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**GREATER BLACK SEA AREA:  
CONCEPT, DEVELOPMENT, PERSPECTIVES**

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## **Preamble**

**T**he initiative of applying for a grant offered by the Ministry of Education and Research with the topic “Risks and threats in the Greater Black Sea Area” was an expected and logic moment. Several researchers of the Institute for Policy Studies in the field of Defense and Military History (ISPAIM) were involved in setting up a Greater Black Sea Area (GBSA) Working Group within the Consortium of Peace Partnership of Defense Academies and Security Institutes. As representative of Central and Eastern Europe within the Consortium’s Senior Advisory Council, Dr. Mihail E. Ionescu has been assigned to establish this Greater Black Sea Area Working Group (GBSA WG).

GBSA WG’s birth has its own history, which successfully ended in February 2006, on the occasion of an international conference held in Bucharest, and then in launching the first big scale project (Travelling Contact Teams Project) within this working group during another meeting held in Bucharest (11-13 February 2007). By the very act of setting up the GBSA WG, ISPAIM holds the secretariat of this organization, which implies in a substantial manner the institute’s research power.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The idea of setting up the GBSA WG was adopted by the Senior Advisory Council meeting in Geneva, on 1-3 September 2004, during which the

So, applying for this grant and the work that followed, after having won the research projects' competition organized in 2005 by the Ministry of Education and Research, found the team members (dr. Mihail E. Ionescu, Șerban L. Pavelescu, Șerban F. Cioculescu, Cristina Romilă, Alexandru Voicu) already involved in studying the topic of security and cooperation in the Greater Black Sea Area.

On the other hand, other researchers within the ISPAIM were involved in writing a research paper on the Pontic Basin's history and present, which turned into a book that has already been issued and welcomed by the public.<sup>2</sup> One can say that the ISPAIM researchers' main course of study became, at least for some time, the study of the Pontic Basin, both historically and during the Cold War period, especially after September 11 2001.

The activity within the ISPAIM was not the only one to provide good conditions for initiating and developing the scientific activity by means of this grant. We need to stress its outstanding actuality, the almost perfect coincidence between the evo-

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participants stressed the regional context in favour of setting up this group (security matters and making the best of the regional potential in various areas). The final decision of setting up the GBSA WG was taken at the SAC's meeting in Rome, 5-7 October 2005. The main conclusions of the meeting touched upon: focusing GBSA WG's activity on the goal of developing projects in the educational field and the need for these to provide expertise on various security matters to decision makers in the countries of the region; recommending that the projects developed within the group should meet NATO's objectives set up at the Istanbul summit in June 2004. The GBSA WG was officially launched at the international conference called "Enhancing Security Cooperation in the Black Sea Region: Can we build Bridges and Barriers?", held in Bucharest, between 30 January-1 February 2006.

<sup>2</sup> General Major (r) Dr. Mihail E. Ionescu (coordinator), *The Black Sea, from the "Byzanthin lake" to the challenges of the 21st Century*, Military Publishing House, Bucharest, 2006, 464 pag.

lution of the research within the grant and the international efforts in the area aimed at identifying a suitable strategy for managing security in the GBSA. From this perspective, it is worth pointing out some developments in the area.

In recent years the US defined a strategy in the Black Sea Region. Although there is no official stance, some elements of this strategy are obvious. The US academic field favors such an initiative and the studies published in the last two years are full of recommendations of this kind.

The study called “US Strategy in the Black Sea Region”, published by Ariel Cohen and Conway Irwin in December 2006, is relevant from this perspective.<sup>3</sup> The authors clearly underline the American interests in the region, the way various US officials have already pointed them out, on different occasions. Caspian energy transit, regional security, counter terrorism, fighting mass destruction weapon proliferation as well as drugs, weapons and human trafficking are issues that determine US actions in the region.

GBSA is also important from another point of view, given that it is a connection to other security complexes such as The Middle East (where the US has direct interests, given the issues of Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran) and the Caspian Sea region (richful of energy resources).

Developing and especially applying an US strategy for this region is a difficult move though, given the obvious interest of some local players (Russia, Turkey, Ukraine) and the various existing expectations.

According to the above-mentioned study, the main US courses of action should be: coordination with the European Union’s

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.heritage.org/Research/RussiaandEurasia/bg1990.cfm>.

European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and supporting NATO cooperation with partner countries within the Partnership for Peace; strengthening the trilateral dimension in the military field between Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, allies within NATO; encouraging riparian states, especially Bulgaria and Romania, to take the lead within the multilateral regional organisations of which the US could become member or observer; developing regional security arrangements, as a participant or observer, by offering capacities in the fields of intelligence, airborne transportation a.s.o. and by using NATO cooperation framework to improve interoperability; enhancing bilateral strategic partnerships with Bulgaria and Romania and providing them with assistance in military training, civil protection a.s.o.; consistent support for the nation building process in the ex-Soviet countries; extending bilateral trade cooperation with the countries in the region.

The US must carefully manage their position in this area, providing support where possible or necessary, in order to avoid being seen as an intruder. According to the above-mentioned study, should US action in the GBSA be successful, it would create a pattern for an enhanced US presence in other regions of strategic interest to the Euro-Atlantic community, such as Central Asia.

No less dynamic was EU's effort to identify a strategy for the Black Sea region. If at the beginning the EU went through a period of research and even reluctance – probably caused by the so-called enlargement fatigue that came up after 2004 as well as by the ENP implemented in the region and the exigencies of cooperating with Russia, having an increasingly loud voice and being increasingly aware of its traditional interests<sup>4</sup> - gradually,

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<sup>4</sup> During a seminary organized in Paris by the EU's Institute for Security Studies, in February 2006, ("The EU and the Black Sea region") it has been said that at this point EU had no particular interest in defining a strategy for the

a comprehensive and positive vision of the GBSA's importance as well as of a suitable European strategy for it came into being.<sup>5</sup> Fabrizio Tassinari's study is real important from this perspective.

Published at the European Policy Center in Brussels in June 2006, the study "A Synergy for Black Sea Regional Cooperation: Guidelines for an EU Initiative" offers an overall picture of a possible EU regional approach. The author grounds on the European Commission initiative of defining a so-called Black Sea synergy, which would be part of the ENP.

According to the study, the main threats to regional and European security are illegal migration, damaging the environment, energy security, drug and weapons trafficking and frozen conflicts. This comprehensive picture of risks shows the courses of action the EU has to take in its approach of initiating an putting into practice a regional strategy. In fact, the author points out that from the very beginning it is necessary to make the distinction between the areas of cooperation in which the Black Sea region is the appropriate framework and those that need an international multilateral framework, at UN, OSCE and Council of Europe level.

EU is already an active presence in the region, offering financial support in the fields of environment protection, transportation, energy. These should continue to be priority fields for the EU, with a greater emphasis on the energy security and the need to diversify the oil and gas transit routes. According to

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Black Sea and that, before launching such an approach, one had to consider the Russian factor and Russia's traditional influence area.

<sup>5</sup><http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=AGENDA/07/11&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>. The European Commission has already published, in April 2007, on its website, a document called "Black Sea Synergy – A New Regional Cooperation Initiative".

Fabrizio Tassinari, EU should back Odessa-Brodi and Constanța-Trieste projects. Internal security actions (fighting illegal migration, drug, human and weapons trafficking and border security) and the use of tools for democratizing are also part of EUs policy for the Black Sea region. Still, for issues such as frozen conflicts or trade policy and education/culture, the most suitable cooperation framework would be at international multilateral level (UN, OSCE, Council of Europe a.s.o.).

The way EU implements its policy in the region should consider developing partnerships, for each cooperation field, with the countries in the region, as well as reaching a wider level of participation by co-opting other players – governmental and non-governmental international organisations. Usually, within such a partnership, one player, mainly an organisation, tends to become a coordinator. Each partnership would have a fund financed by all parties involved. Moreover, each partner would facilitate project investments and a “Black Sea Action Plan” for three years could be set up. The EU could participate in these financial initiatives through its ENP –Europe’s partnership and neighborhood instrument.

The Romanian initiative of creating a Forum for Partnership and Dialogue, which became a reality in the summer of 2006, would work as a political coordinator for all regional arrangements.

It is very important for the EU to generate a cooperation climate based on trust and dialogue that would avoid the alienation/isolation of regional players and would not give the impression of an approach imposed from the outside, but would be something accepted or requested that would stand by the joint ownership principle, by involving all local players.

Tassinari concludes that a Black Sea synergy should be based upon several basic principles: coordination among the already existent institutions, mechanisms and regional activities; pragma-

tism and focus more on some doible projects rather than on a long list of priorities; ownership or encouraging the initiatives coming from the region, such as BSEC; flexibility or geographical delimitation of the levels of cooperation according to the nature of challenges; supporting a wide regional dynamics, including NATO enlargement, creating energy security a.s.o.

Halfway between “post-Cold War Warrior” and “positive regional power”, in this period Turkey swung between raising as a singular power in the Pontic Basin and cooperating with riparian countries (according to the ownership principle) and even with NATO and the EU. In this case it is worth noticing that, apart from openly stating the legitimate interest to keep sovereignty over the Straits, this interest has been tied to several issues of cooperation and security at the Black Sea, which need to be approached separately and in relation to other players equally interested and concerned about a suitable solution.

The studies published during the last two years, both in Turkey and other countries, point out a shift in Ankara’s foreign policy in this wider framework of changes related to some particularities of Turkish position in the Black Sea region. Therefore, Turkey’s energy reliance on Russia and Iran, an issue discussed within Turkey’s National Security Council in April 2006, can provide an explanation for what has been called a coincidence of interest with Russia.<sup>6</sup> This also shows why the two nations want to preserve the regional *status quo* and oppose amending the Montreux Convention.

As to the Russian position towards this region, some authors say Moscow is using energy and energy transportation to the West as a major foreign policy instrument.<sup>7</sup> Russia monopolises

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<sup>6</sup> Kemal Kirisci, *Turkey’s Foreign Policy in Turbulent Times*, in “Chaillot Papers”, no. 92, September 2006, EU Institute for Security Studies.

<sup>7</sup> Vladimir Socor – lecture given at the National Defense College in December 2006.

transit at the Eastern Coast of the Caspian Sea, where there are plenty of oil and gas reserves. At the same time, Russia is opposing the construction of Trans-Caspian pipelines in order to preserve its own transit monopoly. Consequently, we can anticipate a political-diplomatic “battle” over controlling the transit oil and gas “corridor” from the Caspian and Central Asia regions to the West (Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan).

There is a close connection between energy transit and Russia’s policy in the region and the frozen conflicts in Georgia and Azerbaidjan, used as a barrier against building a strategic energy corridor East-West, meant to transport energy resources of the Caspian Sea Basin. Russia plays an increasingly role in the GBSA, trying to block a stronger position in the region of other major global players. So, Moscow continued to oppose NATO enlargement, seen as “surrounding” Russia, protested against the deployment of US military facilities in Romania and Bulgaria, became reticent to the EU’s ENP and is trying to settle its relationships with regional players (mainly former Soviet republics) in its own interest.<sup>8</sup>

Another important regional player, Ukraine is defining its interest in the region in close connection to the importance of energy resources in the Caspian Sea Basin, needing to manage the regional democratisation problems and solve conflicts. Official documents underline the importance of implementing several cooperation levels, mainly from the point of view of security and trade dimensions. Managing regional security seems

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<sup>8</sup> “...Russia’s vital foreign policy goal of establishing a neo-imperial condominium over the CIS...Indeed, any sign of a CIS state cooperating with NATO triggers an immediate response, which indicates that the Russian political elite still sees NATO and the EU as being, at the core, enemies of Russia”, in Stephen Blank, Black Sea Rivalry, in “Perspectives”, vol.XVII, no.2, March/April 2007.

to be an emergency for Kyiv, both as part of Ukraine's European policy and from the point of view of its relations to Russia. The issue of Russian fleet in the Black Sea, deployed in Crimea until 2007 according to bilateral agreements, continues to be very present on the Kyiv-Moscow agenda, probably being the most important part of Ukraine's foreign policy.<sup>9</sup>

The approach is contradictory though, given the divisions and political turbulences in Ukraine. On one hand, the Russian factor and the Russian naval base in Crimea are considered as risks to Ukraine's national security as well as to the overall regional security and, on the other hand, given the political developments in this country, a closer relation to Russia remains a foreign policy objective. The dual nature of such a position generates internal incoherence and instability and makes it difficult to anticipate Kyiv's Euro-Atlantic propensity as a long term program and as far as implementation likeliness is concerned.

In this wider context, the initiatives launched within the grant aimed at becoming part of ISPAIM's wider research in the field. It couldn't have been otherwise, because it was obvious that, at least for the team members, it was difficult to separate the specific action concerning the risks and threats in the Greater Black Sea Area from the efforts put as members of GBSA WG secretariat, or as part of the team that conceived the paper "Black Sea – from the "Byzantine lake" to the challenges of the 21st Century, or as organisers and participants in many international and internal scientific studies on the security of the Pontic area.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Yuri Dubinin, Historical Struggle for the Black Sea Fleet, in "Russia in Global Affairs", vol.V, no.1, January-March 2007.

<sup>10</sup> We randomly state here the most important international meetings in which the research team members participated together or separately: international seminary organised by the Romanian Foreign Affairs Ministry, IPSDMH

At the same time, we should not forget that, between 2006-2007, the grant team did so that the issue of security risks and threats in the GBSA held a top position in the “Strategic Monitor” magazine, issued by the ISPAIM. Internationally recognized specialists<sup>11</sup> published studies showing, on one hand, the growing interest of the scientific international community in the respective issue and, on the other hand, the national community’s interest in this field.

The first initiative to have been launched was to edit on the Internet a newsletter of the grant, to make us known among

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and the Romanian Institute for Political Studies “NATO – a model of cooperative security. How the experience of Membership Action Plans and Individual Partnership Action Plans would enhance national and regional security within PfP” (Bucharest, 30-31 May 2006), the international conference organised by IPSDMH, George C. Marshall Center, Manfred Wornier Association in Romania “Enhancing security cooperation in the Black Sea region: can we build bridges and barriers?” (Bucharest, 29 January-1 February 2006), the international conference organised by the National Defense University “Carol I” “Security and Stability in the Black Sea Area” (Bucharest, 21-22 November 2005), the seminary of the Harvard Programme Black Sea Security (22-26 October 2006), the Black Sea Forum for partnership and Dialogue organised by the Romanian Presidency (Bucharest, 5-6 June 2006), the international seminary organised by EU ISS “The EU and the Black Sea” (Paris, 24 February 2006), the international conference organised by the Ankara Center for Strategy Studies “Balkan conference on cooperation between the strategic and research centers” (Ankara, 9-10 June 2005), the international session of scientific communications organised by the National Defense University “Carol I” “Defense and Security Strategies at NATO and EU’s Eastern Border” (23-24 November 2006), the meeting of the Working Group on Greater Black Sea Area within the PfP Consortium of Defense Academies and Institutes for Security Studies (11-13 February 2007) where the discussions touched upon the “Travelling Contact Teams” project, participations within decision making bodies within the PfP Consortium.

<sup>11</sup> Jeffrey Simon, Eugene Rumer, *Toward a Euro-Atlantic Strategy for the Black Sea Region*, “Strategic Monitor”, no. 1-2/2006. See also Ognyan Minchev,

the international scientific community interested in the Black Sea related issues, through the effort of monitoring the regional security situation. Called “Developments in the regional security environment” (“Monthly survey of the GBSA’s security environment”), this newsletter has a history not yet completed. It materialized the constant monitoring of security developments in the Black Sea into the following coordinates: internal and foreign policy of the countries in the region, geopolitics and geostrategy, energy security. The monitoring did not overlap other similar actions in the region (such as “Ankam Turkforpol”<sup>12</sup> or “APE Transnistrian Digest”). Still, these “newsletters” do not provide a wide regional approach, covering all nations in the region, but focus more on the neighbour geographic area. Moreover, these newsletters are not structured and organised by various issues, but are a selection of newspaper articles, studies and comments relevant to a certain event. Unlike those, the grant newsletter has a structure followed closely issue by issue. So far, we have published issues between May 2006-March 2007.<sup>13</sup> To see how it looks like, we show below this structure.

The first chapter refers to energy security, trying to explain the main events of the previous month, as well as the opinions of some of the best known analysts in the area. The chapter presents the developments in the process of creating transit routes for natural gas from Central Asia and The Caspian Sea to the Western countries, the geostrategic competition between major players in the region for harnessing and trans-

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*Fundamental interests and strategies for the Black Sea Region*, “Strategic Monitor”, no. 3-4/2006, p. 5-30.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.ankam.org/>.

<sup>13</sup> It can be accessed at [www.sabsa.ro](http://www.sabsa.ro), the website of the grant (another initiative, the team’s first visible one), launched in the summer of 2006.

porting energy resources, the Turkish-Russian relations and the cooperation of the two countries at this level, Russia's energy policy and its impact on Russia's relationship to the countries of the former Soviet empire and the EU Member States a.s.o.

Another chapter refers to the frozen conflicts (Transnistria, Abkhazia, Southern Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabakh) and looks into the main developments based on some coordinates. It considers the relations of these "enclaves" to the states whose territorial integrity is affected, the latest developments in the managing process and the positions taken by the international organisations, internal political developments, Russia's position and, last but not least, their cross-border impact. Transnistria is an important subject of this monitoring, given Romania's direct interest in solving this conflict. Consequently, the monthly newsletter includes as well Romania's statements on Transnistria.

Major regional players (Turkey, Russia, Ukraine) are subject to a separate chapter that tries to identify the way in which their policy towards the Black Sea region develops, their main regional initiatives, the way they interreact with the countries in the area, the developments in perceiving the risks and threats to security in GBSA, the relations to NATO, EU, US, the main internal political changes, Romania's relation to these countries.

At the same time, a separate chapter presents NATO and EU's role in the region. The chapter considers NATO's partnership instruments, the exercises within the Partnership for Peace, bilateral relations with countries in the region, EU's Neighborhood Policy, the way regional players see the actions of the two organisations and their developments toward a unitary strategic approach of this area.

The monitoring activity is interested in the regional institutional framework of cooperation and the present arrangements

as well. That is both those involving a wider participation, such as BSEC, and those within CSI or GUAM. The monitoring activity has as main coordinates initiatives and actions developed by these arrangements, developments of the plan, members and relations to actors outside the region.

Our objective is that the monthly newsletter is edited both in Romanian and English. Up until now we published ten issues, starting with May 2006, one per month. It is addressed to roughly 100 readers from Romania, Austria, Armenia, Azerbaidjan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Turkey, Ukraine, Russia, The United States, France, The Netherlands a.s.o.

The second initiative was to set up a quizz on the specialists' assesments of security risks and threats in the GBSA. It was set up in the early 2006 and sent to 100 respondents. By the end of 2006 we received roughly 21 answers (from personalities such as J. Boonstra – The Netherlands, Nika Chitadze – Georgia, George Niculescu – NATO, Martin Lessenski – Bulgaria, Nicu Popescu – Moldova, Evgheni Sharov – Ukraine, Sever Voinescu, Iulian Chifu, Claudiu Crăciun – Romania, Alexander Goncharenko – Ukraine, Martin Malek – Austria, Gilles Pernet – France a.s.o.).

It is worth making a few comments on this initiative.

Firstly, a low rate of answers to the quizz has been noticed, which does not mean a specialists' lack of interest in the issue of security at the Black Sea, but rather a fatigue of such initiatives. It could also stand for an explanation the fact that answering the quizz also meant a position in principle on the issue of Black Sea security, therefore acknowledging its acute (or less acute) or, on the contrary, positive nature. From this perspective, it is worth mentioning an answer from one of the respondents according to which risks and threats are already listed in

an official document (issued by BLACKSEAFOR in 2005). We could also add the very sensitive politization of the Black Sea situation in the last two years. So, in April 2005, Turkey rejected the US application for BSEC membership and later it opposed extending to the Black Sea the *Active Endeavor* operation in the Mediterranean.<sup>14</sup>

Secondly, two ways of approaching security risks and threats shaped in. The first one was that these risks and threats are visible both in the sea area and the terrestrial frontiers (not just the sea borders) between different states which make non-conventional threats (illegal migration, drug and human trafficking, weapons and sensitive stuff smuggling a.s.o.) become present. Generally, those in favour of such a course of action include among threats aerial surveillance of Greater Black Sea Area as well as civil emergencies.

Supporters of the second approach focus the threats area exclusively on the sea, thinking that terrestrial or aerial threats or those related to civil emergencies fall under the competence of structures different from those specialised in the maritime field and therefore not relevant to the Black Sea. In practice, such an approach limitates the GBSA to the maritime basin and restricts to naval fleets the interest in fighting threats, neglecting other components.

Thirdly, there is a massive discrepancy between experts' assessments of various aspects of security in the GBSA. To give only a few examples: while some think that interstate war is

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<sup>14</sup> For Turkey's opposition to international players' presence in the Black Sea, see Stephen Blank, *Black Sea Rivalry*, in "Perspectives", vol. XVII, no.2, March/April 2007, which deals with "...the deep-seated Turkish Sevres syndrome".

still likely in the region, others think otherwise. In one case, the first opinion has the following explanation: “Nagorno Karabakh is still a dangerous threat. Despite progress has been achieved in negotiations, there is a live threat of hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaidjan. The same explanation can also be valid for the frozen conflicts in Georgia. At a certain moment, Russia could intervene in case Tbilisi and breakaway regions of Ossetia and Abhazia would come to war”. The other opinion, stating the unlikeliness of interstate war, has the following explanation: “The difference in size of players in the region and the relations between these nations with NATO and the EU shape their mutual ties and their non-combat behaviour. There is also dialogue”.

