the instructions of President V. V. Putin, is directed to make the conflict sides maintain an opportunity to equally state their positions and search for an opportunity to agree.

The negotiation file of the Moldavian party still contains only the Law of 2005 offering the status even not to Transnistria but “inhabited localities of the left bank of the Dniester”. It gives transparent bases for such compromise.

Probably, in the absence of any reasons for rumours, there are rumours on somebody wanting to impose ready decisions to the parties. In any case, the Russian side does not have any similar intentions. The whole story of real progress in the negotiation process evidences that the initiatives have been prepared on the basis of the long-term and tough agreement of the positions independently by the conflict sides. At the same time the Russian party still does not exclude an option to settle the problem by means of creating a federation.

Indeed, the Russian government is interested in increasing confidence between the conflict parties and giving a chance to Transnistria and its citizens to retrieve opportunities for satisfying own needs, securing safety, social confidence and comprehensive development of the region even in the terms of non-recognition. Otherwise there is no chance for viable settlement of any conflict.

We should face a wide range of problems. Besides, return of the Transnistrian delegation to participation in the work of the Russian-Moldavian Intergovernmental Commission for Economic Cooperation will facilitate it.

We are ready to support participation of the Russian business, non-governmental organizations, and educational institutions in the important for Transnistria projects. In this respect it should be quite clear that the Russian Federation is an intermediary, being equally committed to the priorities of prosperity of the friendly Moldavia and close to us Transnistria.

It has a direct relation to the geopolitics, because finally, the viable formula of Transnistria's special status, - if the settlement is achieved, - will have to clearly determine the premises for a comprehensive participation in the beneficial for it integration interaction. Any attempts to build up the policy using contraposition of the two vectors of European and Eurasian integration is an anachronism, based on supposing the European Union states as an area, secluded from the others by a customs fence. As for Russia, we are sure that the regional interaction on the Eurasian continent should be encourage both on the bilateral level and in the format of the EU – CIS relations.

I would like to hope that the results of the discussion you are going to have, will make a contribution to generalization of the experience of one of the most efficient peacekeeping

operations on the European continent, and will become an expression of our joint appreciation to the peacekeepers, whose military service has been facilitating to maintenance of peace on the Dniester for twenty years already.

It is important to raise the question in a wider sense on the proportion of tactical and strategic targets of the recently resumed negotiation process, which political contents must satisfy the confident prospect for Transnistria.

I wish fruitful work to the organizers and participants in the forum.

Speech Delivered by Mr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey at the Opening Session of the Kabul Ministerial Conference of the Istanbul Process

Kabul, 14 June 2012, [Link](#)

[...]

H.E. President Karzai,

Distinguished Minister Resul,

Honourable Ministers,

Secretary Generals,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me start first by expressing my gratitude to H.E. Hamid Karzai for honoring our conference with his presence.

It is a pleasure to be here in Kabul today and to co-chair the Follow-up Conference of the Istanbul Process which was initiated about eight months ago in Istanbul, with a vision for a better future for our region.

I would like to thank brother Zalmay Resul and his able team led by First Deputy Minister Jawid Ludin for the hard work they have carried out in taking forward the Process, including the preparation of the concept paper and hosting preparatory meetings in Kabul. I would also express my gratitude to our Turkmen brothers for hosting a meeting of the Senior Officials in Ashgabad.

We are indeed very content to see that our neighbors and friends are sharing this regional cooperation vision in a spirit of regional ownership. We have come a long way since the Kabul Declaration on Good Neighborly Relations of 2002 where the region and Afghanistan's neighbours voiced their desire for peace and stability for the first time.

Distinguished Participants,

Our region has unique characteristics. It is rich in terms of human resources, cultural heritage as well as economic potential. The history and the future of the countries in the region are intertwined. Indeed, Afghanistan is situated at the Heart of Asia, so that its surrounding region could not be secure and wealthy without a safe, stable, and prosperous Afghanistan.