Last, but not least, respondents see three sets of motivations for the precarious security situation in the GBSA. While some are convinced that it is due to Russia’s hegemonic temptation, others think it is due to weak states, open to threats of internal or external conflict, insufficiently modernised and therefore easy to be penetrated by international networks as well as to respond in a positive way to authoritarian political tendencies; finally, for others, the explanation lies in the lack of efficiency in cooperation and security regional management measures.

The answers to the quizz meant for security specialists will be widely interpreted at the end of our research and in conjunction with other data gathered along the way, especially during missions undertaken by the members of the grant in the GBSA countries.

The third initiative, probably the most important, has been the launch of a study journeys programme in countries of the region to meet the experts on the scene. The discussions fo-

cused on the ways of approaching GBSA within the security area of each country visited, on the prominent risk perceptions, on the possible cooperation solutions for managing these threats and for keeping them from becoming conflicts. Before publishing this book, working visits has been undertaken in Bulgaria, Moldova, Turkey and Ukraine. The conclusions reached at the end of discussions between members of this research project and representatives of various governmental and academic institutions of the above-mentioned countries are being assessed and will be used as support for the final monography of the project, to be published in 2008.

The studies developed in this paper can be considered a background for the research undertaken. Historical heritage is assessed, with a focus on the geopolitical revolution that emerged after the Cold War and made GBSA more visible.

The study "Greater Black Sea Area: historical perspective and contemporary dynamics", written by the author of these lines, looks into the historical events related to the Pontic area, in the order of occurrence, showing the undisputable geostrategic and geopolitic importance of the region within the overall security and stability of the European continent.

In this context and given the region's human, natural and trade resources, the GBSA shows itself as an area of confrontation while at the same time of cooperation, contact and permanent exchanges between different nations and civilisations, between Europe and Asia. Finally, though coexisting with periods of openness and relative freedom of maritime traffic and trade on the Black Sea and the Danube, the competition between continental powers over the relative or absolute control on the region is a constant geopolitical feature of the region. Greeks, Romans, Byzantins, Otomans, Russians/Soviets conceived their

statute of regional or continental power in close relation to the control over this geographic and geopolitic area and its resources.

The study “Considerations on the concept of Greater Black Sea Area”, by Şerban L. Pavelescu, proves that this concept leads to an academic rediscovery of an area that, for a long time, has been a marginal part within its structure.

Greater Black Sea Area and the developments of its security climate after the Cold War became an independent topic of study rather late and together with other specific areas of interest. We are dealing with an invention to the extent that the GBSA, like other similar concepts from the post Cold War period, tries to give an answer to a complex reality having as feature the fluidity of the global and regional security environment, the unpredictable nature of many of its developments, as well as the permanent efforts within the international relations system.

The study “Energy Corridors in the Greater Black Sea Area tendencies and strategic stakes”, by Şerban F. Cioculescu, shows the network of transit routes for oil and gas in the GBSA. The Black Sea corridor can become a main (alternative) transit route for Caspian and Central Asian gas and oil on their way to Europe. It is also likely that Iran’s resources could in time be directed towards this route, on their way to the European market.

The perspectives of economic growth in the EU Member States are closely linked to access to imported hydrocarbures and the Black Sea-Caspian region has a key position on the EU’s economic agenda. We see a special interest in protecting transit corridors against accidental or voluntary disruptions, caused by political blackmail, sabotage, terrorist acts, at NATO level, which decided at the Riga summit in 2006 to set up a plan to secure these routes considered to be of strategic interest to the Member States.

The study “NATO and the EU, security providers in the Greater Black Sea Area. Perspectives on a regional Euro-Atlantic approach” (Occasional Papers No. 11), by Cristina Romila, studies NATO and EU partnership instruments used in relation to the countries in the region and tries to identify reasons in favour of some regional cooperation areas between the two organisations.

The paper looks into the terms of these instruments and the relations to each country in the region, with a special focus on the political dimension of cooperation, political dialogue and the way these influence the process of modernisation in these countries.

The study follows two analysis perspectives: a descriptive one and an estimating one, their combination being essential to the comparison stated in the title. The author focused mainly on using arguments based on the actual level of involvement in the region of the two organisations, using mainly official documents.

The study “An Overall View on the Greater Black Sea Area. Political and Institutional Developments” (Occasional Papers No. 11), by Alexandru Voicu, is a synthesis of the main events and directions that had an influence on the security environment of this region in the years before and, especially, after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Situated at the outskirts both of the former Soviet Empire and of the West, the Black Sea region was and continues to be an area featuring many internal fractures, many of which having deep historical roots, whose understanding is essential to our research.

The study follows two directions. It looks into elements relevant to the object of the research conducted in the countries of the Greater Black Sea Area, divided into three categories: regional powers (Russia and Turkey), followed by the newly independent states (Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia,

Armenia, Azerbaijan) and the former states of the communist block (Bulgaria and Romania). The study shows the way the new countries (only six of them are riparians) see the Greater Black Sea Area, their relations to global players (mainly EU and NATO), the frozen conflicts in the region and their influences on the regional and European security environment. A special attention is paid to the relationship between Russia and Turkey over the Black Sea. The study also looks into the existent economic, historic and political divisions – from this point of view the region is very heterogeneous. Moreover, the paper draws the line on regional cooperation initiatives (BSEC, BLACKSEAFOR, GUAM, TRACECA, INOGATE, SECI, CDC). Despite the impressive number of organisations and the diversity of the fields covered, regional cooperation is still incipient, being influenced by the tensions, divergences and conflicts in the countries of the region.

The present book (Occasional Papers No. 11), which has in annex an important number of documents necessary to understand the recent years security situation in the GBSA, will be followed by another one that will sum up the communications presented at the international meeting to be organised in Bucharest in the autumn-winter of 2007 as well as the “external” mission reports (of the team members based in Bucharest and the countries of the GBSA, as well as in other “regions of interest”). In 2008 we will write and publish the final monography that will include the results of the entire research.

***Dr. Mihail E. Ionescu***

Director of the Institute for Political Studies  
of Defense and Military History

# **THE GREATER BLACK SEA AREA: A HISTORICAL APPROACH AND CONTEMPORARY DYNAMICS**

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**A**rea of impact between civilisations, of communication, exchanges or confrontation, the Black Sea region has become since early in the European history a special region. Trade routes, ties between the old famous routes in this area, such as the way “from the Vikings to the Greeks”, trade routes connecting Central and Western Europe to the Black Sea shores and, from this point on, through the well known “Silk Way”, to the Far East, for the ancient times, or the nowadays transit route for the Caspian oil crossing this region to Western Europe gave the Greater Black Sea Area the statute of “bridge” between the Old Continent and Central Asia. The Black Sea region and the developments in its security environment in the Post-Cold War era became a distinct topic of study rather late and together with other specific areas of interest. The concept itself has been introduced in a study of the researchers Ronald D. Asmus and Bruce P. Jackson barely in 2004 closely linked to the development of similar notions such as the Greater Middle East. The general strategy practice as well as the literature feel the imperative of redefining the geopolitical concepts according to

the new realities in the security environment and the international relations system in the new context after September 11 2001.

This was also the case for the Black Sea area, which became “greater” or “extended” right after September 11 for reasons we will look into later in this paper. It is just a last “element” in the thick file of literature dedicated to the Black Sea region and the adjacent areas from the point of view of the new international security environment and its developments in the Post-Cold War era. The geopolitical and geostrategical position this area has in connection to major vectors of structuring the international relations system and the European security environment – such as the vital interests of the European Union Member States in having easy access to Caspian energy resources, the efforts to build a stable and coherent security environment in the immediate neighbourhood of the borders of the common European space, the US and its anti-terrorist international coalition allies’ need to use this region as a “path” in the anti-terrorist campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan – place this region on the international security agenda.

Given the special nature above mentioned, the history of this region meant both collaboration and confrontation, its study being in fact the “listing” of some successive attempts to take control over the Pontic space, separated by periods of relative peace favourable to free movement and trade.<sup>1</sup> This game of power has a very obvious stake – domination over this area with a unique geopolitical and geostrategic position gave to the one in control the control over all trade routes crossing the region. Moreover, the Pontic area provided access routes to the heart of Europe or, depending on the case, points of resistance against a possible invasion.

## **A historical scheme**

The Greek civilization (18-19 centuries B.C.) created, for the first time in this region, a unitary area including colonies and civilization cradles all along the Black Sea's shores. In time, their domination on the naval communications and the Pontic trade evolved into a coherent structure, a "Pontic Union", as well as in an attempt to set up a common naval force. In this context a genuine Pontic culture flourished on the basis of the initial Greek lead.<sup>2</sup>

Together with the birth of the Pontic Empire (Mithridates, 120-63 B.C.), we witness a first attempt to have exclusive control over this area that until then had a diverse political statute. The Romans entered this region in confrontation with this state, conquering and incorporating in their empire a big part of the Black Sea's shores, the southern and eastern waterways, and some of the Pontic shore. Rightful successor of the Roman Empire in the region, the Byzantine Empire managed to include within its borders most of the Pontic area being, from this perspective, the first major power to control for a long time and have an undisputable monopoly over the region and its resources.<sup>3</sup>

The Ottoman Empire followed the Byzantine Empire. Acquiring domination over the region was a longstanding process that began with the penetration of the Balkan Peninsula and reaching the Danube line in the last decade of the XIVth century, continued with putting under siege and conquering Constantinople (1453) and ended at the middle of the XVIth century. Then the Black Sea became a genuine "Ottoman lake".

The decline of the Ottoman power and the awareness of new powers in the Black Sea region and the Balkans – the Habsburg Empire and the Tsarist Empire – realities whose origins lie in

the developments of the international political landscape at the end of the XVIIIth century and the beginning of the XIXth century, mark the beginning of the “Eastern Issue – dividing “the Ottoman heritage” – and in the internationalization of the Straits and the Black Sea issue. Between 1784-1802, after Russia, the first to have this statute in 1784<sup>4</sup>, major European powers acquire each on its turn, the right to free navigation and trade in the Black Sea.

The evolution of the strategic situation on the European continent after the 1789 French Revolution and the major pressures of Russia on the Ottoman Empire will lead to the signing of the British-Ottoman Treaty in 1809 according to which, in times of peace, the Ottoman Empire would close the Straits and, consequently, the Black Sea basin, to any warship, benefiting from the Great Britain guarantee for the integrity of the Ottoman state. This first step toward the internationalization of the Straits issue and of the navigation situation in the Black Sea will be followed by the decision of the Vienna Congress (1815) stipulating the free navigation on the Danube. <sup>5</sup>. The Adrianopole Peace (1829)<sup>6</sup> stated, through the international pressure on the Ottoman Empire, the free navigation for all trade vessels, regardless their pavilion, through the Straits and in the Black Sea. Step by step, “the Ottoman lake” as geopolitical reality vanished, after more than three centuries.

For the first time, Russia is acknowledged as a successor of the Ottoman Empire, therefore having a dominant position at the Black Sea, as a consequence of the Unkiar Iskelessy Treaty (1833)<sup>7</sup> stipulating that, in exchange for the Russian help, the High Porte was forced to close the Straits to any foreign warship, regardless the reasons why it would require access. Major naval power in the Black Sea, Russia gained this way its supremacy

over this area that in the third decade of the XIXth century tends to become a genuine “Russian lake”. But unlike the former “Ottoman lake”, “the Russian lake” of the Black Sea had a different composition. It was more like a series of international agreements (mainly Russian-Ottoman, which gave Russia a leading position in the region) rather than a direct control over the area.

The London Convention (1841) that made the Straits neutral and placed their statute and the integrity of the Ottoman state under international guarantee, as well as the decisions of the Paris Peace Congress (1856) following the Crimean War – placing Russia and Turkey under the interdiction to build warships and military ports at the Black Sea shores – are the next stages in the international developments of the Straits Issue and of the Black Sea. Free navigation of trade vessels was restated – therefore Russia’s “monopoly” was eliminated – and warships’ access through the Straits was banned as long as the Ottoman state was neutral. Finally, settling the navigation regime on the Danube, setting up an International Commission on the Danube assigned to settle the navigation regime on the river’s lower course and manage the maintenance and exploitation work at the river’s outfall, blocking Russia’s access to Danube by forcing it to give back the three Southern Basarabia departments and diminishing the general influence of the Russian Empire in the area complete the overall picture of changes in the Black Sea statute brought in by the Paris Peace Congress (1856). The two key issues in the discussion about controlling this area - the Danube issue and the Straits issue – are seen together for the first time and with the purpose of not allowing one major power – Russia – to take control over the large Pontic region.<sup>8</sup> For the first time in modern history, the Black Sea issue also calls for a vast surrounding region, beyond the hinterland of the waterway itself.

The 1871 London Convention that put an end to the neutral statute of the Straits and of the Black Sea and gave the Ottoman state the permission to open the Straits for the allied states' warships<sup>9</sup> and especially the 1877-1878 Russian-Ottoman War<sup>10</sup> reopened the Black Sea "file". Russia won the ground lost after the Crimean War. The new Caucasus territories that Russia took control of after the 1877-1878 War gave Russia control of more Black Sea shores and taking back the three Southern Basarabia departments provided it with direct access to the Danube's outfall and a position in Danube's European Commission.

The Straits, the Black Sea and the Danube's statute regain the major powers' attention during the first four decades of the XXth century. The Balkan wars, a last act of the "Oriental issue", but especially World War I were the main benchmarks of this evolution. The 1912 London Convention and the 1913 Bucharest Convention, following the Balkan Wars, kept Ottomans' control of Istanbul and the Straits. At the same time, the Ottoman state kept a European province having the powerful town of Adrianople. The rest of its European possessions were divided among the other combatants (except for Romania) in the two Balkan Wars.

World War I reopened the Straits issue and, consequently, the Black Sea issue. The Western allies' 1915 military operations in Gallipoli aimed at setting their military presence in the Straits. This was seen necessary because the agreement reached in March 1915 between Russia, on one hand, and Great Britain and France, on the other hand, acknowledged Russia's right to take control, at the end of the war, of the Straits, of Constantinople and of the Tenedos and Imbros islands. In exchange, Russia acknowledged the extent of British-French interests in the Far East. In fact, it was a direct acknowledgement of Russian

domination at the Black Sea and a clear delimitation of the Allies' influence areas. England and France confirmed once again this agreement in December 1916 in their attempt to keep Russia, tired and near collapsed, at war.

The Allies' victory and the events in Russia seemed to change the situation. The Mudros Truce (30 October 1918) established the allied military occupation over the Straits and the Sevres Peace (1920) opened them to both war and trade ships, in times of war and peace. The Black Sea became an open sea. Constantinople and the Straits area were neutralized and placed under the control of an International Commission involving the Great Allied Powers and all the Black Sea riparian nations.

The success of the Kemalian revolution in Turkey will lead to an overall reconsideration of the Straits' statute and of navigation in the Black Sea. With the support of Soviet Russia, the new Turkish state managed, at the Lausanne Peace Conference (July 1923)<sup>11</sup> to obtain reconsideration of all decisions taken four years earlier according to the late Sevres Peace Treaty. The principle of free access of trade and war vessels as well as of civil and military aircraft in the Straits area, both in times of peace and war, remained in place. As for the upcountry powers, a maximum allowed shipping quota for the vessels to enter the Black Sea was introduced, depending on the shipping of the biggest war fleet of a riparian state. This stipulation favored Soviet Russia. Turkey was forced to bring down all fortifications and military facilities in the Straits area, otherwise risking to be neutralized.

Afterwards, the Turkish state will try to get a change in the Straits' statute. With the support of Russia and its future allies in the Balkan Antanta, Turkey proposed in 1934 the establishing of a "Black Sea Pact" that was to include all Black Sea's riparian

countries and was supposed to support the remilitarization of the Straits by guaranteeing, in their exclusive benefit, free navigation through the Straits for trade and military vessels. The main beneficiary of this proposal was Soviet Russia, which was trying to get back and recover its military maritime capabilities and restate its continental power statute. The Montreux Conference (July 1936)<sup>12</sup> agreed to the remilitarization of the Straits and reduced to 30,000-45,000 tones the shipping of war vessels of the upcountry states that were allowed to enter the Black Sea, while the Soviet fleet, the largest in the region, had a more than double shipping; allowed the closing of the Straits for all war vessels given Turkey's neutrality; recognized all Soviet Union's geopolitical and geostrategic advantages and predicted Black Sea's quick comeback to the previous "Russian lake" statute. To these developments one can add the severe cutting of powers for the Danube European Commission<sup>13</sup> in 1938.

The Paris Peace Treaty (1947) and the decisions made by the Belgrad Conference of Danube riverside countries (1948) re-enacted the inter-war decisions on the Straits issue and Danube's international statute, provisions that remained valid until today. Full freedom of navigation, equal treatment for all flags, respecting national sovereignty of riverside states, in Danube's case, shipping quotas and access restrictions through the Straits for military vessels of upcountry powers have been restated and codified as such in the provisions of the documents adopted on those occasions.<sup>14</sup>

The Cold War years saw the Soviet Union's undisputable domination over the Black Sea basin. Controlling more than two thirds of all shores, through its territory and those of its satellites – Romania and Bulgaria – the Soviet Union will try to impose its absolute control over this area by putting direct

pressure on Turkey, the only riparian country that was not under its domination. The main objective of the Russian approaches during the years 1945-1947 was to change Montreux Convention provisions in the sense of blocking access in the Black Sea for all warships of upcountry states.<sup>15</sup>

In the second half of 1945, the Soviet pressures consisting of demands for territorial adjustments (the issue of Armenian provinces in Turkey that the “Armenian people” wanted to be attached to the Soviet Union)<sup>16</sup> will intensify as Ankara will change its neutral statute, during the first post-war years, to become a US ally. These pressures were directly linked to the change in Moscow’s perception of Turkey from a neutral country, former confidential ally with common interests in the Black Sea area, to a hostile country that would occupy a part of some Soviet republics’ territories (Caucasus territories that the Soviets claimed in 1945) and that deliberately uses its favourable geostrategic position against Soviet interests, taking the lead of the hostile block of Western powers. The “Truman doctrine” (Turkey was one of its beneficiaries), Turkey’s joining the “Marshall Plan” (1947), its NATO membership (1952) and its signing of the Balkan Pact with Greece and Yugoslavia marked the stages of the two countries’ becoming opponents and hostile one to another. A slight relaxation between the two countries came up after the end of the Stalinist era, but it was more than modest. The issue of Turkey and the two Straits will come back on a periodic basis in the relations between the two dominant superpowers of the Cold War era. Putting forward the Jupiter missiles deployed in Turkey that could have reached Soviet territories in the context of the Cuban missile crisis and asking for their withdrawal in exchange for withdrawing the Soviet nuclear missiles from Cuba is one of the affairs in question.<sup>17</sup>

For the developments in the Pontic area, the consequence consisted in the Black Sea indisputably becoming a “Russian lake”, in the sense of owning a monopoly. The Soviet naval bases in the region, especially those in the Sevastopol area, ruled the entire Black Sea region. Possession of the Snake Island and access to the Danube Delta provided the Soviet Union also with control of this continental fluvial waterway. Here, in the Black Sea, the most important Russian navy force has been and is still deployed. Among all ports the Soviet Union had during the Cold War era only those at the Black Sea operated 12 months a year.

The end of the Cold War era found the countries in the Black Sea region in a process of reshaping and restructuring the relations among them. The setting up in Belgrad, in 1988, of the Balkan Cooperation Initiative, the first political cooperation and collaboration structure, with important effects on strengthening confidence and security among the countries in the region as well on enhancing their economic ties prove a climax of a process aiming to establish, involving all the region’s nations, economic, political and military cooperation structures. The collapse of the communist system (1989) and the falling apart of the Soviet Union two years later (1991) will lead to new developments.

At the end of this historical journey the first conclusion to be drawn is the indisputable geostrategic and geopolitical importance of the Pontic area in the overall security and stability of the European continent. In this context, given the human natural and trade resources of the region, it shows itself as a space of confrontation and collaboration, of permanent contact and exchanges between peoples and civilizations, between Europe and Asia. Finally, though alternating with moments of openness and relative freedom of navigation and trade in the Black Sea and on the Danube, a constant geopolitical feature of this region

is the competition among continental powers to take relative or absolute control of the area. Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Ottomans, Russians/Soviets saw their statute of regional or continental power in close connection to control over this geographic and geopolitical region and its resources.

### **The new regional security environment**

The end of the Cold War reopened the Pontic “file” in an almost explosive manner. The collapse of the communist system and especially the Soviet Union’s fall apart – followed by a genuine geopolitical storm – led to a larger number of riparian countries compared to the period before 1991 and the Cold War balance of power in the area has been deeply changed.

Two major conflict centers surrounded the region. On the West, the conflicts in the former Yugoslavian territory and the instability and lack of security lasting roughly a decade. On the East, the former Soviet space, especially the one in the Caucasus, where, whether we consider the former Soviet republics – Armenia, Azerbaidjan, Georgia – or the Russian Federation territory – Chechnya – there were violent developments and conflict centers related to national rebirth and reconstruction of countries in the region or to ethnical and territorial disputes following the Soviet Union’s dissolution. With various explanations, ranging from the rhetoric of nationalist speech to those related to frontiers, autonomies, or secessions, conflicts in this area feature ferocious battles and an extremely high potential to contaminate the neighbor regions. The transnistrean conflict, a typical crisis of post-Soviet period, adds to these two major conflict areas. Launched in 1992, right after the Republic of Moldova declared its independence, this conflict

was frozen by the intervention of the former imperial power – Russia – as a mediator and provider of peacekeeping forces interposed between the conflicting parties.

On this background of conflicts, lack of security and instability following the post-Cold War developments in the former Yugoslavian and former Soviet areas, other conflicts, like the Kurdish one, having much deeper origins and motivations than the above mentioned disputes, emerge. If we add to these developments the personification of transition from the economic system and the communist political regime to democracy and market economy, the difficulties met by the former communist countries in their social, economic and political restructuring process and the due security and instability risks, we may say that, for the beginning of post-Cold War era as well as for the following years, the Greater Black Sea Area features multiple instability and conflict centers taking shape in an unstable and fluid security environment.<sup>18</sup>

The issue of security and the game of interests in the region become even more sophisticated because of the facts and factors outside the Black Sea region – but that can be included in a greater acceptance of the concept – which fill in this picture of insecurity and instability risks.<sup>19</sup> We are considering the hydrocarbons reserves and the conflicts of interests surrounding exploitation and transport to beneficiaries of these Caspian area resources, extremely important to regional players in the greater Pontic area and especially to Western Europe. This area has become the almost compulsory transit route for these resources on their way to the Mediterranean area and further to Western Europe or to the East, mainly China. These communication routes interest major global players. Moreover, developments in post - 11 September 2001 international security environment

and the key position of this area, in the context of major objectives set by the wide counter terrorist offensive launched by the international coalition around the United States, have made this area even more globally visible.<sup>20</sup>

In the context of these developments, regional players gave multiple answers to the complex equation of security in the Pontic area.

Against the background of the Soviet Union's collapse and lack of power in the region, during the first post-1991 years (Soviet Union's dissolution), Turkey followed a foreign policy of a country pretending to be a regional power structured<sup>21</sup> around the idea of regrouping and supporting the new Turkish-speaking states. The conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia, as well as the strategic interests for the Caspian energy resources were other important motivations to this course of action.

The Russian Federation was not happy to accept the place it had in the new security equation of the Pontic area and tried both in general and in particular in the Black Sea region to win back the positions it had lost. Having obvious geopolitical and economic trumps – 142.9 million inhabitants, 60 billion barrel oil reserves and 47,000 billion cubic meters gas resources – Russia<sup>22</sup> is running through a process of economic reform, consolidation of the state's authority and institutional modernization. It took Russia a long and difficult way to reach the recovery level of the years 2001-2006. The 1990-1992 period was marked by the impact of the Soviet Union's falling apart and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact.

The union republics turned into independent states that joined – more or less formal – the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The chaotic economic liberalization during “Elţân era”<sup>23</sup> gave birth to an “oligarchy” and questioned the social and

political stability. To these there should be added the Chechnya war, the rise of the fundamentalist Islam in post-Soviet Central Asia, the proliferation of organized crime structures, losing worldwide reputation a.s.o. The present Russian leadership, led by president Putin (from 2000) oscillates between two attitudes: to economically open the country towards West and cooperate together with the US and the EU; to rebuild a new economic, political and military “bloc” (the Common Economic Space, the Collective Security Treaty Organization)<sup>24</sup> and develop its nuclear power and high-performance armament. Attempting to preserve its big power statute,<sup>25</sup> Russia seems to feel threatened from outside all its borders: by the West (surrounded by NATO), the Islam (aggression in the Central Asian belt) and China (“colonialisation” of the Far East). Moscow tried hard to preserve its statute of second world nuclear and military power, of active global player, on the basis of a dominant authority within the CIS. Economically, Russian oil exports matched the Saudi ones, having today impressive cash excedents, but Moscow’s full integration in the world’s economy still has to be accomplished (World Trade Organization membership). Hydrocarbons, exported by giant state-owned companies, have become foreign policy tools.

Moscow set up a strategy on “close neighborhood” supremacy and even on preventive action against major threats. After 2000 various intensity tensions occurred in the entire Baltic Sea – Black Sea region, on the NATO-EU border, related to: the statute of Russian-speakers in the Baltic States; terms for access to Kaliningrad enclave; treatment of the East-West movement of goods and persons (as part of securing EU’s eastern borders); redeploying NATO and US bases to the East; discrepancies between EU’s economic giant (3,992,854 km<sup>2</sup>, 450 million

inhabitants, Gross Domestic Product worth 9.040 billion dollars)<sup>26</sup> and the Russian Federation (142.9 million inhabitants, 17 million km<sup>2</sup>, GDP worth 854 billion dollars)<sup>27</sup>; respect for minorities' rights.

The growing energy reliance of other European nations on the Russian Federation, serving Moscow's interests, is another element of the picture. Equally, Moscow needs also to consider the fact that its main oil and gas pipelines run through Belarus, Lithuania, Ukraine and Poland, making transports to the EU subject to transit charges set by players on which Russia has uncertain, weak or even zero control. Trying to overcome this situation, starting with 2004 and especially in 2005, the Russian Federation launched the Northern Pipeline project (together with Germany) that would cross Finland, bypassing Ukraine and Belarus; this way, Gazprom will deliver 25% of EU's gas needs through this pipeline. At the same time, in the autumn of 2005 Russia signed an agreement with Germany for a pipeline tying the two countries beneath the Baltic Sea, bypassing Poland and the Baltic States.

Until recently, Russian Federation's actions in the Black Sea basin were mainly in connection to the events in Transnistria and Caucasus or to the dynamics in the Ukraine-Turkey relations. A kind of unwritten "partnership" between the Russian Federation, Ukraine and Turkey seemed to safeguard "regional stability". The West used to state its positions through the OSCE. From 1999-2000 and especially from 2004 (The Baltic States, Romania and Bulgaria's NATO's membership) other "global powers" made their presence felt in the region. Shortly, EU and NATO's influences on the CIS countries in the Black Sea basin grew remarkably stronger, all the way from Ukraine to Azerbaijan. Russian experts began to increasingly acknowledge

the existence of a “geopolitical pluralism” in the Black Sea, suggesting NATO, US and EU’s implacable headway.

On the other hand, “NATO-EU pattern” of approaching security in the Balkans finds supporters in the Black Sea region too.<sup>28</sup> In 2003-2004, the EU launched a strategy and a policy for “its Eastern neighborhood” signing strategic partnership agreements with Ukraine and Moldova, the Southern Caucasus nations waiting their turn. The Kremlin tries harder and harder to unify the Common Economic Space, involving Ukraine (already uncertain, if not illusory after the “orange” revolution in December 2004, but making a spectacular comeback after the summer of 2006 after Yushchenko administration was sworn in) and Belarus. Still during 2004-2005, Moscow tried to push the “military integration”. There are also opinions based on Western “scheming” intending to remove Russia from the Black Sea and “subordinate” Orthodoxy. In the beginning of October 2005, Eurasia Economic Community, also called CIS’ Customs Union, (Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kârgâstan and Tajikistan) signed the treaty establishing a New Eurasia Economic Union, to be enlisted at the United Nations Organization as an international organization.<sup>29</sup> So, if its first actions meant establishing the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), an attempt to set up a “Commonwealth” of the former Soviet republics, Russia held important positions in the former Soviet space. The Caucasus conflicts (Chechnya, South Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabakh) and the one in Transnistria gave the picture of a huge “crisis arch” at the outskirts of the former Soviet empire and justified actions of instrumental peacekeeping with Russian monopoly. Basically, it was about preserving Russian military presence in the former imperial space where not even today Moscow is showing any intention to withdraw its troops from (despite the

fact that, for instance, in 1999, at the Istanbul OSCE summit, Moscow committed itself to withdraw its troops from Transnistria). The setting up of CIS and the Russian Federation's new military doctrine, by means of the "close neighborhood" concept, were the palpable proof of regaining the positions lost following the sudden fall of the Soviet Union.

So, it is obvious that Russia does not abandon its traditional Black Sea positions and tries, in the new geopolitical conditions, to state its superior presence. The means – ranging from the energy "weapon" to the physical presence (military bases, PK in frozen conflicts), from absorbing labor force to making investments in strategic sectors of the "close neighborhood" – are employed together or separately in order to keep ties as close as possible with the former imperial space. In recent years, Russia made a tradition of systematically showing resistance to US and NATO strategies in the Greater Black Sea Area. Beginning with the tough competition for drawing the energy routes and continuing with the recent controversy over the American plan of deploying in the Caucasus elements of an anti-missile shield (presumably in Georgia or Azerbaijan) and possibly in Ukraine, the Russia-US tone of dialogue grew significantly worse.<sup>30</sup>

In the technical literature, Turkey is considered to be a second regional power in the Greater Black Sea Area, after Russia. With a 780,580 Km<sup>2</sup> area, 74.3 million inhabitants, a GDP worth 358 billion dollars<sup>31</sup>, after the Soviet Union's collapse, Turkey showed its growing interest in the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia, inhabited by Turkish populations. When Baku regime chose the democratic Muslim model instead of the Iranian Islamic fundamentalism, President Turgut Ozal said that Turkey and Azerbaijan formed a "two state nation". After President Geidar Aliev was sworn in (1993) and following the return to a more

laic system, a temporary chill in Ankara's relations with Baku followed, while today the two capitals act within an extended energy partnership and in a "close antiterrorist cooperation". On a larger scale, Turkey offers economic support and provides military assistance to Azerbaijan and Georgia. At the same time, Turkey welcomed GUAM and supported Georgia and Azerbaijan's efforts to establish a Stability Pact for the Caucasus, involving countries in the region and other major international players (2002-2003). Besides the Russian Federation and Azerbaijan, Ukraine takes new efforts to enhance diversified cooperation with Turkey. In 1992, Ankara put forward<sup>32</sup> the Organization for Economic Cooperation in the Black Sea. Simultaneously, relations between Turkey and Armenia remained tensioned. Within the same context of repositioning in the Far East, Turkey intensified its relations with the EU and reactivated diplomatic links of cooperation with Iran and Syria. From October 2005, Turkey started its EU membership negotiations.

Lately, Turkey is putting forward a sui-generis policy at the Black Sea. On one hand, it is obvious that Ankara is trying to keep 1936 Montreaux Convention provisions on military naval circulation through the Straits, as part of an older strategy of keeping the Black Sea as a "closed sea", including to its own allies; on the other hand, we can see Turkey means to be a big naval power. Many Turkish political actions in 2005 prove this behavior, but the most important ones for its views in this field are Ankara's veto to extending NATO's *Active Endeavour* sea operation from the Mediterranean to the Black Sea and the launching, together with Russia, of the *Black Sea Harmony* operation in the Black Sea. In fact, Turkey's new foreign policy orientations in the Black Sea region make Russia a strategic partner on many levels. Turkey's present strategy to get closer

to Russia, in its attempt to block the opening of the Black Sea and NATO, EU and US presence as major players, is a precautious one because it is meant to harm the interests of countries like Romania, Bulgaria, Georgia, and Azerbaijan of supporting the region's shift towards the West. By opposing the extension of Active Endeavour operation, Turkey invoked the Montreaux Convention which prevents military vessels from transiting the Straits for strategic military exercise, even in times of peace. Russia said it wanted to take part in *Active Endeavour*, but in the Mediterranean and placed conditions such as excepting its trade vessels from controls, the Alliance paying the operation costs for Russian vessels and even placing the operation under NATO-Russia Council's control. Of course, NATO rejected these exaggerated claims, but a compromise was reached according to which Russian ships worked together with the allied ones. Russia's opposition to NATO's ships presence in the Black Sea was obvious in 2006, when, stimulated by Moscow, the Russian-speaking minority in Crimea protested against these ships, which led to cancelling a NATO's exercise with Ukraine (*Operation Sea Breeze*). Crimea local parliament even declared that region as "NATO free area".

Turkish attitude of aligning with Russia against NATO and the United States seems more unusual. Political analysts often see a chill in Turkey's relations with the US, especially after the misunderstandings that arose shortly before the 2003 war in Iraq. Turkey opposed to this military campaign, was very suspicious about American actions of providing support for the Kurdish population in Northern Iraq and was very irritated at the serious security situation in Iraq and its cross-border propagation potential. Even the revolutions in Ukraine and Georgia seemed negative in the eyes of some of the Turkish

politicians who considered these occurred because of Washington's hidden actions. It was only a little step to think of an attempt to establish an "anti-Russia alliance" in the Black Sea area that could undermine Turkey's security and harm its legitimate interests.<sup>33</sup> According to some analysts, there is a quick change of elites in Turkey, in the sense that old English-speaking and pro-West elites are step by step replaced by more nationalist, more conservative elites hostile to the West.<sup>34</sup> The older vision of Turkey being a frontier country, embraced until recently by Turkish experts, is replaced by the image of a state "placed in the middle of a critical region". An expression of these new elites' emergence is, according to them, the tendency to set up close relations with direct neighbors – Russia, Syria, Iran.

Another important nation in the Pontic area is Ukraine, a country which stated as early as 1991 its will to become a major player in the Black Sea basin, as proved by the longstanding competition with Russia over the former Soviet naval base in Sevastopol and the future of the Black Sea Soviet fleet. Out of 46.4 million inhabitants<sup>35</sup> the Russian minority is 20%. Kyiv and Moscow hold discussions on the Russian-speakers' statute, on using the Russian language or the hydrocarbons transit to the West. The Russian Federation is keeping its important naval base in Sevastopol, Crimea.

Sworn in at the end of 2004, Victor Yushchenko's administration showed its NATO<sup>36</sup> and EU orientation, without ignoring special relations with the Russian Federation. Kyiv is directly involved in solving the Transnistrean conflict and seems interested in solving the issues with Romania over the Bâstroe Canal and the delimitation of Snake Island area. In order to increase its regional statute, Kyiv takes advantage of its key geographic position in hydrocarbons transit both from the

Caspian Sea to the West (through Odessa-Brodi pipeline) and from the Russian Federation to the EU (through the “Druzba” pipeline). So far, Russia criticized and often even blocked all Ukraine’s attempts to move closer to NATO, including NATO membership. Maybe only if most of the Ukrainian population supported NATO membership, the politicians would think they have a clear signal and could ask Russia to leave Sevastopol, after 2017, when Russia’s renting contract for the Crimean port expires. Moscow does not accept the states placed under its influence to be also NATO members and, generally, wants to have the last word over defense policies and the alliances these nations establish.<sup>37</sup>

Finally, the energy sector and the strategic interests of fighting terrorism and other extremely powerful forms of organized crime existing in the region justify a deep involvement of another major power in managing and controlling the regional security environment – the United States. American military presence in Turkey, as well as anti-guerilla fighting troops in riparian countries such as Georgia are elements allowing the decision makers in Washington to assess the importance of this region.

The EU is trying to act like an increasingly important player in the region. The three EU programs refer to Central Asia and Caucasus: TACIS (Technical Assistance to CIS), TRACECA (Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Central Asia) and INOGATE (Interstate Oil and Gas Transport to Europe). Caucasus nations are members of the Council of Europe (Georgia from 1999, Armenia and Azerbaijan from 2000) and of the Partnership for Peace (PfP) from 1994. In recent years, the EU and the Council of Europe have been very active in the Caucasus, including through special and economic-political assistance programs. Armenia’s constitutional reform is being undertaken with EU

contribution. The Union has named a special representative for Southern Caucasus, which takes part in discussions for finding solutions to region's crisis. EU is encouraging Ukraine to follow its political and economic standards, participating, as observer, in the negotiations on Transnistria, and provides support for democratizing the regimes in the region. EU's influence in the Black Sea basin was considerably enhanced with Romania and Bulgaria's membership.<sup>38</sup> By means of its European Neighborhood Policy, taking the shape of the region's countries signing neighborhood agreements, the EU hopes to anchor the region to the West and facilitate its democratization and transformation.

NATO is, on its turn, a key player in the region. During the Cold War years, the Black Sea space became the scene of "the frozen confrontation"<sup>39</sup> between Warsaw Treaty's strategic arrangement and NATO; penetration lines were of special interest: "the Greek line", East Mediterranean, and access to the Middle East. During the 1990s, NATO extended in the region, as a collective defense and security structure. On the Western and Southern line of the Black Sea basin, from the Baltic Sea to Southern Caucasus, all nations – except for Ukraine and Republic of Moldova, which are members of the PfP – are members of the Northern Atlantic Alliance. Today, NATO is already Black Sea "riparian".<sup>40</sup> Within NATO-Russia and NATO-Ukraine Partnerships (1997) are working: NATO-Russia Council (May 2002), NATO-Russia Action Plan on Terrorism (2004), NATO-Ukraine Action Plan, adopted at the Prague summit (2002), NATO-Ukraine Enhanced Dialogue, from April 2005. Other states participate in the PfP or have undertaken Individual Partnership Plans with NATO. Ukraine, Georgia, and Azerbaijan expressed their will to become members of the Alliance. Ukraine

signed an agreement on NATO's forces crossing its territory, while the Russian Federation supports NATO's communication lines in Afghanistan.

On this background, NATO Istanbul summit in June 2004 brought an important contribution. On that occasion a special attention was paid to security in the Black Sea basin, Caucasus, Central Asia, as well as to the need to enhance cooperation with the Russian Federation and Ukraine. NATO encouraged Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan to continue their efforts of aligning to NATO's political, institutional, democratic and defense standards, bringing at the same time their contribution to the common goal of counteracting new threats: local conflicts, international terrorism, organized crime, nuclear, chemical, biological materials trafficking, illegal migration a.s.o. General K.V. Totskiy, the first Russian ambassador assigned exclusively to NATO, thought, in the summer of 2004, that NATO-Russia relations naturally formed a part of the security architecture in Europe's evolution and the Council of Europe had become a pillar of international relations.<sup>41</sup> NATO Istanbul summit brought important changes in the PfP development as well. It stated two strategic changes, indicating a space PfP shift towards Caucasus and Central Asia (a major importance was given to the Pontic-Caspian area), as well as a new operational framework (emphasizing, among others, military exercises and education in relations with countries in the region).

The decisions taken in Istanbul were reconfirmed at Braşov informal NATO summit in October 2004. NATO secretary general, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, reminded the importance of partnerships with Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan, including during his visit to Southern Caucasus (3-5 November 2004). At the November 2006 Riga summit, NATO secretary general presented the

delegations of the member countries with proposals of concrete measures for securing the pipelines and hydrocarbons sea transport, including the pipelines transiting Caucasus and the Black Sea area as well. This shows NATO's enhanced role in the region, with a direct emphasis on the security of the East-West energy corridor.

Still, US strategic plan of installing, for the time being, rigs and integrated radars in the anti-missile shield (Theatre Missile Defense) in Poland, The Czech Republic and possibly also in Southern Caucasus<sup>42</sup> generated virulent reactions from the Russian officials. After President Vladimir Putin, in his speech given in February 2006 during the Munich Security Conference, roughly attacked the tendency towards unilateral actions and the US dominated unipolar system, as well as NATO enlargement, naming them hostile gestures, sources within the Russian Federation Ministry of Defense revealed there were ongoing discussions on a new military strategy that could consider NATO as a strategic rival<sup>43</sup>, including in the event that the anti-missile shield would be NATO-managed, as suggested by some EU officials, hoping to diminish Russia's fears.

In this new security context and given the coordinates of transformations among regional and global players involved in the management of international relations system and of the regional security environment, the Black Sea nations tried to find their own answers to the developments among these players.

Before making a short assessment of the solutions regional players put forward to tackle the new regional security environment challenges and of the developments which took place in this area among the international relations system, it is worth looking into a concept increasingly important – the Greater Black Sea Area. The meaning of this debate is explanatory,

because the way in which the geographic and geopolitical area subject to this approach is seen and defined helps understand some of the situations occurred and the solutions the countries in the region adopted as part of their efforts to manage and stream line the security environment and the region's overall bilateral and multilateral relations.

A study written by American political analysts Ronald D. Asmus and Bruce P. Jackson provides the necessary structure for developing our approach.<sup>44</sup> Investigating the international community's development towards the situation in the region, during the Cold War years and afterwards, helps the American researchers note a lack of concern about this area and the related developments of the long-term agenda and preoccupations of the global scene's most important players. There are four explanatory factors to this situation – the Black Sea's being an area of contact and cross point of influence spheres in recent centuries' international relations' geopolitics; the tight and demanding agenda of the main security organizations and state players involved in the Euro-Atlantic and global developments' management; the poor interest of the countries in the region in having close relations to the West; the lack of conceptual means and even the Western historical conviction this area only partially belongs to Europe and is anyway just a remote and somehow exotic European suburb.

In this context, the developments - both regionally and globally - during the second part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century last decade, especially following September 11 2001, brought this region into attention as a key area in the economy of managing the security, with its new dimensions, both of the European continent and the global scene. Given these mutations that took place at geopolitical and geostrategic level, but also the older historical-

geographical conditions, the Black Sea asserts itself, once more, in the field of international relations, as a united region with specific political, economic and security circumstances. This is the context in which the Greater Black Sea Area concept is brought to our attention, as part of similar concepts addressing the new geopolitical and geostrategic circumstances of the security environment and the international relations system.

In this sense, the Greater Black Sea Area (GBSA) includes, besides NATO member states – Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey – the CIS nations in the North-Pontic area – Moldova, Ukraine and Russia. They are joined by the three South-Caucasus countries also belonging to the CIS – Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. GBSA references include both the energy corridor connecting the Euro-Atlantic system to the Caspian area, provider of these resources, and a vast region on the Eastern and Northern limits of the area, which includes the major fluvial axes and trade routes – the Danube, Nistru and Nipru. At the Southern and Eastern limits, the GBSA links the Greater Middle East and Central Asia regions.