We strongly believe that the positive energy that has been mobilized through the Istanbul Process will enhance the existing efforts for a stable and prosperous region.

In this era in which problems have gained a transboundary nature, we all suffer from complex challenges which cannot be dealt by any single country. These problems can only be overcome through regional ownership and cooperation. We have common interests in countering terrorism, extremism and narcotics. The success or failure of one regional country in standing up to these and other challenges inevitably creates impact on other regional countries. That is why we need ever developing regional cooperation.

Distinguished Participants,

Developments since the Istanbul Conference in November 2011 have been very encouraging. This meeting will become a milestone in our collective efforts when the first set of the confidence building measures, namely those seven selected to be implemented, are endorsed today.

However, we should also bear in mind that the Istanbul Process is not only about the technical implementation of confidence building measures. It has been and should continue to be a consultation forum, which provides us a valuable opportunity for enhanced political dialogue.

I wholeheartedly believe that gathering around a table for discussion, looking each other in the eye, is in itself a confidence building measure.

Moreover, the Process could serve as a platform for creating

new synergies among various existing regional efforts with a view to achieving a more effective cooperation in the security, economic, cultural, education and legal fields, placing Afghanistan at its core.

As such, with our common efforts, the developing Istanbul process will consolidate its place as a unique platform. Given its comprehensive membership, the Istanbul Process, brings the Heart of Asia countries together with regional organizations, the United Nations and other interested partners as supporters; all of which have sincere desire to contribute to the stability and prosperity of Afghanistan and its surrounding regions in a constructive manner.

In this journey, Turkey will of course continue to support Afghanistan in leading this process. Regional cooperation, in fact, is one of the priorities of the Turkish foreign policy. This vision is also reflected in our Trilateral Summit Process with two brotherly countries Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Distinguished participants,

Feeling myself in my second home, I would like to thank our Afghan brothers who kindly suggested me to co-chair this important conference. It is a distinct pleasure for me to see such a high-level participation, pledging to take forward the Istanbul Process with sincere intentions. We are confident that the Process will continue in the same spirit of dialogue, cooperation and dedication in the years to follow.

Thank you.

Recent Publications on the Black Sea Region

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

September 2012

- Günter Seufert, *Foreign Policy and Self-image, The Societal Basis of Strategy Shifts in Turkey*, SWP Research Paper 2012/RP 12, September 2012, SWP, [Link](#)
- Hrant Kostanyan and Ievgen Vorobiov, *Free and fair? A Challenge for the EU as Georgia and Ukraine gear up for elections*, CEPS Commentary, 27 September 2012, CEPS, [Link](#)
- Dariusz Kałan, *The Crisis in Hungarian-Armenian Relations*, PISM Bulletins, No. 418, 18 September 2012, ISN ETH Zurich, [Link](#)
- International Crisis Group, *Turkey: The PKK and a Kurdish Settlement*, Crisis Group Middle East Reports, No. 219, 11 September 2012, ISN ETH Zurich, [Link](#)
- *Caucasus Agenda: The Role of State and Non-State Actors*, TESEV Foreign Policy Bulletin, July 2012, TESEV
- Daniela Schwarzer, *A New Approach in and for Greece*, SWP Comments No. 20, July 2012, ISN ETH Zurich, [Link](#)
- Gökhan Bacik, *Turkey and the New Middle East*, EPC Commentary, EPC, 27 July 2012, [Link](#)
- Anita Sobják, *Romania in Negotiations on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014–2020*, PISM BULLETIN No. 71, 18 July 2012, [Link](#)

August 2012

- S Neil MacFarlane, *Georgia: National Security Concept versus National Security*, Chatham House Programme Papers, August 2012, ISN ETH Zurich, [Link](#)
- Gunter Bahr, Daiju Narita and Wilfried Rickels, *Recent Developments in European Support Systems for Renewable Power*, Kiel Policy Brief, No. 53, August 2012, The Kiel Institute for the World Economy, ISN ETH Zurich, [Link](#)
- Geir Flikke, *Russia – A BRIC Country?*, NUPI Policy Briefs, August 2012, ISN ETH Zurich, [Link](#)