This vast region is a linkage and compulsory passing area and a strategic point of reference in the new circumstances of the global security environment after 11 September 2001. The anti-terror campaign carried out by the US-led international coalition, the Afghanistan and Iraq military operations and the neighborhood of the Greater Middle East geopolitical space required the international community, the major security organizations, and regional and global players involved in these developments to deeply reconsider their vision on this area. Being unified and having a renewed strategic importance, the GBSA becomes, under these circumstances, one of the supporting points of the antiterrorist offensive and a major part

of the European continent's security, especially against non-conventional threats.

Asymmetrical, non-conventional risks are not the only concerns for the public opinion and the security studies experts' community in Europe and the United States. According to political analyst Stephen Blank, the GBSA has several security paradigms, ranging from security based on supranational integration (Romania and Bulgaria's cases) to conflict dyads with the risk of escalation (Russia and Georgia provide a typical example in this sense). Not only that Russia is opposing the region's efforts to "westernize" and democratize, but it does not show a real will to cooperate with its smaller Southern neighbors in fighting organized crime, weapons, radioactive materials trafficking a.s.o. While hydrocarbons become Russia's favorite "weapon" in its relations to the West, Gazprom's becoming a real Foreign Affairs Ministry and proliferation of criminal organizations with Russian roots suggest a "campaign run to corrupt and undermine the basis of democratic governance in Eastern Europe, in general".<sup>45</sup> Russia is systematically opposing US and even EU's actions in the area, is denouncing NATO's activities and interest in the pipelines' security, all being part of what Bruce Jackson called a *soft war* between Russia and the West. Moscow sees US efforts to multilateralize and open the GBSA as a direct threat to its foreign policy interests which, according to Blank, tend to take shape with the Russian cooperation with Turkey, against Western interests. According to a well-known political analyst (V. Socor), the Russian government recently declared its intention to turn the Baltic Sea into an "oil corridor" to Western Europe, capable of receiving annually 150 million cubic meters of oil transported by sea from Primorsk. Moreover, there is also a project for building a Russian

gas pipeline that would cross the Baltic Sea bottom and provide with rough material a liquefied gas processing facility to be placed near Sankt Petersburg.<sup>46</sup>

Examining the solution to this complex security equation found by the GBSA nations in their efforts to build a stable, coherent and predictable security environment and consolidate cooperation and collaboration bilateral and multilateral relations, it is enough to mention three categories of such initiatives that underline the major collaboration potential of the region, as well as the inhibiting factors of closer links. First of all, we will present a first attempt of economic cooperation, followed by security initiatives and, finally, the regional infrastructure development as cooperation “pat germinator”.

A preliminary explanation: all three fields will consider both organizations covering the whole GBSA extended region (and even beyond it) and precise areas of it.

The first and most important cooperation organization in the Black Sea area, in a chronological order of their establishment, was in the economic area. On 25 June 1992, in Istanbul, eleven heads of states and governments (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine) signed a common declaration laying the foundation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC). Setting up this body of economic cooperation and promotion of trade and free exchange relations between the signatory parties must be understood both in the double context of the integration tendencies existing among European nations, from the West and the East, and given the acute necessity of the signatory states to reconstruct a common trade and free exchange area. Its development can be considered a political success and a real gain in the field of regional security, since the periodic highest

level summits and the other various level meetings brought their contribution to building a communication and collaboration climate and easing up situations that could hamper regional security. At the same time, BSEC served as a link for countries in the region to establish and undertake contacts and negotiations with international organizations active in the filed of security and more, such as the European Union, Council of Europe, or OSCE. Beyond its initial dimensions, a powerful component of collaboration in fighting terrorism, smuggling, organized crime, arms and drugs trafficking a.s.o. develops within the BSEC before and mainly after 11 September 2001.

Responding to the development in time of the member states' interest and commitments, the organization endowed itself with multiple permanent institutional components meant to provide answers to various issues of political, economic, financial, scientific a.s.o. integration. We can mention the Permanent International Secretariat – PERMIS, the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank – BSTDB, as bodies directly linked to BSEC institutional structures, as well as bodies indirectly linked to these, such as the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation – PABSEC, the Business Council or the International Centre for Black Sea Studies – ICBSS, the last one covering scientific cooperation. All these auxiliary bodies work on a consultative basis.

The institutional cooperation is linked to a relative development of projects commonly established and carried out within the BSEC. In the telecommunications field, we note the development of several projects of setting up international optical fibre communication networks such as Trans Asia-Europa (TAE), the Black Sea Fibre Optic Cable System – BSFOCS, Trans-European Telecommunications – TET and the Eastern Black Sea

Telecommunications Project – DOKAP). Other several optical fibre telecommunications projects became operational as well. In the transports field, BSEC pays a special attention to developing the regional transport infrastructure and integrating it in the European infrastructure, a particular concern being given to 7, 8 and 9 pan European transport corridors.

An issue of great interest within BSEC is that of electricity production and transport integrated systems. Regulations and projects in this field have been adopted since the Erevan BSEC summit (1998), when member states signed a memorandum of cooperation within BSEC in the field of electricity production and transport networks.

Finally, important developments took place within BSEC in the field of fighting cross-border organized crime in all its forms, ranging from corruption to money laundry, human and drug trafficking to smuggling. From 1997, annual internal ministry meetings have been held on a regular basis. The main result was the signing, on 2 October 1998, of a cooperation agreement between BSEC countries on fighting cross-border organized crime.

Still, both the lack of homogeneity among mechanisms of actual implementation of its decisions, resources and international visibility, and the local features related to the historical evolution and economic development of the states in the region had as a result the fact that this economic cooperation initiative, with multiple dimensions added along the way, had only a few successes in the field.

This was both because of the lack of appropriate means in line with the size of the organization's initiator and main supporter (Turkey) and the low interest of the member states which began to focus, as early as the 1990s, on their integration or on developing close cooperation links with major international

organizations (the European Union), which took their attention and consumed their resources. Equally, it is worth adding the inhibiting element of sticking to a restrictive regionalism, on the basis of the *ownership* principle, obviously contrasting today's globalizing tendencies – see Turkey and Russia's refusal to accept the US request on becoming a BSEC member.

Cooperation agreements and the action structures in the field of military security and other structures of the countries in the region developed as direct and quick answers to security risks and the instability that were a feature and remain important dimensions of the regional security environment.

Based on Turkey's initiative laid out in a project put forward to Black Sea riparian countries in 1998, Black Sea Force (BLACKSEAFOR) is a military cooperation structure meant to consolidate security and stability as well as to promote predictable relations in the Black Sea area by means of enhancing regional cooperation and collaboration relations. Joint actions of the six member states' naval forces (Turkey, Russia, Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria and Georgia) have the objective of a joint training for rescue missions, natural calamities intervention, fighting smuggling a.s.o. The constitutory agreement was signed in April 2001 in Istanbul.

Beyond its cooperative security dimension by means of which it contributes to establishing a climate of trust and predictability in relations between riparian countries, BLACKSEAFOR has a low involvement in consolidating the regional security environment, given its component features. The lack of specific objectives and the incipient nature of the participating countries' naval forces' integration into this agreement make of this organization more of a cooperative forum having as main objectives increasing the mutual trust among member states

and setting up a dialogue and cooperation climate by means of specific tools. Having neither an open organizational dimension nor a developed institutional structure, working on consensus and by means of coordinating a council with a rotating presidency, BLACKSEAFOR cannot intent to go beyond the above-mentioned working framework. An important element in the context of post 11 September 2001 security environment developments is that, following Russia's initiative, the member states are discussing about setting up an anti-terrorism dimension of the organization. If adopted, this development in BLACKSEAFOR functioning would structurally change the way it works.

Among regional cooperation initiatives in the Greater Black Sea Area, the South East Cooperation Initiative – SECI has a special place, given the frameworks and circumstances in which it was set up and developed. SECI includes the South-Eastern Europe nations, meaning the countries on the Black Sea's Western and Southern coasts.

Having as declared objectives the establishment of a stable and coherent security and cooperation environment in the Balkans by encouraging collaboration among participating countries, in order to facilitate their European integration, and the coordination of regional development plans, SECI was launched following a joint initiative – the United States and the European Union – in December 1996, shortly after the signing of Dayton peace agreements. SECI works and is structured on the basis of the Declaration of Principles on Cooperation within SECI, adopted during the inaugural meeting held in Geneva (5-6 December 1996).

The main SECI coordination body is the Agenda Committee, made of SECI national coordinators (they are nationally responsible with member states' participation in SECI projects). Its

responsibilities include identifying common concerns in various fields of interest to member states, ranging from economy to security, and stating the priorities list on which joint collaboration projects are established.

SECI's main accomplishments are the Regional Centre for Fighting Cross Border Crime<sup>47</sup> and the adoption, under the auspices of NATO and the South East Defense Ministerial Process, of the South East Europe Common Assessment on Regional Security Challenges and opportunities – SEECAP (2001).<sup>48</sup>

The initial ambitious action program did not survive time and lack of material resources needed to support such an agenda. Launching and developing the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe made the fusion of the two regional cooperation structures' activities possible and even desirable (2003). Following this "fusion", the Bucharest SECI Centre became the Regional Centre for Fighting Cross Border Crime which includes secretariats of several Stability Pact activities, SECI was dissolved in the Stability Pact Business Council, which led to the establishment of the Southern-Eastern Europe Business Consultative Council, subordinating former SECI committees.

German initiative launched in the Kosovo crisis context, the Stability pact for Southern-Eastern Europe (SPSEE) took the shape of an agreement put forward by the EU Presidency signed on 10 June 1999 in Cologne and launched the same year within a summit grouping the signatory states and the EU member states, together with other global players (political and security international organizations – UN, EU, OSCE, NATO, OECD, Council of Europe; international financial institutions – IBRD, IMF, EBRD, EIB; regional initiatives/organizations – BSEC, ICE, SECI, SEECAP). Black Sea Western coast players – Romania, Bulgaria and Republic of Moldova are members of this group.<sup>49</sup>

Equally, with the main objective of building a security, democracy and prosperity regional environment and stimulating the integration of the countries in the region in the European and Euro-Atlantic economic, political and security structures, SPSEE wants to be the main tool for channeling the reconstruction and development funds for this region of Europe.

The Stability Pact's main role is providing the logistical and financial assistance for the reconstruction and the political, economic, military construction in post-conflict or internal and external instability situations. The dimension of logistics, expertise, coordination and coagulation of regional cooperation structures, easing up the regional political-military situation and consolidating a stable and coherent security environment are the elements and conditions for SPSEE's success. On the other hand, as for the financial and material support for concrete reconstruction and regional development projects, SPSEE's contribution was unconvincing. Described as the Balkan equivalent of the famous Marshall Plan (initiated by the US for Western Europe in 1947), SPSEE did not manage to find the financial support to meet the needs of this region while its functioning in the field of project budgeting and approval proved to be extremely time consuming and expensive both in chronological and bureaucratic terms.<sup>50</sup>

Recent SPSEE developments show it as an ongoing security and cooperation structure. The restructuring process of regional cooperation frameworks and bodies, abounding in the Balkans, finds SPSEE as well as the South East European Cooperation Process (SEECOP) in a favorable position of gathering together powerful regional cooperation mechanisms which go beyond the prospective phase and become a strong shield for consolidating a coherent and stable security environment, necessary for the

development and democratic political and economic construction of the Balkan area. SECI integration in the SPSEE is a first step in this direction.

Together with these regional cooperation structures of a strong political nature, several military initiatives of security cooperation also developed in the GBSA during the post-Cold War era. Some of these developed as the extension and logical consequence of the arrangements and activities of some of the already analyzed political cooperation structures. It is the case of SEECAP, SEEGROUP, SEESTUDY, developed under NATO auspices. We add two military cooperation structures – SEDM and SEEBRIG – developed according to the new way of conceiving security and international, regional and sub regional cooperation.

Southern-Eastern Europe Defense Ministerial Process (SEDM) is an informal regional cooperation body, without its own structure, established as the expression of concerns over the military and not only aspects of participating countries' regional security. Following the Southern-Eastern Europe ministries of defense meeting in Tirana (1996), at the US initiative, during the second meeting (Sofia, 1997) it was decided to set this form of regional cooperation and consultation on a permanent basis, in order to bring contribution to the regional stability and security and enhance regional cooperation. SEDM groups ten NATO and PfP member countries – Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, Greece, Italy, Romania, Slovenia, Turkey and the United States. From 2001 Ukraine also participates in SEDM works, as an observer.

An expression of the military dimension of the regional cooperation, at the Thessaloniki meeting (9 October 2000) SEDM developed a coordination structure – the Coordination Committee – meant to supervise the fulfillment and political

guidance of ongoing initiatives and projects set up during SEDM meetings, except for the Southern Eastern Europe Multinational Peace Brigade (SEEBRIG): South Eastern Europe Simulation Network (SEESIM), Military Hospitals Satellite Connection Network (SIMIHO), Ministries of Defense/Armed Forces Support for Fighting Mass Destruction Weapons Proliferation, Border Security and Counterterrorism (CBSC), Working Group for cooperation in the fields of Defense Industry, Research and Technology. At the same time, SEDM has been involved in establishing the SEECAP and SEEGROUP activity, which took shape during 2001 and 2002.

In parallel with SEDM activity, following Skopje Agreement signed on 26 September 1996, the Multinational Force for Peacekeeping in Southern Eastern Europe – MFPSEE – was set up taking the shape of the Southern Eastern European Brigade (SEEBRIG), the first real multinational peacekeeping force in the region. Its declared objective is the promotion of security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic region and the regional cooperation development in the Balkans. Established in accordance with the Charter of the UN, SEEBRIG is a stand-by force, destined to participate in conflict prevention and peacekeeping operations carried out under UN, OSCE mandate, under NATO or EU auspices or as part of ad-hoc international coalitions' forces set up for such missions. SEEBRIG cannot participate in peace imposing missions.

Following the agreement setting up SEEBRIG, other two agreements were signed under SEDM auspices, one establishing a genius structure meant to support SEEBRIG activity and enhance its capacity to carry out its specific missions (Bucharest SEDM meeting, 30 November 1999) and another one (Athens, 21 June 2000) settling the statute and the legal functioning

framework of SEEBRIG headquarters. Other two agreements settling SEEBRIG organizational and functioning details were adopted during 2000-2002. The process of SEEBRIG's becoming operational, launched on 31 August 1999, completed on 1 June 2001. During February and August 2006, SEEBRIG deployed troops in Afghanistan, within the International Security Assistance Force – ISAF, where they carried out exercises, secured certain perimeters and trained the Afghan army.

In close connection to conflict developments and the instability and insecurity focal points in the GBSA, these developments in Southern-Eastern Europe were joined, at the Pontic regional level, by a regional security structure made of states, former Soviet republics, as a body with political and economic duties having also the tasks of a strategic alliance with the declared objective of supporting and consolidating state sovereignty, integrity and independence of the member states – GUAM.

Its origins lie in the 10 December 1997 joint statement of presidents of the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Ukraine stipulating a common position on the changes brought to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe – CFE. Afterwards, these nations deepened their cooperation which covered foreign policy fields, political consultations, defining common positions in the relations with Russia and the CIS. On 24 April 1999, during NATO's anniversary summit in Washington, Uzbekistan announced its GUAM membership. The institutionalization of GUAM and defining action priorities took place at 2001 Yalta summit. The documents signed on that occasion acknowledged that GUAM has no vocation of becoming a distinct political-military structure with its own identity. At the same time it was stated the necessity of deepening the

economic cooperation and intensifying trade exchanges between the countries of the organization, key issues for the development and consolidation of relations between the participating countries. The next summit, held again in Yalta, during 19-20 June 2002, continued the institutionalization by means of the agreements signed on the functioning and on the structure of GUAM institutions and of implementing some of the joint projects previously negotiated and adopted.

A major moment of crisis within this regional cooperation body was Uzbekistan's withdrawal decision, on 14 June 2002, invoking the lack of perspectives and the weak progress in key areas of economic integration and interstate cooperation. The crisis will be overcome a few months later, when Uzbekistan reviewed its initial stance. Despite this, the Uzbek state presence at GUAM summits and its involvement in the joint activities of the organization's member states are very weak.

Together with the political component, increasingly strong within the organization, GUAM's key objectives are economic cooperation, liberalization of trade exchanges and setting up integrated energy networks. It is important to note that GUAM keeps, under the circumstances of a continuous adversity of the Russian Federation towards it and its member states, an important security dimension. Common security threats, similar security issues, with similar origins and expressions, contribute to the sustainability of the organization's security component.

The last GUAM summit, held in Kyiv on 22-23 May 2006, noted these developments. The main topics on the agenda were very good examples in this respect: diversifying energy resources and providers and managing the frozen conflicts in the region. Presidents of GUAM states signed a protocol stating their intention to establish a free trade area within the four

constitutive countries of GUAM. It was named “Organization for Democracy and Economic Development” and put forward a plan setting up a large database on organized crime, terrorism and drug trafficking that would benefit to intelligence services and justice agencies of the member states.<sup>51</sup> Establishing a Council of Energy Security was also mentioned.

The issue dealt with the previous year, at Chişinău summit (nicknamed “GUAM revival summit”), focused mainly on the management of frozen conflicts in the Black Sea area, putting US participation in GUAM meetings as observer - on a permanent basis, the active involvement of NATO and EU member states in the region – Poland, Lithuania, Romania<sup>52</sup> – in solving the problems the GUAM countries are facing. All these gave substance to Steve Mann’s remark – leader of the American delegation that took part in that meeting – according to which the Chişinău summit was a crucial one in the history of the organization. Although the participating countries did not manage to reach an agreement on the issues in question they only signed a common Declaration on the “Democratic Construction from the Baltic to the Black Sea” – the meeting emphasized a positive development of this organization that, at the next summit, in Kyiv, managed to endow itself with a solid institutional structure: The Heads of State Council, the Foreign Ministers Council, the National Coordinators Council. The permanent secretariat of the new organization was set in Kyiv. Later on, Victor Ianukovici becoming Ukraine’s prime minister – a politician close to Russia’s strategic interests – led to a certain ambiguity in this country’s relation to GUAM.

Looking into its activity we can see that GUAM was born mainly as an organization for political cooperation that evolved from a simple coordination and cooperation agreement into an

international body with distinct structure and objectives, with well defined institutions which go well beyond the initial field of political cooperation, touching upon areas related to it, such as the economic or security and military ones. The complementarity of member states' economies (the free trade area project) – fruit of the territory's economic development policies undertaken by former Soviet authorities – the existence of a common security issue, of particular risks and threats specific for all the countries in the former Soviet area, the decision makers' will to enhance a presently low level of understanding and to cooperate in order to deal with the security and defense issues together with the other states, all these are cohesion and coherence factors for GUAM. Beyond these, there are many things left to be done in order to turn the organization into a powerful defense shield, able to face both the security environment, at least unstable for the former Soviet region, and the pressures of the former imperial power aiming at its dissolution. Anyway, it is a fact that Moscow has a negative perception of the organization as a destabilizing and disturbing factor towards Russia's national safety and security.

Economically, GBSA's cooperation structures focused on the issue of recovering the region's transport and communication infrastructure. It is obvious that Caspian energy resources and their transit to their main beneficiaries – Europe are of a central attention to regional and global players involved in promoting and undertaking these projects. Still, on the other hand, issues like fluidization and carrying out in good condition communications linking Europe to Central Asia and the Far East are also important in drafting and implementing these projects.

TRACECA (Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia) was born as an expression of the will to set up a transport and

communication corridor on the East-West line, starting in Europe, crossing the Black Sea and Caspian Sea areas to Central Asia. TRACECA program was launched during a joint conference of transport and trade ministers of countries in the region and of the main interested European nations held in Brussels, in May 1993. During the meeting it was agreed to implement an EU project of financing due technical assistance for developing a transport corridor in the region in question. Up to 2003, 39 consultancy projects on this transport corridor have been drawn, with the European financial support (57,4 million euros). 14 investment projects summing up 52,3 million euros added. Today, TRACECA project is in the phase of harmonising customs procedures, which involves more political involvement from governments and parliaments of countries participating in the project in promoting the legislative initiatives needed for implementation. The fourth Annual Conference of TRACECA Intergovernmental Commission, held in Baku (21-22 April 2005) adopted the organization's budget for 2005-2006, discussing, along with issues concerning the carrying out of existing programs, the possibilities for cooperating with the EU given its new neighborhood policy, the conceptual, legal, institutional a.s.o. matters related to the extension of the future international transport corridor. In May 2006, Sofia hosted the fifth Annual Conference of TRACECA Intergovernmental Commission and the 20th Meeting of TRACECA National Secretaries which assessed a positive record of its activities. It was also decided the adoption of a TRACECA strategy for developing the International Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia for a period of time until 2015.

The special role the project has been and is playing in promoting good neighborhood relations among member states,

keeping and enhancing cooperation and collaboration relations in the region, opening new markets, generating development potentials, attracting foreign investments and upgrading the existing infrastructure stands out. At the same time, for this region the project is EU and other international bodies' main tool for promoting market economy, competition and free exchange and eliminating non-physical barriers among people and nations in this area.

Together with TRACECA project, aiming at opening communication channels and setting up a general transport and communication corridor, a specialized transport program developed, focusing on transit of energy resources from Caspian Sea and Central Asia to Europe, INOGATE.<sup>53</sup> Launched in 1996, INOGATE aims at enhancing regional cooperation between exporting countries, transit countries and consumer countries, reducing investment costs and risks, as well as promoting environmental concerns. One of INOGATE's major objectives is also to guarantee Europe's energy security by means of supporting the implementation of a secure and sustainable mechanism.

INOGATE is structured mainly under the auspices of EU's TACIS program, having as main responsibilities providing technical support and consultancy for energy infrastructure projects' development and, in some cases, financial assistance for supporting priority interventions. It is organized around six integrated pillars:

1. Prospecting existing oil and gas resources.
2. Assessing development possibilities of new transport systems.
3. Institutional development of hydrocarbons trade and international transport capabilities.

4. Interstate security and safety structures in the field.
5. Technology transfer in the fields of resource management and pipeline transport operations.
6. Coordination, promotion and attraction of investments for strategic projects.

If, during its initial phase (1996-2000), INOGATE focused on supporting activities related to pillars 1-3, for the period 2001-2004 the attention was focused on pillars 4 and 5. With a 100 million euros budget already invested during 1996-2004 and with a total amount of 68 million euros programmed for investments in projects under pillars 4 and 5 in the period 2004-2006, INOGATE has a generally positive record of achievements in its action area.

### **Romania's position on the Greater Black Sea Area**

Given its geographic position and its historical tradition, Romania could not have ignored this area. Demographically the seventh European Union member state with 21.6 million inhabitants,<sup>54</sup> Romania controls the Danube Delta and the Danube's mouths (4,200 Km) and 245 Km of seaside, with the due exclusive area, holding an important position at the Western Black Sea shore. Economically, Romania (171.5 billion dollar GDP<sup>55</sup>) fits the medium level, between the Russian Federation (854 billion dollar GDP)<sup>56</sup> and Turkey (358 billion dollar GDP), close to Ukraine (97 billion dollar GDP) and ahead of Bulgaria (30 billion dollar GDP) and Southern Caucasus countries.<sup>57</sup> Its trade exchanges are 70% EU oriented. Bucharest promotes its own Black Sea cooperation policy, linked to NATO and EU objectives.

During the past centuries, national interests have been greatly influenced by the presence in the Pontic region of two

very powerful players: the Ottoman Empire and the Russian Empire. Since the end of 2004, when a new Presidential Administration was sworn in in Bucharest, the interest in the Greater Black Sea Area became a constant, as stands proof the underchapter dedicated to this region in the National Security Strategy. As NATO and EU member state, Romania is fully aware of its need to harmonize the GBSA regional policy with the one followed by the two organizations, when such common positions exist. Romania is interested both in the economic matters (access to hydrocarbons, trade) and the military (military balance in the Pontic region) and security (fighting terrorism, organized crime, arms and forbidden substances trafficking) ones. During the 1990s, Romania focused all its foreign policy efforts on the West, following the main objective of its double EU and NATO integration. That is the reason why even its involvement in regional cooperation agreements in the Balkans were initially seen as “energy” waste and even as a deviation from this objective, until Romanian officials understood that this involvement in NATO and EU related areas not only did it harm, but was meant to prepare those countries for their integration.

Similarly, now the Romanian state wants to help EU’s Foreign and Security Policy include a Black Sea dimension as well and to convince NATO to pay more attention to Pontic and Caspian nations. The ideal would be to have a joint EU and NATO strategy for the GBSA, but, since there is not such a thing, it is necessary for the two organizations to harmonize their positions and interests.

The interest in oil pipelines linking Central Asia and Caucasus to the EU area is a constant in Romanias foreign policy. Constanța-Trieste and Nabucco are the most important projects, but in recent years a liquefied gas terminal from Constanța, in

cooperation with Qatar, has been mentioned as well. President Traian Băsescu invited the European countries to invest in this latter project.<sup>58</sup>

In March 2006, key EU decision makers announced the drafting of a strategic paper on the joint management of risks and opportunities in the GBSA. Called *Black Sea Synergy*, the paper that now is being drafted will define trade and security priorities by means of cooperation with Ukraine and the GBSA countries.<sup>59</sup> There will be regular meetings of foreign ministers of the Black Sea riparian countries and the regular EU “Troika” – prime minister of the country holding the Council’s rotating presidency, High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU (CFSP) and foreign relations commissioner. The new strategy will of course be based on the European Neighborhood Policy, but also on revitalizing some regional cooperation organizations like BSEC and the Black Sea forum. The new projects cover the gas and oil offer and the transit corridors from the Caspian and Central Asia, solving the frozen conflicts and diminishing separatist tendencies, limitation of illegal migration, developing the civil society in the democratizing countries and environmental protection, as well as projecting new transport corridors.

The US interest in the Greater Black Sea Area is another guarantee for the Euro-Atlantic future of these nations most of which were placed under Soviet control for decades. In the early March 2006, mass-media spoke of the US Department of Defense intention to draft a strategy for the GBSA in order to stabilize this area, fight conventional and non-conventional threats and facilitate hydrocarbons access.<sup>60</sup> The Americans become increasingly aware of the need to break the Russian monopoly on hydrocarbons transit corridors from Central Asia and Caucasus,

especially in the case of Gazprom which tends to control in an authoritarian manner energy markets in Turkey, Ukraine and Georgia. The big Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline has also the task to establish an energy route outside Moscow's control.<sup>61</sup>

All these developments favor a great deal Romania's national interest and our country has the duty to encourage them by all political, economic and diplomatic means.

As a conclusion, a possible record of changes in the Black Sea's area following the Cold War period notes, first of all, the unpredictable development and fluidity of regional security environment. The exponential growth of risk factors to regional and national security of countries in the region, the instability and insecurity generated by conflict points declared in the Balkan and Caucasus areas are just a few of the phenomena related to these regional security environment developments in this period. The solutions the countries in the region found to this security equation followed the force ideas of cooperative security and of developing security and economic cooperation bodies and arrangements promoting trust and stability at regional and continental level. The efforts undertaken by the nations in question converged both following own initiatives and under the impulse and coordination of global players, be it security organizations like NATO, EU, OSCE a.s.o. or the intervention of global players, mainly the United States.

## **NOTES**

<sup>1</sup> Dan A. Lăzărescu, *Black Sea strategic, political and economic problems*, in the Romanian Journal of International Affairs", vol.3, no.1&1997, p.54.

<sup>2</sup> John Boardman, *Overseas Greeks. Greek colonialization and early trade*, Meridiane Publishing House, Bucharest, 1998, p.308-318; Gheorghe I. Brătianu, *The Black Sea. From its origins to the Ottoman conquest*, vol.1, Meridiane Publishing House, Bucharest, 1988, *passim*.

<sup>3</sup> Natural successor of the Roman Empire, the Byzantine Empire holds, at the expense of a long and expensive conflict against the Persian Empire and the Caucasus kingdoms, absolute control and monopoly of trade on the routes crossing the Pontic region. Its hegemony ends with the fourth crusade and Constantinople's Latin conquest. See Gheorghe I. Brătianu, *in the work cited*, p. 196-197, Florentina Cazan, *The Crusades*, Enciclopedic Publishing House, Bucharest, 1992, p.153.

<sup>4</sup> *Databook of Ottoman Empire International Acts*, vol.II, Paris, Leipzig, Neuchatel, 1897, p. 81-85.

<sup>5</sup> E. Caratheodory, *From international law on the big water streams*, Leipzig, 1861, p. 106.

<sup>6</sup> *Databook of Ottoman Empire International Acts*, vol.II, p. 166-173.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 229-231.

<sup>8</sup> Nicolae Dașcovici, *The issue of Bosphorus and Dardanelles*, Geneva, 1915, p. 240 and next.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>10</sup> *The Berlin Treaty followed by the Congress Protocols*, Romanian Official Publishing House, 1878.

<sup>11</sup> J.B. Duroselles, *Diplomatic History from 1909 till nowadays*, Dalloz, Paris, 1985, p. 310-311.

<sup>12</sup> Iulian Cârțână, Ilie Seftiuc, *Romania and the Straits issue*, Scientific Publishing House, Bucharest, 1974, p. 77-79; *Documents from Montreaux Conference on the Straits' statute (22 June-20 July 1936). Official report of plenary sessions and minutes of Technical Committee debates*, Paris, 1936.

<sup>13</sup> Between 8 and 17 August 1938 Sinaia hosted the Conference on changing maritime Danube regime settling the cut of Danube's European Commission's attributions. Most of the Commission's prerogatives were transferred to the Romanian state, so that stipulations on Lower Danube's international statute were in line with the Romanian state's sovereignty rights. See G. Sofronie, *Romania's diplomatic struggle for sovereignty on the Danube*, Bucharest, 1940, p. 287 and next.

<sup>14</sup> Iulian Cârțână, Ilie Seftiuc, *in the work cited*, p. 345-349.

<sup>15</sup> Charles King, *The Black Sea: A History*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2004, p. 229.

<sup>16</sup> A.A. Ulunian, *Soviet Cold War Perceptions of Turkey and Greece (Looking out the CC of CPUS headquarters: information and appraisals, 1945-1958)*, in "Mejdnarodskij Istoriceskij Jurnal", no.20/2002.

<sup>17</sup> Andre Fontaine, *History of the Cold War*, vol.III, Military Publishing House, Bucharest, 1992, p.135 and next.

<sup>18</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, Bruce P. Kackson, *The Black Sea and the Frontiers of Freedom*, in "Policy Review", no.2/2004, *passim*.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>20</sup> Alexander Goncharenko, Caspian – Black Sea New Security Challenges and the regional Security Structures, in "The Quarterly Journal", 2002

<sup>21</sup> Nasuh Uslu, *The Russian, Caucasian and Central Asian Aspects of Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post Cold War Period*, in "Alternatives. Turkish Journal of International Affairs", vol.2, no.3&4, fall&winter 2003, p. 164-187, *passim*.

<sup>22</sup> *The World in 2006*, "The Economist Newspaper Limited", 2005, p.99; www.theworldin.com.

<sup>23</sup> Peter Reddaway, Dmitri Glinski, *The Tragedy of Russia's Reforms. Market Bolshevism against Democracy*, United States Institute of Peace Press, Washington DC, 2001, p. 1-155.

<sup>24</sup> *The Maritime Strategy of Russia: The Gap between Great Sea Power Ambitions and the Economic-Military Realities*, Juergen Schwartz/Wilfried A. Hermann/Hans-Frank Seller (Rds.), *Maritime Strategies in Asia*, White Lotus Press, Bangkok, 2002, p. 171-206; www.revistamedia.ro: *Moscow wants a Security Force in Central Asia*.

<sup>25</sup> Janusz Bugajski, *Cold Peace. New Imperialism of Russia*, Casa Radio, Bucharest, 2005, p. 287-304.

<sup>26</sup> Pascal Boniface (ccordinator), *L'annee strategique 2005*, Armand Colin, Paris, 2004, p.68.

<sup>27</sup> *The World in 2006*, The Economist Newspaper Limited", 2005, p.99; Pascal Boniface, in the work cited, p.223

<sup>28</sup> Mihail E. Ionescu, *Security Options in the Wider Black Sea Area: Romania's case*, in "Papers of the Conflict Prevention Studies Center", no.6, BSU, Bucharest, 2003, p. 5-28.

<sup>29</sup> www.eurasisnet.org – "Tajikistan Daily Digest".

<sup>30</sup> Stephen Blank, *Black Sea Rivalry*, in "Perspectives", ISCIIP, Boston University, Volume XVII, Np. 2, March/April 2007.

<sup>31</sup> *The World in 2006*, “The Economist Newspaper Limited”, 2005, p. 100. Charles Grant, *Turkey – Europe: The Ten Golden Rules*, published in “Les Echos”, 13 December 2004, [www.cer.org.uk/articles](http://www.cer.org.uk/articles).

<sup>32</sup> Mustafa Aydin, *Europe’s Next Shore: the Black Sea Region after EU Enlargement*, in “Occasional Papers”, no. 53, ISIS, June 2004, p. 19-25; [www.iss-eu.org](http://www.iss-eu.org).

<sup>33</sup> See the arguments presented by Zeyno Baran, *The Future of democracy in the Black Sea Area*, in “Harvard Black Sea Security Program 2005”, p. 19-20.

<sup>34</sup> Suat Kiniklioglu, *History in the Making*, Ankar Turkforpol, 3.03.2007.

<sup>35</sup> *The World in 2006*, “The Economist Newspaper Limited”, 2005, p. 100.

<sup>36</sup> [www.ukraine.be/nato/press/NATO launches “Intensified Dialogue with Ukraine”](http://www.ukraine.be/nato/press/NATO_launches_Intensified_Dialogue_with_Ukraine), 21 April 2005.

<sup>37</sup> Stephen Blank, *Black Sea Rivalry*, in “Perspectives”, ISCIIP, Boston University, Volume XVII, No.2, March/April 2007.

<sup>38</sup> Heiner Hanggi and Fred Tanner, *Promoting Security Sector Governance in the EU’s Neighborhood*, in “Chaillot Papers”, No. 80, ISS, July 2005, p. 53-59 and 62-65.

<sup>39</sup> Vladimir Socor, *NATO Prospects in South Caucasus and Eastern Europe*”, “Strategic Monitor”, 1-2, 2004, p. 44-57, [www.ispaim.ro](http://www.ispaim.ro).

<sup>40</sup> Bruce P. Jackson, *The Archeology of Modern Europe*, NATO Studies Center, POLITEIA – National School of Administrative Studies, Bucharest, 2004, p. 16-23; [www.newamericancentury.org/russia](http://www.newamericancentury.org/russia). Bruce P. Jackson, *On Democracy in Russia and The Future of Democracy in the Black Sea Region*, 2005.

<sup>41</sup> General K.V. Totksiy, *Interview*, published in “NATO Special Edition of NATO Revue”, p. 54-56, [www.nato.int](http://www.nato.int), Istanbul summit.

<sup>42</sup> According to the recent statement of general-lieutenant Henry Obering, US Missile Defense Agency director.

<sup>43</sup> Simon Saradzhyan, *A dangerous game in Russia’s backyard*, 07.03.07, <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/news/sw/details.cfm?id=17333>.

<sup>44</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, Bruce P. Jackson, *The Black Sea and the Frontiers of Freedom*, in “Policy Review”, June 2004.

<sup>45</sup> Stephen Blank, *Black Sea Rivalry*, in “Perspectives”, ISCIIP, Boston University, Volume XVII, No. 2, March/April 2007.

<sup>46</sup> V. Socor, *Turning the Baltic Sea into a Second Bosphorus Oil Corridor*, “Eurasia Daily Monitor”, Vol. 4, Issue 46, 7 March 2007.

<sup>47</sup> The fruit of a Romanian initiative laid out at the 26 January 1998 Agenda Committee meeting, SECI Center for Fighting Cross Border Crime was included on SECI agenda at the 15 April 1998 Agenda Committee meeting. On 26 May 1999 it was signed in Bucharest the Cooperation Agreement for Preventing and Fighting Cross Border Crime, which included the Organisational and Functional Charter of SECI Center in Bucharest. The Center became fully operational in 2001, with the signature of the Centre's headquarters agreement between Romania and Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe (SPSEE). International and intergovernmental institution, SECI Center is made of four working groups for fighting human trafficking, drug trafficking, trade fraud and terrorism.

<sup>48</sup> A key tool in investigating, diagnosing and counteracting the Balkan security environment risks and threats, SEECAP was adopted on the occasion of Budapest NATO summit (29 May 2001) and is a Romanian initiative developed under SECI auspices. Its success led to the setting of the exercise within the *South East Europe Security Cooperation Steering Group* (SEEGROUP), especially created as a structure specialized for this purpose, on a permanent basis. On the occasion of Reykjavik NATO summit, on 15 May 2002, SECI countries reassessed their interest and support for the Balkan security environment study and for the two established tools – SEECAP and SEEGROUP.

<sup>49</sup> We must note that the Republic of Moldova is the only CIS country that is also member of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe. This country gained the observer statute as early as June 2001.

<sup>50</sup> SPSEE's balance sheet for the two Regional Tables – Brussels (May 2000) and Bucharest (October 2001) – is a little more than 5 billion euros. If we add the SPSEE extraordinary meeting on the Former Republic of Yugoslavia and the amounts it granted to the Yugoslavian reconstruction the total amount, from this point of view, is at the very least discouraging. The region's financial needs for supporting the post-conflict and transition reconstruction processes are a lot bigger than these sums.

<sup>51</sup> Vladimir Socor, *Guam in Kyiv: Another Summit of Good Intentions*, May 25, 2006, [http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article\\_id==2371115](http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id==2371115).

<sup>52</sup> During Kyiv GUAM Summit, Romania participated as observer.

<sup>53</sup> See in this volume Șerban F. Cioculescu contribution, *Energy Corridors in the Greater Black Sea Area – tendencies and strategic stakes*, p. 107-170.

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<sup>54</sup> *The World in 2006*, “The Economist Newspaper Limited”, 2005, p. 99.

<sup>55</sup> *The CIA World FactBook, 2005*, <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ro.html>.

<sup>56</sup> *The CIA World FactBook, 2005*, thinks that Russia’s GDP calculated in relation to the purchasing power parity was in 2004 1,408 billion dollars.

<sup>57</sup> *The World in 2006*, “The Economist Newspaper Limited”, 2005, p. 97-100.

<sup>58</sup> His Excellency Mr. Traian Băsescu, *Welcome Speech*, in “Security and Cooperation”, No. 1/2006, George C. Marshall Romania Magazine, p. 3-4.

<sup>59</sup> Andrew Rettman, *EU’s New Black Sea Policy Faces Russian Misgivings*, 16.02.2007, <http://euobserver.com/9/23494>.

<sup>60</sup> Joshua Kucera, *The United States Develops a Strategic Plan for the Black Sea*, 1 March, 2007, <http://www.eurasianet.org>.

<sup>61</sup> Zeyno Baran, *The Future of Democracy in the Black Sea Area*, in “Harvard Black Sea Security Program”, 2005, p.8-24.

## **CONSIDERATIONS ON THE CONCEPT OF THE GREATER BLACK SEA AREA**

**Șerban Liviu Pavelescu**

**A** new concept rose in the technical literature and set in on the major global decision makers' agenda. It is, as far as the European security balance is concerned, a door to an area that, for a long time, has been a side component in its structure. This process adds to the continental security, together with the prior conditions related to the Pontic area, new dimensions and conditions which extends the range of risks and threats operating beyond it.

Beyond this primary analysis, at academic level, the above-mentioned opening is both an invention and a rediscovery. Like other similar post-Cold War concepts, the Greater Black Sea Area<sup>1</sup> tries to find an answer to a complex reality featuring the fluidity and unpredictability of many international security environment developments, as well as a still ongoing examination within the international relations system. We are dealing with a redefinition as much as this area has a distinct identity and voice in the continental security equation and was, since ancient times, a key region for the attempts of keeping security of the states and the overall region.

In practice, the opening in question makes the European security equation even more complicated, adding to it new features and conditions. These developments bring the risk factors, the conflict centers and the Black Sea region's insecurity in the continental security balance, requesting the European decision makers with responsibilities in the area to debate and solve the multiple security matters related to this area.

In this context, our approach has the objective to identify, on one hand, the present defining dimensions of the Greater Black Sea Area concept and, on the other hand, to determine the previous known definitions and circumstances of this concept noted as such in the bibliography that has been dedicated to it. The works on which our study is based have been considered eloquent following a thorough bibliographic research. They are the fruit of a selection carried out among the available documentary papers.

### **Introductory remarks**

As previously mentioned, researchers Ronald D. Asmus and Bruce P. Jackson have relatively recently launched the concept of a Greater Black Sea Area in a study published in June 2004 in the "Policy Review" magazine.<sup>2</sup> Although the expression itself is brought in discussion in this article, the process of establishing its conditions, of structuring and configuration has started a long time before. We can say that studies supporting this guiding principle, structuring within its meanings the idea in question, were launched around the year 2000, being put forward by some of the most important European institutes of security and defense studies.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the approach of the two researchers is not unique; in June 2004, the date of issuance of the above-mentioned article, a study on the same topic – Greater Black Sea Area – by

Mustafa Aydin<sup>4</sup> was issued, under the auspices of the European Union Institute for Security Studies.

A wide range of publications issued in the scientific landscape in this period add to the already mentioned references: “Journal of Southeast Europe and the Black Sea Studies”, “Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans”.

The interest found once again in this region, which begins to be increasingly felt at the beginning of the XXIth century, is not accidental. It answers, on one hand, to the issues characteristic to the region that begin to weight considerably within the continental security once the European and Euro-Atlantic enlargement processes begin. Therefore, if during the last decade of the XXth century the lack of security in the Greater Black Sea Area (we consider the Soviet imperial inheritance, the so-called frozen conflicts, as well as nonconventional security risks, such as illegal migration, cross-border crime or smuggling) can and is greatly ignored or is subject to a side interest, together with Central-Eastern European nations’ European and Euro-Atlantic integration and, especially, together with Romania and Bulgaria’s NATO and EU accession, and with Turkey’s integration perspective, these matters can no longer be overlooked. Besides, the decade of indifference and of managing security risks and threats in the region through third parties (see OSCE and especially the Russian Federation) not only did it not bring at least a partial solution, but perpetuated and increased the regional instability and insecurity climate, which began to significantly alter the European and Euro-Atlantic security environment.

On the other hand, it is obvious that, given the functioning and developments of the international relations system after September 2001, given the setting up of the international antiterrorism coalition and the military operations it is carrying out

in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Pontic area is getting a new geopolitical dimension and is becoming a privileged topic of study for the specialists in the area and not only.