July 2012

- SOFIA HAFDELL, *THE DANISH PRESIDENCY AND TURKEY'S EU ACCESSION: TURNING THE PAGE TOWARDS NEW POSITIVE AGENDA*, GPoT BRIEF, Global Political Trends Center, July 2012, ISN ETH Zurich
- Aybars Görgülü and Onnik Krikorian, *Turkey's South*

ICBSS News and Events

5th International Black Sea Symposium on “The Black Sea region as an influential crossroad between East and West: A path towards extroversion”

The **International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS)** successfully organised its **5th International Black Sea Symposium** on “The Black Sea region as an influential crossroad between East and West: A path towards extroversion” in Athens, on 2-4 July 2012.

Fifteen young professionals from the Black Sea countries, the EU Member-States and the US attended an intensive three-day course where 22 renowned international experts addressed a wide spectrum of issues, such as energy efficiency, environmental governance, security, innovation, science technology, economic relations, culture and education, that currently form the framework within which many cooperation schemes and synergies have been promoted.

Participants, speakers and observers used the Symposium to network and to form ideas for new joint projects; to discuss; to exchange views and to enhance the dialogue among “domestic” and “external” knowledge.

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between ICBSS and ICHD

Closing the event, **Dr. Zefi Dimadama**, ICBSS Director General and **Dr. Tevan Poghosyan**, Executive Director of the International Center for Human Development (ICHD) signed a **Memorandum of Under-**

standing (MoU) aiming at establishing and developing cooperation between the two organisations with a view to promoting and enhancing the dialogue in fields of common interest.



ICBSS News and Events

“Balkans Oil & Gas Summit” on “Black Sea Region: New Perspectives towards an Energy Roadmap”, 28 September 2012

In September (28), ICBSS DG participated as a speaker on **“Black Sea Region: New Perspectives towards an Energy Roadmap”** at the **“Balkans Oil & Gas Summit”** organised by International Research Networks, in Athens, 26-28 September.

International Conference Security on “The Black Sea region between the East and the West”, 11 September 2012

In September (11), Amb. David Kereselidze participated as a speaker on **“The Black Sea region between the East and the West”** at the **10th International Conference Security** in the South East Europe **“Geopolitical Dynamics in the Black Sea region and the security in South-East Europe”** that was held in Sofia, Bulgaria.

“Green Cluster of Knowledge Institutions of Black Sea: A Roadmap on Renewable Energy Sources and Energy Efficiency for Research and Academic Institutions”, 23 July 2012

The International Centre for Black Sea Studies attended the **Final Conference** of the **BSEC-HDF research project** **“Green Cluster of Knowledge Institutions of Black Sea: A Roadmap on Renewable Energy Sources and Energy Efficiency for Research and Academic Institutions”**, which took place in **Istanbul, on 23 July 2012** and was hosted by the project partner, TUBITAK Marmara Research Center. The other 2

partners of the project also attended the Conference: the project coordinator, International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS), and the National Research University-Higher School of Economics (HSE).

Welcome speeches were addressed by the BSEC-HDF Manager, Mr. Konstantinos Zaimis and the Director General of the International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS), Dr. Zefi Dimadama.

The Final Conference was organized in the context of the project’s finalization, aiming at presenting its main outcomes, particularly the launching of the **Green Cluster of Black Sea Knowledge Institutions**, strengthening capacity building in the fields of energy efficiency and renewable energy sources and creating cooperation bonds with the Black Sea stakeholders.



“Georgia’s European Way – The EU and its European Neighbours”, 10-12 July 2012

In July (10-12), ICBSS Alternate Director General, Amb. David Kereselidze attended the 9th International High Level Conference, **“Georgia’s European Way – The EU and its European Neighbours”**, Batumi, Georgia.



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ISSN 1791-664X
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THE BLACK SEA MONITOR

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