From this perspective, the approaches on defining and analyzing the Greater Black Sea Area, the interest in the lack of security related to it, as well as the decision to actively get involved in managing the regional security environment meet needs fitting into the foreign action of some of the major global players.

### **The GBSA concept. A historical approach**

Beyond these introductory considerations and the interest this area generated in recent years, as to the technical studies and analysis on the Greater Black Sea Area, a first thing to be said is the existence of several tendencies in their development depending on the historical era under study and the era when the studies in question have been drafted. Within the papers on the Black Sea region, the historical periods of the Greek colonialization, the Greek, Byzantine and Ottoman civilizations are approached more or less globally and the existence of an overall view of the region, of a way of understanding and conceiving the Pontic area also requested in the scientific approach is obvious. A perfect example for this tendency is Gheorghe Brătianus famous work “The Black Sea. From Origins till the Ottoman Conquest”<sup>5</sup>. It is true that this kind of analysis is favored by the fact that, during a historical era or another, except for some short periods of multipolarity, the Black Sea region was under the rule, see even the physical occupation, of a single major power, the Byzantine and Ottoman examples being the best known ones.

As presented in the studies on the Greater Black Sea Area which cover the mentioned period of time, this region is well

defined, including in its borders the Black Sea riparian territories. The surface of the Pontic area, as a topic of study, differs depending on the historical era and the geopolitical context, being larger or smaller or linked to one or another of the adjacent continental regions depending on the political, economic and military vector dominant in the region. In this context, the Pontic space is at the same time a defense force of the European continent and a path for the invasions it is subject to. In both cases, it represents a point of contact and communication between different worlds and civilizations.

For modern and contemporary periods, stating the Eastern Crisis and, with the XIXth century, the emergence of national liberation movements, the complexity of developments in various regions of the Greater Black Sea Area allowed and even determined a discontinuous approach of this region. Favorite field for the major Russian-Hungarian-Turkish conflicts that influenced the history of the Eastern Crisis in the last decades of the XVIIIth century and the first half of the XIXth century, the Balkan Peninsula is, by far, the most thoroughly and intensely studied sub region of the area in question.

Such a development in historiography and geopolitical and military analysis resides, one hand, in the notoriety and special implications of developments in the region, which, in the middle of the XIXth century had become a major factor in the European security equation. On the other hand, the emergence of Balkan nations, the establishment of national states in the region, the whole process of inventing<sup>6</sup> the nation and nationality they are going through are also reflected in the historiographic production, and not only, that is dedicated to national construction. The result is a technical bibliography divided on space, national and chronological criteria, treating narrow issues, a bibliography, above all one-sided, whether it is about studies and analysis

published in the countries in the region, or in the European states interested and involved in the management of the Eastern crisis. This feature of the modern era of the scientific production is dominant for the Black Sea region and it perpetuates all along the modern and contemporary era.

Moreover, given the fracture lines that crosses it during the XXth century (the medical line set up at the Soviet Union's frontiers between the World Wars, the post-war Iron Curtain), the region is not even subject of an unitary approach in the synthesis studies on the European continent; the ideological and political reasons, as well as the significance of the confrontation between rival political-military blocks being more important than the geopolitical, geostrategic or historical ones, which favor an overall vision and an interrelated approach of developments of the various sub regional components in the Pontic area.

A feature of bibliography developed on various issues in the last years of the XIXth century and the beginning of the XXth century is that, in this fragmented and changing environment, a topic increasingly deeply and extensively approached which lays the basis of a global vision of the Greater Black Sea Area stands out – the issue of the international navigation statute and conditions in two key-areas that define this region: the Straits and the Danube. These are looked into from various perspectives, ranging from that of the international law to that of balance of powers and political-military developments linked to the confrontation between great powers on settling the conditions for these regions in the rule of the entire Pontic area, such as the Caspian Sea or the Central Area region. The contributions of Nicolae Draşcovici<sup>7</sup> (jurist and international law specialist), Georges Demorgnay<sup>8</sup> and Voyslav M. Radovanovici<sup>9</sup> a.s.o. stand out in the bibliography on this issue stand out.

The post-Cold War period and the disappearance of separation lines set until then by the ideological, political, economic and military confrontation that ruled the international relations system in the post-War years opened a new era in the analysts and researchers' vision of this area and the developments related to it.

Beyond these positive factors that enhanced the potential for a comprehensive, overall approach of the region and the issues related to it, the conflictual developments in this area and the new separation lines that are about to be set in the geopolitical space in question favored, also according to the way the international community reacted to the crisis in the Balkans, Caucasus or in Transnistria, the development of a precise expertise and, most of the times, focused on answers limited to challenges that caught the attention of local and global players involved in the management of the regional security environment. A second separation line that is about to be set is that drawn by specialists between countries belonging to the Pontic space divided into former communist and ex-Soviet nations. These are important study categories involving different systemic approaches and visions of their political, economic, social, military a.s.o. developments. They are followed by countries directly belonging to the Pontic area, such as Turkey, or included into the Greater Black Sea Area, such as Greece, countries which have not experienced communism and are particular cases given their relations to major international security organizations involved in the management of crisis and conflict centers in this area – NATO and the EU – as well as the contribution they are called to bring, from this perspective, within the efforts of structuring and consolidating regional security. In this context, there are various ways of approaching this area and its security issues and they provide this area with

a different geographical, geopolitical and security analysis dimensions depending on the analysis perspective and the point of interest of the developed studies. Together with a unitary approach of this region, with particular delimitations and conditions, there is also, at least for the first post-Cold War decade, a divided approach which adds to its various components values and subordinations outside this area.

The studies and analysis developed in the post-Cold War period by famous technical institutions assert an immediate and determined answer when fundamenting and supporting some decisions of the political decision-makers, as well as the coexistence of the two opposite visions of the region and its components. An example in this sense can be the Balkan region which caught the attention of the international community, mainly NATO and EU's, given the implications of the instability developed in this area to the European and international security. Consequently, looking into and answering to this concern about the area in question, the European Union's Institute for Security Studies has developed several analyses meant to provide the European political decision-makers with an expertise focused on the specific issues they were confronted with and meant to document and lay the basis for their decision in managing the Balkan crisis point.<sup>10</sup> Another example, which takes specialization much further on, is the *Conflict Studies Research Centre* (Sandhurst, UK) which developed a series of parallel studies on the Balkan, Central-Eastern European and ex-Soviet areas<sup>11</sup>.

In parallel with this technical expertise, the research institutions conceived some of the recent studies on the global developments in the Black Sea region and on the geopolitical and geostrategic reference value of this area in the European and Euro-Atlantic security context.<sup>12</sup>

Together with the above-mentioned developments, there is also a second direction consisting of the issuing of synthesis analyses and global analyses on segments or the entire Greater Black Sea Area. Papers like those written by Barbra Jelavich<sup>13</sup> or Misha Glenny<sup>14</sup> are significant to this vision. Other papers we can mention in this context on the Caucasus area include those signed by F. Longuet-Marx<sup>15</sup>, Wilhelm G. Lerch<sup>16</sup> or Michael Mesbahi<sup>17</sup>.

Since the last decade of the XXth century, they are followed by studies that look into general issues linked to the Greater Black Sea Area, a tendency enhanced given the mutations in the international relations system after September 2001. The main topics of this new prospective approach of the overall Greater Black Sea Area are the regional security environment, the risks and threats it is subject to, the development of regional and sub regional cooperation and collaboration, the reform processes carried out in the former communist states in order to meet the targets of consolidating a democratic political regime and a viable market economy. Among these works we mention those written by Terry D. Adams, Michael Emerson, Laurence David and Marius Vahl<sup>18</sup>, Tunc Aybak<sup>19</sup>, Andrew Cottey<sup>20</sup>, Renata Dwan<sup>21</sup>, Sarah Hobson<sup>22</sup>, Oleksandr Pavliuk, Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze<sup>23</sup>, Charles Sebe<sup>24</sup>, or the *Black Sea Regional Profile* issued by the Sofia Institute for International and Security Studies<sup>25</sup>.

### **The contemporary approaches of the GBSA**

In the end of this overview of the technical bibliography on the Greater Black Sea Area and the various aspects of its historical evolution, we can say that, beyond the obvious variety and the analysis lines, sometimes opposite, of the approaches meant to help understand, explain and look into this area, there are also common positions as to acknowledge its existence and

the importance it has in the overall European context. The possible present definitions, as well as the conditions of this area are synthesized in a few already mentioned papers, which lay the basis for our analytical approach whose purpose is to settle some defining coordinates and the conditions linked to this concept. We consider the works coordinated by Graeme P. Herd and Fotios Mostakis<sup>26</sup>, as well as that of Anna Aldis<sup>27</sup>, anticipating and announcing the greater interest in the region residing in the conceptualization of Ronald Asmus, Bruce P. Jackson<sup>28</sup> and Mustafa Aydin<sup>29</sup>.

For Herd and Mostakis, the Black Sea region includes the riparian nations – Ukraine, the Russian Federation, Georgia, Turkey, Bulgaria and Romania. They add countries like Armenia, Azerbaijan, Moldova and Greece which, although not directly belonging to the area, are linked to it through “history, solving frozen conflicts and the common Soviet past”<sup>30</sup>. The region is seen as part of a wider ensemble, the countries in the region being linked to one another both as part of the Pontic region and to various components of geopolitical ensembles to which CIS, for the former Soviet countries, EU and NATO, for Greece, NATO, for Turkey, a.s.o. belong. Moreover, even if not directly included, indirectly, given the nature of the approach and the structure of the topic of study, regions like Caucasus are considered to be part of the Pontic geopolitical ensemble<sup>31</sup>. In this context, the Greater Black Sea Area keeps, on one hand, obvious fracture and separation lines on the analysis pattern dedicated to the Cold War. On the other hand, the way of seeing the Pontic space clearly shows the emergence of a unitary approach of the region as a distinct component of the continental security system, playing a double role: a bridge for Europe with the Central-Asian and Middle Eastern areas, as well as a gatekeeper for the European identity<sup>32</sup>.

The main features of the security environment surrounding this area are the fluidity and the unpredictability of its developments, the overall instability altering some of the countries in the region (especially those belonging to the former Soviet area), and the impact of these risk factors on the overall European security. The main components of regional risks and threats include the frozen conflicts, the overall instability among the former communist states in the region undergoing the process of consolidating democratic political structures and a viable market economy including all risks linked to this process – unemployment, organized crime (in and cross-border), civil society weakness, horizontal proliferation of mass-destruction weapons, illegal immigration, the phenomenon of “weak nations” a.s.o.<sup>33</sup>. We can add a series of classic risk factors, such as the ethnic, religious and political minorities and their dissolutive action towards national states, or inter state conflicts.<sup>34</sup>

Both the role of global players involved in the management of the regional security environment, like OSCE and the UN, and the impact that EU and NATO enlargements have in diminishing and eliminating some of the risk factors to the regional security environment are another point of interest to the authors of the study in question. From this point of view, enhancing NATO’s presence in the region with Romania and Bulgaria’s membership, as well as the perspective of Turkey’s starting EU membership talks are considered to be of a positive influence on the Pontic security environment. The regional cooperation organizations in the region, like the Black Sea Economic Co-operation (BSEC), are considered to lack substance and have little efficiency towards the region’s security risks.<sup>35</sup> The role of big players in this region is another point of interest. In this context, the negative influence that Russia’s relative weakness, as major regional and European player, has on the

developments in the region's security environment, especially as far as the nations belonging to the former Soviet space are concerned<sup>36</sup>, stands out, among other things.

The main conclusion of our approach is the coherence of the Pontic geopolitical ensemble, the particularity and, at the same time, the importance that risks and threats linked to it have on the continental security environment. In this context, given, on one hand, the lack of interest in the area, which dominated among the European structures the last decade of the XXth century, stands out, on the other hand, the need for EU, NATO and other global players to actively get involved in the management of security issues in the Greater Black Sea Area; these developments significantly influence the stability and coherence of the overall European security environment.

The study gathering coordinated by Anne Aldis<sup>37</sup> carries further on the discussion on the Greater Black Sea Area and the circumstances linked to it from various perspectives, be it economic, political, social, military or security. The Pontic area can have variable geographical delimitations depending on the perspective and analysis criteria applied to it. The analysis of Dr. Oleg Serebrian is relevant<sup>38</sup>. Side region and without most of the features of an autonomous geopolitical ensemble during the Cold War, the Black Sea finds its geostrategic and geopolitical potential with the Soviet Union's fall apart and the collapse of Eastern-European communist regimes. Altogether, these events led to a major change in the regional and continental balance: Russia's influence in the European and even Pontic security equation obviously diminished, Turkey temporarily became a regional power and new state players emerged. In its new configuration, the Black Sea region includes both the neighboring countries and those belonging to the geopolitical sub ensembles made of the Balkan and Caucasus regions. The interdependence

of the Pontic and Caspian basins is also one of the defining coordinates of the region. The Russian Federation, Ukraine and Turkey are the regional major players in this context. Dr. Julia Grigorieva and C.W. Blandy's contributions put the emphasis on the region's instability factors, including in the greater Pontic area, by analyzing the conflict situations and the possible solutions to them, both the Balkan and the Caucasus regions.<sup>39</sup> In this context, the frozen conflicts issue and the role of these instability centers within the regional and overall European security environment play a central role in the analyses of the two authors.

Beyond the mentioned contributions, other papers included in this book, such as those by Stuart Hensel, Liviu Mureșan, Giovanni Ercolani, C. W. Blandy and Yury Temirov,<sup>40</sup> also play an important role in the conceptual profiling and geographical, geopolitical and geostrategic delimitation of the Black Sea region. The Greater Black Sea Area is a distinct geopolitical and geostrategic unity with a well-defined role in the continental strategic "concert". Its developments follow the similar changes in adjacent geopolitical spaces, like the European or the Caspian ones, and the active risk factors within the regional security environment, as well as its possible negative developments substantially alter the European security. In this context, the presence of international players like NATO and the EU is not only something to wish for, but also something necessary, and the area in question tends to play an increasingly important role in ensuring their own security. Moreover, the emergency of issues like energy resources makes of the Pontic area the only alternative transit route for the Caspian and Central-Asian energy resources to the European continent; this way the emphasis is put on the reliance on a unique energy resource – in this case, the Russian Federation.

As a conclusion, we can say that the approach coordinated by Anne Aldis provides us with the picture of a well defined Greater Black Sea Area that includes a large region beyond its geographic borders. A convergence point between the European and Central-Asian and Middle Eastern spaces, the Pontic area is a challenge to the EU and NATO, called to resolutely get involved in the management of the regional security environment and in fighting the conventional and non-conventional risk factors within it.

The period of time that separates these first two above mentioned studies of the other two defining the Greater Black Sea Area concept as such in its present meaning is marked by specific studies looking into distinct aspects of the area and the issues linked to it. In this category we can include studies such as those by Thomas Valasek<sup>41</sup>, Nicholas Dima<sup>42</sup> or Alexander Goncharenko<sup>43</sup>.

The Greater Black Sea Area is brought back into public debate in 2004 in the article by the American researchers Ronald D. Asmus and Bruce P. Jackson<sup>44</sup>. The main reason the authors give to their interest in this region resides in the dramatic changes within the international security environment after 11 September 2001 together with a whole range of priority reconsiderations among security risks and repositionings in the global geopolitical and geostrategic map. The developments in NATO and EU's enlargement processes which bring these two international security bodies close to this area can also be added. The overall picture is filled in with issues related to regional resources, mainly the energy resources, vital to ensuring the European security.

The authors delimitate the Greater Black Sea Area on the basis of geopolitical, geostrategic and historical considerations. The region includes, all along with the Pontic basin neighboring

countries, the Balkan and Caucasus regions. There are many reasons for this division, ranging from common history to regional players' common interests. The lack of stability linked to social reconstruction processes in the region's former Soviet and communist nations, the existing open or "frozen" conflict focal points, the non-conventional risk factors related to these developments, such as smuggling, weapons and drug trafficking, illegal migration, cross-border organized crime a.s.o., are the main features of an unstable security environment. Altering not only the regional security, but also the overall continental security, the risk factors in question argue the necessity for the GBSA to be included in the European security map and for the European Union and NATO's involvement in the management of security issues linked to this area. Giving the examples of Balkans and successful stabilization processes of the region, the authors argue the necessity of repeating this kind of experience in the Greater Black Sea Area, underlying the role of the above-mentioned international institutions in promoting and supporting the processes of consolidating democratic political regimes, viable market economies and cooperation and collaboration relations in and between countries.

Moreover, GBSA is not just a frontier, a buffer-area at the EU and NATO's Eastern borders, but also a key link area in connecting the European area to the Caspian, Central-Asian and Middle Eastern regions. The successful efforts of stabilization and democratization of the region, EU and NATO's active involvement in managing the region's security are seen as key instruments for providing a coherent and viable European security environment, for developing stable connections and for positively influencing the developments in the Great Middle Eastern region. At the same time, this approach is meant to

ensure the secure connection and the development of antic trade and transport routes, such as the Silk Way, as well as an easy access to key Caspian and Central-Asian energy resources for the European energy security.

The range of approaches considered for the development of a genuine EU and NATO Pontic policy include, together with encouraging and developing the existent regional cooperation arrangements and agreements, adjusting some of the already tried tools which have proven their efficiency in stabilizing and democratizing some regions such as the Eastern-European and the Balkan ones. The new European Neighborhood Policy, the Partnership for Peace, as well as regional cooperation and collaboration structures set up in the Balkans – the Stability Pact – are considered. The active involvement of these international security organizations is seen, at the same time, as a way to encourage the process of democratization and laying the basis of a functional market economy in Russia and of making this market economy bring a major shift in Moscow's foreign policy in the sense of its return to the "zero sum game" geopolitical instrument.

In parallel to this approach, under the auspices of the European Union's Institute for Security Studies, the study by Professor Mustafa Aydin<sup>45</sup> was published in June 2004. His territorial cut, as well as his arguments in favor of a reconsideration of GBSA's role, are mostly the same as in the case of Asmus and Jackson's article. The difference lays in the analysis perspective, which is not Euro-Atlantic, but European, Aydin's analysis being structured around the European Union's enlargement process. In this context, we have to underline that there is no difference in identifying and looking into the risk factors to regional security, as well as their impact not only on the area in question,

but also on the overall European region. As a difference from the previous study it is worth mentioning the special attention Aydin's approach pays to regional cooperation organizations and arrangements in the region, as well as the importance to the EU of its involvement in the management of the regional security environment, in the processes of society transformation in the sense of democratization and consolidation of ongoing good neighborhood relations in the GBSA. To conclude, we can say that, following a different line of analysis compared to Asmus and Jackson's study, Mustafa Aydin reaches a similar picture of the GBSA, when it comes both to its geopolitical, geostrategic or historical circumstances and the enhancement of risks and threats to its regional security and in defining the course of action for fighting these risks. Justifying, on one hand, that the ownership over the concept with the same name belongs to the American researchers, Aydin's analysis argues, on the other hand, with the differences underlined in the analytical process carried out, as well as with the conclusions which are common to those of the above-cited approach, the necessity and rightfulness of the concept, as well as the GBSA's existence as geopolitical and geostrategic unity.

Following this opening, the number of works on GBSA and the various components of the security, economic, political and military ensemble it creates and on the place and role it plays in the European geopolitical and geostrategic ensemble increased significantly. Specific or general, these works meet a real need of expertise on the area generated by the developments it has followed and the links of this area to the Great Middle East or the Caspian and Central-Asian areas; this need is even greater in the general context of the operations that the international antiterrorist coalition is carrying out in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Studies such as those coordinated by Oleksandr Pavliuk and Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze<sup>46</sup>, the study gathering issued in two volumes by NATO Defense College in December 2005<sup>47</sup> or that published in 2006 by the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program<sup>48</sup> are relevant to this direction. The mentioned editorial production, both the cited contributions and those filling in the recent years' bibliography on this issue, brings new explanations and dimensions to the Greater Black Sea Area concept, its defining circumstances and dimensions. We cannot say though that we are experiencing a significant redefining compared to Asmus, Jackson and Aydin's approaches.

The Greater Black Sea Region is without any doubt, a reality of the European geopolitical map. Meeting and dialogue point, as well as place for trade, cultural a.s.o. exchanges, the Greater Black Sea Area is at the same time a space for confrontation. The existent bibliography on the region helps establishing the picture of a regional security complex in the way suggested by Barry Buzan<sup>49</sup>. On the other hand though, despite all older or newer attempts of some countries, Romania included, to define a distinct political action line on the GBSA, we cannot talk about the existence, among the populations of the riparian countries, of a common identity about belonging to this region.

Tradition, the feature of being a meeting point between areas with different geopolitical, cultural and economic conditions, all contributes to this. The disappointing results of initiatives like BLACKSEAFOR (Black Sea Force) or Black Sea Harmony argue this assertion. Belonging to different economic, political, society and cultural areas, desirous to integrate into various economic, political and security organizations or become members of such bodies, the GBSA states still have a long way to go before establishing and developing a common identity.

Beyond these considerations, as reflected also in the cited studies and analysis, the GBSA concept has an unstable geometry and multiple references. There is neither a unanimously stated definition nor a stable and well defined area to be brought in question. Following the example of other concepts referred to in the contemporary technical literature such as the Great Middle East, the GBSA has a variable geometry adjusted depending on the needs of those who use it in the studies they develop. There is a maximum and a minimum of the geographic area this concept can cover. The minimum means the geographical circumference of the Black Sea and covers only the riparian nations. We find such an interpretation in the analyses on the military cooperation in the Black Sea region and the military tools set up for this purpose – BLACKSEAFOR and Black Sea Harmony<sup>50</sup>. The maximum configuration includes regions like the Western Balkans, Caucasus or the Caspian Sea. With a variable surface, it suffers modifications depending on the point of interest of the approach that analyses and describes the region. Studies on issues such as the energy resources or, more precisely, the need for the European continent to identify and develop alternatives to the Russian energy resources employ the Greater Black Sea Area concept, which includes, in the context, a wide geographical area stretching from the Caspian Sea to the Balkans<sup>51</sup>. The same goes for the study on the security issues of the area, ranging from the geopolitical and geostrategic imbalances generated by the Soviet Union's collapse and the emergence of other nations, former Soviet republics, to the conflicts that altered their internal and international developments in the post-Cold War era<sup>52</sup>.

The main references we can identify in the studies that develop and use the GBSA concept cover energy, security,

environmental protection, post-communist transition and development of democratic political regimes and viable market economies. These categories have various contents, the most important, from the point of view of the technical literature looking into them, being those which belong to regional security and energy resources categories. We consider issues like frozen conflicts, conventional security risks (inter state conflicts, religious, economic, political, ethnical risk factors), as well as the so-called new risks or non conventional security risks (the “weak states” phenomenon, smuggling, institutional corruption, organized crime, drug, weapons and dangerous substances trafficking, illegal immigration). Terrorism and the international antiterrorist coalition’s offensive in Afghanistan and Iraq, the new geopolitical and geostrategic role the Greater Black Sea Area gets in this context complete this picture.

#### NOTE

<sup>1</sup> Among all alternative names (Extended Black Sea Area, Extended Region of the Black Sea, Enlarged Black Sea Area a.s.o.) the authors of this volume chose the name Greater Black Sea Area (GBSA).

<sup>2</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, Bruce P. Jackson, *The Black Sea and the Frontiers of Freedom*, in “Policy Review”, June-July 2004, p. 17-26.

<sup>3</sup> Graeme P. Herd, Fotios Moustakis, *Black Sea Geopolitics: Dilemmas, Obstacles & Prospects*, Conflict Studies Research Center Series, G 84, Sandhurst UK, July 2000; Yannis Valinakis, *The Black Sea Region: Challenges and Opportunities for Europe*, Institute for Security Studies, European Union, “Chaillot Papers”, no. 36, Paris, July 1999.

<sup>4</sup> Mustafa Aydin, *Europe’s next Shore: The Black Sea Region after EU Enlargement*, Institute for Security Studies, European Union, Occasional Papers, No. 53, Paris, June 2004.

<sup>5</sup> Gheorghe Brătianu, *The Black Sea. From Origins to the Ottoman Conquest*, Polirom, Iași, 1999.

<sup>6</sup> According to the definition and process developed by Benedict Anderson (*Imagined Communities*, Verso, London, 1983) and the details presented by Maria Todorova in her work *The Balkans and Balkanness*, Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2000.

<sup>7</sup> Nicolae Drașcovici, *The Bosphorus and Dardanele Issue*, Georg & Cie Librairies-Editeurs, Geneva, 1915; *Idem*, *Our Sea or the Straits Status*, Alexandru A. Terek Printing House, Iași, 1937.

<sup>8</sup> Georges Demorgnay, *The Danube Issue. A Political History of the Danube Bassin. Studies on Various Statutes of Danube Navigation*, Paris, 1911.

<sup>9</sup> Voyslav M. Radovanovici, *The Danube and the Application of the Freedom of Fluvial Navigation*, Geneva, 1925.

<sup>10</sup> Nicole Gnesotto, *Lessons of Yugoslavia*, Institute for Security Studies, Western European Union, "Chaillot Papers", No. 14, Paris, March 1994; Jopp, Mathias, eds., *The Implications of the Yugoslav Crisis for Western Europe's Foreign Relations*, Institute for security Studies, Western European Union, "Chaillot Papers", No. 17, October 1994; Sophia Clement, *Conflict Prevention in the Balkans: Case Studies of Kosovo and the FYR of Macedonia*, Institute for Security Studies, Western European Union, "Chaillot Papers", No. 30, Paris, December 1997; Dimitrios Triantaphyllou eds. *What Status for Kosovo?*, Institute for Security Studies, Western European Union, "Chaillot Papers", No. 50, October 2001; Judy Batt eds., *The Western Balkans moving on*, Institute for security Studies, European Union, "Chaillot Papers", No. 70, October 2004 a.s.o.

<sup>11</sup> It is enough to access the site of this institution, [www.defac.ac.uk/colleges/cscr](http://www.defac.ac.uk/colleges/cscr).

<sup>12</sup> Graeme P. Herd, Fotios Moustakis, eds. *op. cit.* and *Security in the Black Sea Region: Perspectives et Priorities*, Conflict Studies Research Centre Series, G 93, Sandhurst Uk, March 2001; Yannis Valinakis, *op. cit.*, or Mustafa Aydin, *op.cit.*

<sup>13</sup> Barbara Jelavich, *The Balkans History*, 2 vol., The European Institute, Iași, 2000.

<sup>14</sup> Misha Glenny, *The Balkans, 1804-1999. Nationalism, War and Great Powers*, Granta Books, London, 1999.

<sup>15</sup> F. Longuet-Marx, *Caucasus. Old Axes, New Challenges*, Cres, Geneva, 1998.

<sup>16</sup> Wilhelm G. Lerch, *Der Kaukasus, Natiolalitäten, Religionen und Grossmächte im Widerstreit*, Europa Verlag, Berlin, 2000.

<sup>17</sup> Michael Mesbahi, *Central Asia and the Caucasus after the Soviet Union. Domestic and International Dynamics*, University Press of Florida, Miami, 1992.

<sup>18</sup> Terry D. Adams, Michael Emerson, Laurence David and Marius Vahl, *Europe's Black Sea Dimension*, Centre for European Policy and International Centre for Black Sea Studies, Brussels and Athens, 2002.

<sup>19</sup> Tunc Ayback, *Politics of the Black Sea. Dynamics of Cooperation and the Black Sea Realities*, Tauris Publishers, London and New York, 2001.

<sup>20</sup> Andrew Cottey, *Subregional Cooperation in the New Europe: Building Security, Prosperity and Solidarity from the Barentz Sea to the Black Sea*, Macmillan, London, 1999.

<sup>21</sup> Renata Dwan, *Building Security in Europe's New Borderlands: Subregional Cooperation in the Wider Europe*, ME Sharpe and the EastWest Institute, Armonk, New York and London, 1999; Renata Dwan and Oleksandr Pavliuk, *Building Security in the New States of Eurasia: Subregional Cooperation in the Former Soviet Space*, ME Sharpe and the EastWest Institute, Armonk, New York and London, 2000.

<sup>22</sup> Sarah Hobson, *The Black Sea in Crisis*, World Scientific Publishing Co., Singapore, 1999.

<sup>23</sup> Oleksandr Pavliuk, Ivanna Klymush-Tsintsadze, *in the work cited*.

<sup>24</sup> Charles Sebe, *The Black Sea Countries: Fear of Future Conflicts*, L'Harmattan, Paris, 1997.

<sup>25</sup> *Black Sea Regional Profile: The Security Situation and the Region Building Opportunities*, Institute for security and International Studies, Sofia, 2000-2005.

<sup>26</sup> Graeme P. Herd and Fotios Mostakis, *op.cit*.

<sup>27</sup> Anne Aldis, *Security in the Black Sea Region: Perspectives & Priorities*, Conflict Studies Research Centre series, G 93, Sandhurst UK, March 2001.

<sup>28</sup> Ronald Asmus, Bruce P. Jackson, *in the work cited*.

<sup>29</sup> Mustafa Aydin, *op.cit*.

<sup>30</sup> Graeme P. Herd and Fotios Mostakis, *in the work cited*, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 3.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 7.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 3-4.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 12-13.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 14-15.

<sup>37</sup> Anne Aldis, *in the work cited*.

<sup>38</sup> Dr. Oleg Serebrian, *Some Considerations about Reactivation of the Black Sea Geostrategic Ensemble*, in Anne Aldis, *in the work cited*, p. 3-7.

<sup>39</sup> Dr. Julia Grigorieva, *The region under tensions: Current Black Sea Region Stability Factors* and C.W. Blandy, *The Black Sea Basin: Obstacles to Peaceful Development*, in Anne Aldis, *in the work cited*, p. 8-15, 15-2- respectively.

<sup>40</sup> Stuart Hensel, *Economic Reform and the Region's Prospects – A Western View*, Dr. Liviu Mureşan, *The Black Sea Economic Cooperation*, Giovanni Ercolani, *Economic Stability and Security in the Black Sea*, C.W. Blandy, *The Black Sea: Energy Politics and Pressures*, Prof. Yury Temirov, *Security in the Black Sea Region: Military Threats*, in Anne Aldis, *in the work cited*, p. 21-47.

<sup>41</sup> Thomas Valasek, *US Policy toward the Caspian and Black Sea Region*, in "The Quarterly Journal", No.1, March 2003, p.15-22.

<sup>42</sup> Nicholas Dima, *The Black Sea Region: New Economic Cooperation and Old Geopolitics*, in "The Journal of Social, Political and economic Studies", spring 2003, p. 77-96.

<sup>43</sup> Alexander Goncharenko, *Caspian-Black Sea Security Challenges and the Regional Security Structures*, in "The Quarterly Journal", Vol. III, No. 2, June 2004, p. 1-7.

<sup>44</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, Bruce P. Jackson, *in the work cited*.

<sup>45</sup> Mustafa Aydin, *in the work cited*.

<sup>46</sup> Oleksandr Pavliuk, Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze, *in the work cited*.

<sup>47</sup> Jean Dufourcq, Lionel Ponsard, *The Role of the Wider Black Sea Area in a Future European Security Space*, 2 vol., NATO Defense College, Research Branch, Rome, December 2005.

<sup>48</sup> Svante Cornell, Anna Jonsson, Niklas Nilsson, Per Haggstrom, *The Wider Black Sea Region: An Emerging Hub in European Security*, The Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Uppsala, Washington D.C., 2006.

<sup>49</sup> Barry Buzan, Ole Waever, *Regions and Powers. The Structure of International Security*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003, p. 40-83.

<sup>50</sup> We see such an interpretation reducing the region strictly to the Black Sea neighboring countries in the official statements and the studies on the region developed in Turkey and not only. The explanations of such an interpretation express the will of some of the region's countries to avoid a review of the agreements that settle the Straits' international statute and, consequently, the Pontic area. Interview with ASAM (Turkey) specialists in November 2006.

<sup>51</sup> See Alexander Goncharenko, *in the work cited*; Thomas Land, *The Black Sea: Economic Developments and Environmental Dangers*, in “Contemporary Review”, March 2001, p. 144-151; Mustafa Aydin, *Regional Cooperation in the Black Sea and Integration into Euro-Atlantic Structures*, NATO Defense College, research Branch, Rome, December 2005, p. 31-43; A. Necdet Pamir, *Energy and Pipeline Security in the Black Sea and Caspian Sea Regions: Challenges and Solutions*, in Oleksandr Pavliuk, Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze, *in the work cited*, p. 123-156.

<sup>52</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, Bruce P. Jackson, *op.cit.*; Mustafa Aydin, *in the work cited*; Nicholas Dima, *in the work cited*.

# **ENERGY CORRIDORS IN THE GREATER BLACK SEA AREA TENDENCIES AND STRATEGIC STAKES**

**Șerban F. Cioculescu**

**T**oday's world relies on the energy resources, oil and gas being of the utmost importance among them. Until alternative resources are eventually discovered, the importing nations put a significant pressure on the exporting ones and this pressure tends to become even more intense in the near future. Importing countries are vulnerable compared to exporting nations, but the two categories are somehow interdependent.

Of course, these natural resources spread in many regions of our planet, the most notorious ones being the Middle East, Russia-CIS, Northern Africa and Latin America. The International Energy Agency predicts that in the year 2030 the energy demand will be 50% bigger than it is now. Oil, natural gas and coal will represent around 80% of the global energy consumption.<sup>1</sup> According to the International Energy Agency, in 2015 the global energy demand will increase by a third, that is 240 million barrel a day. The oil global demand could be 32% bigger in 2015, reaching 93 million barrel a day. The demand in gas will, in its turn, be 45% bigger.<sup>2</sup>

The Caucasus and the Black Sea area has a special strategic and economic importance, given that it is both a hydrocarbons exporting region and a transport corridor for them. Well founded studies show that in the future the consumption of these resources will increase, given the existence of the great powers, highly industrialized countries. The energy issues will also reshape the security complex of countries in the Greater Black Sea Area (GBSA) in the medium and long term. Given the spread of these resources throughout the planet and the presence of turbulent areas (Middle East, North Africa), we expect the number of global and regional players in the Greater Black Sea Area to grow. Even if there is visible progress in the use of alternative energy, the big importers will continue to rely on oil and natural gas. According to pertinent assessments, oil and gas will cover by 2020 37.9% of the global energy demand.<sup>3</sup>

As we all know, the Greater Black Sea Area is a transit route for Russian, Central-Asian and Caucasus hydrocarbons to Europe. Following the order of their importance, the nations developing regional energy strategies consider mainly big gas and oil exporters – Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, but also Iran. In the future, the US, the EU, China, Japan, but also India and Russia will compete on the global energy market to gain as much access as possible to hydrocarbons and as financially advantageously as possible.

### **Main pipelines**

**Burgas-Alexandropolis pipeline** issued as an energy project in 1991, right when the Soviet Union was collapsing. The pipeline will connect Bulgaria, Greece and Russia and will be 285 kilometers long. The overall cost will be nearly 800-900 million dollars and the transport capacity will be of nearly 800,000 barrel

a day. At the beginning, the capacity will be of only 35 million tons of oil annually and would reach 50 million barrel.<sup>4</sup> Presumably, it will be functional by 2011, connecting Central Asia to the Aegean Sea basin (greater Mediterranean area). It will be 100% private funded. The Russian President Vladimir Putin said that Burgas-Alexandropolis is a priority to Russia's energy sector and to the European importers of Russian area hydrocarbons.<sup>5</sup> Bulgaria and Greece lobbied the EU member states to a great extent in favor of this project, given that it is a pipeline which transits two EU member states. The pipeline will be supplied with Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan oil that will come from Novorossiisk port to the Aegean Sea coast. This way, Russia will avoid transiting Ukraine and Belarus, which have become more difficult politically controlled, and also the Straits, where Ankara is opposing any increase in the transited quantities.<sup>6</sup> According to political analysts, Burgas-Alexandropolis and Burgas-Bitola-Vlore are the most likely routes, Russia, Germany, Greece and Bulgaria giving great support to the project.<sup>7</sup> In any case, Russia will control 51% of the shares in the multinational business enterprise which will build the pipeline, through the companies Trasneft (33,4% of the Russian shares), Rosneft (33,3%) and Gazprom-Neft (33,3%). Transneft owns the monopoly over the oil pipelines in Russia and its director announced as early as April 2006 its big support for the project. 75% of the company is owned by the Russian state but, compared to Gazprom, it has a minimal decision-making independence towards Kremlin. Recently there has been intensive discussions about involving new partners like Chevron Texaco, from the US, and KazMunaigazk, from Kazakhstan, in the construction and exploitation of this infrastructure. Russia seems to put pressure on companies involved in the management

of the *Caspian Pipeline Consortium* – CPC to finance some of the Burgas-Alexandropolis pipeline costs, suggesting to them, according to well founded assessments, this is a condition for increasing the volume of hydrocarbons transiting CPC from nearly 27 million tons annually at present, to over 60 million tones. This increase has been foreseen a few years ago, but it did not take shape, which led to big losses for the two oil companies.

Some political analysts are very critical about Burgas-Alexandropolis project, emphasizing that it would increase EU member states reliance on Russia. Vladimir Socor even says that Burgas-Alexandropolis could be “the first Russian-controlled pipeline on EU and NATO’s territory”.<sup>8</sup> He thinks that this would not be in EU’s interest of diversifying energy resources, because the volume of supplied oil would eventually depend on Moscow’s will. The oil would be brought by ship from Novorossiisk and Tuapse, probably also from Odessa and Pyvdeni ports on the Ukrainean coast.

Russia encouraged the construction of the pipeline to avoid the Turkish Straits area and block possible ecological accidents or Turkish restrictions. The new pipeline would allow avoiding these very crowded corridors and the competition with Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan route. In September 2006, heads of states of the three countries transited by this pipeline signed a political deal to hurry the beginning of its construction, but the misunderstandings among certain oil companies in Greece and Bulgaria over the allocation of exploitation quotas prevented this from happening. President Putin warned the two countries to solve these economic divergences, if not risking losing their statute of transit countries and the economic benefits related to it.<sup>9</sup> This way he made an allusion to Turkey’s previous proposal to Russia to participate in supplying a pipeline between Samsun and Ceyhan ports, which was ignored in favor of that linking

Burgas and Alexandropolis. On 15 March 2007, Putin visited Greece and one of his objectives was the signing by heads of states involved of the agreement on the beginning of construction.

**Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan** links Turkey, Azerbaijan and Georgia. 1,760 kilometers long, the pipeline is the world's second longest. The first transport capacity became operational in May 2005. The US constantly supported its construction, as a way to avoid Russia's total control over the Caspian oil. That is why they said this pipeline was as geopolitically as economically important.<sup>10</sup> Some analysts said even that "Russia saw Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline as a US conspiracy to take Moscow out of the region".<sup>11</sup> Leaders of countries involved in the construction of Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline met on 13 July 2006 in Istanbul to celebrate its inauguration. The main investors are British Petroleum, the Azerbaijan state-owned oil company (SOCAR), the American companies Unocal Corp. and Chevron, Statoil of Norway, TPAO of Turkey and Eni SpA of Italy. The pipeline's strategic importance lies in the will to avoid the Russian geopolitically controlled area and provide the West with a certain degree of independence from Russian resources. The pipeline avoids Russia's territory and the demand of some US officials to achieve the project led it to be labeled an "anti-Russian" strategy. There are eight pumping stations and the Caspian oil is directed to the Mediterranean basin. The European and American companies invested nearly 4 billion dollars in this project. The Turkish port of Ceyhan is the end of an old pipeline (now closed) which used to link Iraq and Turkey. Using this route, Turkey wants to download the maritime hydrocarbons traffic through the Bosphorus and Dardanele Straits, implying the permanent danger of ecological accidents. The daily transit volume of the pipeline is expected to reach 1 million barrel a day.

Moreover, Kazakhstan could start pumping 3 million tons of oil annually in the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, according to the June 2006 framework agreement on the oil transit system from Kazakhstan to Azerbaijan. It was mentioned in 2005 the possibility of setting up a gas consortium between Ukraine, Russia and Germany. But Moscow firmly rejected Kyiv's proposal of including here Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan. From that moment on, Kazakhstan decided to practice a policy of energy independence both from Russia and the West.<sup>12</sup> The sensitive nature of the energy security lies in the fact that the pipeline's route is close to conflict centers in Kurdistan, Chechnya, Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia and Ossetia. The seismic risk is also not to be underestimated. For now, Kazakhstan oil will not run through the pipeline, but by ships and the initial annual volume will not be more than 7 million tones. The 20 million tons capacity will be reached berely in 2010.

Because the Russian company Transneft refused to accept the increase in the Kazakh oil supplied through the *Caspian Pipeline Consortium*, fearing the competition with the Russian oil in transiting the Bosphorus, Kazakhstan would probably channel a big part of its oil towards Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline, after having built a 800 kilometer connection to Baku. Then it will be possible to export annually 25 million tones more through BTC. Kazakhstan has already attracted famous companies for exploiting the Kashagan oil deposit, which is to take shape by 2009.

In 2015, Kazakhstan's oil production will probably reach around 150 million tones yearly (3.5 million barrels a day) and is subject to competition between China, EU member states, Russia, Ukraine a.s.o. The oil companies consortium that built Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan set up a series of very strict safety measures and a *Joint Pipeline Security Commission*, in order to discourage the sabotage or theft attempts by local populations who were

not always willing to accept expropriations. In the three transit countries of the pipeline there is a video surveillance system and also a permanent armed guard system. With British Petroleum (BP) financing, Georgia has recently set up the so-called Strategic Pipeline Protection Department (SPPD), made of over 700 people.<sup>13</sup> Turkey and Azerbaijan did not sign with BP supplementary protection deals, relying on national armed forces. In their turn, the US, in order to discourage potential terrorist attacks on the Caspian Sea hydrocarbons exploitation platforms, launched the *Caspian Guard* initiative, by means of which they provide Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan with equipments and training for the coast guard activities. For its part, Russia suggested the establishing of *Casfor*, a security through cooperation organization of Caspian states, but the major players in region rejected this project.

**Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum** gas pipeline was launched at the end of August 2006. This energy corridor has already been used for transiting natural gas from the big offshore deposit in Azerbaijan, Shah Deniz. It supplies 3.4 million cubic meters of gas and 1,300 tones of condensed gas daily. It is estimated that in the near future it will reach 5.6 million cubic meters and 2,500 tones a day. Although all preparations for launching the pipeline as early as October 2006 were concluded, it was postponed for December of the same year. Georgia gets 5% of the gas delivered to Turkey (as transit charge) and is entitled to buy another 5% at a preferential price (55 dollars for 1,000 cubic meters). Waiting for the Azeri gas deliveries, Georgia received assurance from Azerbaijan that this country can serve as transit corridor for the gas the Georgians buy from Iran. But the maximum transport capacity cannot exceed 2,000 cubic meters a day, which means barely 30% of Georgia's needs.<sup>14</sup>

In 2007, launching new exploitation capacities could raise the production to a level of 6 million cubic meters a day, 8.4 billion cubic meters annually respectively, and 2 million tones of condensed gas. Gas quotas are distributed between Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey according to the agreement the three transit countries for the pipeline signed in December 2006. In 2001 a preliminary deal was signed according to which Turkey would benefit from 6.6 million cubic meters of gas a year, while the remaining quantity would go to Georgia and Azerbaijan.<sup>15</sup> Afterwards, Ankara agreed to give a part of its quota to the other partners. For 2007, the total gas capacity transiting this pipeline will be nearly 1.1 billion cubic meters. Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum allows gas exports to Southern Europe, without Russia's control.

**Baku-Grozni-Novorossiisk.**<sup>16</sup> This pipeline was built for transporting oil from Kazakhstan (Tengiz) to the Russian Black Sea port Novorossiisk, with a capacity of 180,000 tones of oil per tanker. But this pipeline crosses Chechnya and is a potential target for sabotage and terrorist attacks. This corridor offers the following benefits: a greater capacity compared to Baku-Supsa pipeline (6-7 million tones) and the construction of a detour avoiding Chechnya. The connection to the new Caspian oil terminal of Mahachkala was also achieved. Russia was also interested in buying the CPC (*Caspian Pipeline Consortium*) in order to control exports from the Northern Kazakhstan oil fields and make the connection to the great oil terminal in Novorossiisk, Cheskaris, having a nearly 40 million tone capacity. Russia also looked into the possibility to build between Suhodolnaia and Radionovskaia an alternative to the Samara-Novorossiisk pipeline, in order to avoid transiting Ukraine. All pipelines leading to Novorossiisk or Supsa irritate Turkey, because they ease the already jammed traffic through the Straits.

**Baku-Daghestan-Novorossiisk.** Building a pipeline between Novorossiisk and Ceyhan via Georgia was a project intensely supported by Russia, mainly to avoid traffic through Bosphorus and Dardanele Straits and allow Azeri and Kazakh petroleum transit Russia, after the launch of Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan. Because of the Chechnya conflict, Russians did not want to build a pipeline ramification through Northern Caucasus. In fact, there is an obvious competition between Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and Baku-Daghestan-Novorossiisk. The last one is riskier from the Europeans' point of view, because it is transiting the breakaway region of Abkhazia. But Daghestan region faces itself rebellions and guerilla movements of the Islamist separatists and therefore neither this route is very secure. In January 2007, Azerbaijan took a big step towards politically and economically breaking away from Russia. The Caucasian state refused to pay a bigger price for natural gas, as Gazprom had requested (230 dollars) while simultaneously announcing it would no longer supply oil through Baku-Novorossiisk pipeline. The Baku authorities argued that the country needed these oil reserves to use them as fuel for the power plants.<sup>17</sup> Until recently these were kept operational by means of Russian gas ... So, Azerbaijan, which has not developed its oil and gas exploitation infrastructures as much as to fill its internal and external needs, is determined to use the power plants by means of its internal production. The full exploitation of Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan route and of the planned Nabucco pipeline is likely to solve the country's energy situation.

**Baku-Tbilisi-Supsa** pipeline has been operational since April 1999. Thanks to it, Azerbaijan managed to transport its oil through a region out of Russia's control, the main beneficiaries being Azerbaijan and Georgia.<sup>18</sup> Supsa is a Georgian port at the Black Sea.

**Odessa-Brodi** pipeline is 674 kilometers long. The initiative belonged to Ukraine and Poland, with the US support, and the Kazakh and Azer oil was to be transited to the Western Europe. The transit volume was to be 40 million tones annually. The Ukrainian government was trying to gain access to higher quality oil that was not mixed up with lower quality hydrocarbons from the Urals, the way Russia used to do. It was convened to extend the pipeline from Gdansk to Plok and the European Commission approved a grant for the technical and trade viability. The first working capacity of the pipeline became operational in May 2002, involving a 9 million tone transport capacity, which was to reach 14.5 million tones. Caspian oil was to be transited from the new Pivdenny terminal to the meeting point with the big Druzba pipeline and further on to Poland and Western Europe. The Naftohaz Ukrayiny Ukrainian company and the subsidiary UkrTransNafta were to control the pipeline. Russia opposed this project which was in Poland, Baltic States and even Germany's benefit. The oil transit capacity was very little, to the Kyiv government's discontent. Even worse, Ukraine does not have the financial resources required to supply a substantial and continuous flow of Caspian oil for the pipeline. It does not have the funds to link Odessa to the existing refineries either. By means of diplomatic and economic pressures, Russia managed to prevent Kazakhstan from delivering fuel through this corridor. Washington, through the US Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson, supported the pipeline project. In 2003, the Russian-British company TNK-BP tried to lobby for the Caspian oil to be directed to Southern Europe, through the Turkish Straits, instead of Northern Europe, as the Ukrainian government wanted.

Not earlier than April 2003 Kazakhstan, through the state-owned oil company KazMunaiGaz, announced it had reached a trade agreement with companies like Chevron Texaco, Exxon

Mobil, BP, Lukoil – members of Tengizchevroil – stipulating an annual 6 million tones of oil flow through Odessa-Brodi. Since there were neither real Caspian oil offers for the pipeline nor interested potential buyers, the Ukrainian President Kucima said in April 2003 that the pipeline could transport Russian oil, which would have brought Kyiv nearly 90 million dollar profit a year, as transit charges, as well as access to oil for the country's current needs.

Russian energy officials repeatedly said Russia had not wanted its oil to be transited to Northern Europe because the region did not have an oil market. For economic reasons, Russia had to find an oil transit corridor to Southern Europe. US deputy secretary of state for European and Eurasian affairs Steven Pifer criticized this point of view, saying that Caspian oil is Odessa-Brodi's best solution, since there was enough demand and offer. Because of Russia's pressures and the excellent economic perspectives of Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline, which was under construction, the Kazakh ambassador to Ukraine announced Kyiv could not supply this transit corridor with the necessary oil. In September 2006, Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko met his Azeri counterpart and suggested that country agreed to supply 4.5 million tones of oil to Ukraine through the pipeline in question. Baku signaled its interest in diversifying energy exports.<sup>19</sup>

Odessa-Brodi project was again brought in discussion in the summer of 2005, when the European Commission agreed that a European consortium should conclude the necessary studies for the construction of a ramification to the pipeline up to the Polish city of Plock. The PKN Orlen Polish company is directly interested in developing or taking over energy infrastructures in Poland and Northern-Eastern Germany and therefore could be the beneficiary of the pipeline's extension to Plock.

Still, at the end of 2006 the Ukrainian President's decision to give up the connection to the Plock terminal was pretty obvious. The Ukrainian business circles around Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich urged the connection to the big Druzba pipeline, which crosses Ukraine and Slovakia, managing to take on their side the Ukrainian energy and fuels ministry Iuri Boyko as well.<sup>20</sup> In this case, processing capacities of Litvinov and Kralupy refineries in the Czech Republic are to be employed. The Ukrainian government informally affirmed its preference for interconnecting this pipeline to the Slovakian pipeline Transpetrol, which is part of Druzba pipeline. At the same time, Kyiv unofficially negotiated with Gazprom the construction of a 230 kilometer long connecting gas pipeline (20 billion cubic meters a year capacity) between Bohorodcany and Ujhorod, that is at the Slovakian border.

Should Ukraine accept the Slovakian solution as a replacement for the Polish one, as far as the EU member states are concerned, it would be a less happy scenario. The reason is that Russia has big chances to buy the Slovakian oil pipeline, which would prevent the Europeans from significantly reduce the Russian monopoly over the Caspian gas. Poland is one of the main supporters of Ukraine's bid for NATO and EU integration and the announcement made by the President Yushchenko at the end of October 2006 on changing the pipeline's direction caused irritation in Warsaw. On the other hand, in January 2007 the European energy commissioner Andris Piebalgs announced Brussels' interest in building a "ramification" of Druzba pipeline towards Lithuania, so that the CIS oil would reach Poland and the Baltic states as well.

**Blue Stream.** It is a pipeline Russia directs towards Turkey in order to diversify the Russian export strategy and prevent

the Western European competition from entering the Turkish market. It comprises two twin pipelines, with a 565 billion cubic feet capacity (Bcf). Its construction was completed in October 2002 and the estimated costs reached nearly 3.3 billion dollars. Since February 2003, it has been supplying the gas flow on a permanent basis. Russia, Turkey and Italy are involved in this project based on a joint venture between Gazprom and the Italian company ENI and launched in 1997. It is a deep sea pipeline, reaching in some places 2,150 meters below surface. To this end they used Saipem 700 technology, provided by the Italian company ENI. Blue Stream begins in Southern Russia, at Izobilnoy, runs across the Black Sea basin, reaching Samsun in Turkey and further on Ankara. So, more than 800 kilometers of the pipeline run across Turkish territory. In September 2006, Russian President Vladimir Putin met Alexei Miller, Gazprom director, and suggested the construction of a second Blue Stream pipeline with a double route – for gas and oil. This way, the transport capacity would increase from 3.7 billion cubic meters in 2006 to nearly 30 billion cubic meters when the new pipelines become operational. Blue Stream 2 will be able to transport 8 billion cubic meters per year, out of which 5 billion are meant for Italy. In principle, the Italian company ENI and Gazprom agreed to sign a preliminary deal in this sense, but Hungarian company MOL is interested in this project too.

Turkish public opinion is somehow worried about Turkey's energy reliance on Russia, but also about the Russian intention of restructuring the Turkish pipeline system. Moreover, Ankara does not want to irritate the EU, whose membership it is aiming at. The EU does not want to see Russia take control of all energy transport corridors to Europe. The same goes for Turkey.<sup>21</sup> But it does not want to block the project for fear of Russian retaliations such as reducing the energy flows through Blue Stream

or choosing an energy corridor to Greece, the big historic rival. Turkish officials are aware that Russia also conceived Blue Stream 2 as a rival to Nabucco pipeline, since there is very likely for the first pipeline to become operational before the second one does, given the smaller distance and the geographical obstacles.<sup>22</sup> They also understand that Europeans will not accept anything hostile to Nabucco project in which they put a lot of hope as far as diversifying energy supply routes is concerned.

Still, if the Turks agree to the Russian plan on supplementary pipelines, it is possible to witness the construction of a pipeline linking Ceyhan and Samsun and therefore it could end up to linking Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan to Blue Stream<sup>23</sup>, the latter being an underwater gas pipeline connecting through the Black Sea the Russian port of Djugba to the Turkish port of Samsun (with an annual capacity of 16 billion cubic meters).

Still, Turkey's reticence could vanish very quickly, given that some EU member states are willing to sign deals with Russian oil and gas companies as well, even against Nabucco project. At the middle of March, the Hungarian government announced its willingness to accept the extension of Blue Stream from Turkey and the Balkans on Hungarian land. If Hungary tends to become an energy connection point for the Russian gas reaching Central Europe, then the EU member states solidarity will suffer to a high degree. Some critics accused Budapest of sabotaging Nabucco project, so a possible yes from Ankara would only worsen the already tensed atmosphere. The Turkish government will not be able to say, like the Hungarian one, through the voice of its prime minister, that Nabucco is "a far away dream", because it assured repeatedly it is highly interested in its accomplishment. A possible failure for Nabucco would increase the lack of confidence many Europeans have towards Turkey, as potential candidate for EU membership.

**Constanța – Panchevo – Trieste.** Romania is very interested in accomplishing this project of the Paneuropean Oil Pipeline (PEOP) through which the Caspian oil would reach Italy, crossing the Western Balkans. The project is competing Burgas-Alexandropolis, the latter having Russia's strong support. Romanian decision makers had the support of influential political and economic circles in France and Italy, but also the diplomatic lobby of EU and US, which acknowledged the importance Constanța port terminal would have in transiting Caspian oil to Western Europe. Midia and Năvodari are considered as valuable refining centres (petrochemistry facilities) as well. Romania would spend around 1.25 billion dollars on a volume of 40 billion tons of petroleum a year or even 2.1 billion dollars on a volume of 80-90 billion a year. In exchange, it would receive as transit charges enough oil to supply most refineries in Romania. The oil would come from Kazakhstan to Novorossiisk and further on to Constanța. Romanian and foreign experts determined that the route Romania-Yugoslavia (Serbia)-Croatia-Italy (Trieste) would be the optimal version economically speaking. The pipeline would be around 1,400 kilometers long, also considering the possibility of using a second terminal at the Adriatic Sea, that of Omisali. There were rumors about transiting more than 30-40 billion tons of crude oil annually (660,000 barrels a day). The estimated cost would be 1-1.5 billion dollars. Romania has the advantage of already having several completed parts of the pipeline, namely that between Constanța and Pitești; it only has to set up Pitești-Panchevo link by reversing the operating direction of oil pumps in the Serbian city. The oil would run from Panchevo to Trieste and Omisali at low costs.<sup>24</sup> Omisali, a Croatian port at the Adriatic Sea, is the route that would allow a quicker connection to Trieste, through Slovenia (*South East European Line*). Political risks are relatively low, because Serbia, inheriting together with

Montenegro former Yugoslavia, is bidding for NATO and EU membership and therefore it is less likely to witness once more conflicts such as those in the 1990s of the past century. Possible oil pollution of rivers in Southern Romania and, implicitly, of the Danube, is a higher risk. This pipeline could have a ramification to Southern Hungary and Central Slovenia which would run to Trieste. Here they could set up the interconnection with Trans-Alpine Pipeline that transits the fuel to Austria, Germany and The Czech Republic. Although Romania has taken major diplomatic efforts, trying to convince Western countries of the strategic and economic benefits of this energy route, it seems that Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan was the favorite one. There is a rivalry between these routes – Constanța-Trieste and Burgas-Alexandropolis, including Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan<sup>25</sup> – but this fact should not alter the relations between the countries involved.

**Nabucco** is an ambitious project of transiting gas from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and, possibly Iran<sup>26</sup>, to Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Austria. The estimated cost is nearly 5 billion dollars, out of which Romania should pay 800 million euros.<sup>27</sup> The pipeline will be 3,300 kilometer long. In June 2006, Romania, together with the other countries involved, signed in Wien the agreement for the beginning of the construction works. The EU has great hopes for accomplishing this pipeline whose construction could start in 2008 and would conclude in 2011 in the best scenario. It would not be fully operational before 2020, when it is estimated to transit between 26 and 32 billion cubic meters a year (between 70 and 90 million cubic meters daily). Initially, they will exploit gas in the huge Azeri offshore deposit of Shah Deniz (over 1,000 billion cubic meters).

On 26 June 2006, the European Commission gave the green light for Nabucco project. The companies involved in the project

are: Botas (Turkey), Bulgar-Gaz (Bulgaria), Trans-Gaz (Romania), MOL (Hungary), OMV (Austria), each one with a 20% quota. These companies asked the European Commission to allow an opt-out from the stipulation stating that access for the operators to the pipeline should be granted at a previously set price, in order to be able to sign long-term supply agreements (more than 10 years). Sources close to the European energy commissioner Andris Piebalgs say that allowing these opt-outs is possible for a simple reason: initially neglected, this project is very interesting for the EU, global player facing an unpleasant dependence on the Russian oil and gas imports. If accomplished, Nabucco would allow the reduction of the Russian influence over energy flows in Europe. “The European Commission is interested in the <Nabucco> project, as an alternative energy source”, Ferran Tarradellas Espuny, energy commissioner’s spokesperson, told “Cotidianul” newspaper in 2006: “Building a new gas pipeline, linking Europe to Turkey region, is a priority to the Commission, interested in diversifying its sources and infrastructure”.

The Austrian company OMV holds 50% of the company that would build “Nabucco”. Many European nations hope that, in time, some of the US sanctions against Iran would be lifted, so that the Iranian gas could be used together with the Azeri and Kazakh ones. In 2006, Kazakhstan managed to export 57 million tones of petroleum. 25 million tones were directed to the *Caspian Pipeline Consortium* (CPC) and sent to Novorossiisk, 15 million tones to Russia through Atyrau-Samara pipeline and another 2.5 million tones to Orenburg refinery in Russia. So, most of the available oil reserves were sent to Europe, via Russia. China barely received 2.5 million tones through Atasu-Alashankou. Some political-economic analysts see a tendency of Kazakh political authorities to leave the so-called strategic alliance with Russia in a “latency state”, while multiplying the cooperation

and partnership signals both with Europe and the US and China. This way, a separation between Russia and Kazakhstan is taking place step by step and a state of “latent rivalry” is taking shape.<sup>28</sup> Russia does not also like the Sino-Kazakh pipeline and Astana’s future participation in supplying Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline or even Nabucco pipeline. In January 2007, the Kazakh Prime Minister, Karim Masimov, asked for a strict control to be instated on the foreign oil companies activating in this country, suggesting the privileges the oil Russian companies were enjoying could no longer continue.

The political analyst Vladimir Socor proves that Russia has a quasi-monopoly on the energy resources exported in Kazakhstan, that is 43 tones of a total of 57 million tones of Kazakh exported oil.<sup>29</sup> On 26 June, energy ministers of the countries benefiting from the future pipeline (transited by the pipeline) met in Wien, together with the EU energy commissioner, Andris Piebalgs, and signed the ministerial declaration supporting Nabucco. Undoubtedly, it has a huge economic and geostrategic importance to the EU and its member states, being considered a key energy project. This is why any kind of pressures from Russia or other countries, which could hamper this project, would generate strong reaction from the EU. And the transit countries would probably acquire a more important geopolitical role within the EU.

**Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC)** is a big investment project with foreign participation. Its costs were estimated at nearly 1.5 billion dollars. CPC Russia and CPC Kazakhstan became partners in this project in which a total of ten companies from seven countries are involved. Russia owns 24% of CPC shares and Kazakhstan, 19%. Russia sells 90% of its annual<sup>30</sup> exports through Novorossiisk, but the traffic jam caused by the tankers in the Straits and the ecological risks irritate Turkey.

In December 2003, Turkey restricted the Straits traffic, evoking national security.

The main pipeline transports oil from Western Kazakhstan to the new Russian maritime terminal (Novorossiisk) and is 1,510 kilometers long. If the initial stages of its construction were financed by the private companies involved in the project (Chevron, KazMunayGaz), the costs of the future extension will be covered from CPC's profits. CPC began its activity in October 2001 and in 2002 oil quality bank was introduced, a mechanism allowing for oil transporters to know the market value of its various assortments. If in 2003 the pipeline transited 16 million tone of oil, by the middle of the next year the volume reached 22 million tones annually and 27 million tones in 2006. The fathers of this project set up a State commission for acceptance, which thoroughly verified the construction applications, the safety of exploitations and of environmental security. CPC's capacity is to increase by 2.5 times in the following years, by means of building a new pumping station, new stocking capacities and a loading facility. In the final development stage, CPC will allow the transit of 67 million tones annually. The difference between CPC and other pipelines lies in the fact that it has been built with the funds of oil transporting companies, for their own needs and not to serve third parties. The management of the transited quantities and the prices are subject to the parties' agreement, following the contractual responsibilities.

CPC's activity consists mainly in exploiting the Tengiz oil deposits, the source of most of the 60-65 million tones of oil Kazakhstan extracts and exports. Though having a huge potential, this deposit only supplied 13 million tones annually in 2004, 2005 and 2006, instead of the 20 millions that had been planned since 2005.

Although Tengiz Chevroil and Exxon Mobil companies, which are exploiting this deposit, say they can increase the extraction level, Russia has not yet agreed to increasing CPS pipeline's operational capacity from 27-30 million tones annually (2005 and 2006) to 65 or even 72 million tones annually in 2009. The Russians are evoking technical, environmental problems, but also transit charges, managing authority a.s.o. in order to favor Transneft Company, willing to take control over the Novorossiisk terminal. Transneft management (including the Russian energy minister Viktor Khristenko himself) did not give the green light to CPC's extension, which made it subject to harsh criticism in the media. Financial reasons and consortium participation level were among the reasons the company's management evoked. And this, although Kazakhstan announced it could supplement the oil volume for CPC, following the increase in the extraction at Tengiz deposit (nearly 12 million tones annually)... In April 2006, Transneft vicepresident Sergei Grigoriyev said he did not want to see a hard competition between Russian and Kazakh oil over the right to cross the Straits.<sup>31</sup> In the future we can expect the Kazakh state to direct a large oil quantity to Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and also to China.

CPC is probably the only private oil pipeline in Russia and that is something Moscow authorities do not like.<sup>32</sup> It is not difficult to see that Russia wants to monopolize the transit routes for hydrocarbons to Europe, serving as an intermediary between Central-Asian and EU nations. The tendency to use hydrocarbons transited through CPC to supply a pipeline such as Burgas-Alexandropolis, that would avoid Turkish Straits, suggests that Moscow seems to be determined to also use CPC as a geopolitical and geoeconomic "weapon" against the US and the EU.

At the same time, tensions with Turkey over transiting Bosphorus and the danger of environment pollution are difficult

to overcome over the long term. CPC's importance is linked to Russia's desire to ensure a monopoly on oil transit from Kazakhstan to Europe. It is estimated that 90% of the oil exports and 100% of Kazakh gas are heading to Russia or transiting it. Kazakhstan set up a project of a Trans-Caspian pipeline, departing from Tengiz, going to Turkmenistan, running under sea to Baku and linking to Tbilisi-Erzurum corridor. The project is to be presented to the European Commission for political approval and financial support.

Moscow did its best to prevent the construction of pipelines that would avoid it and link Kazakhstan to Georgia (it also did not allow Kazakh oil access to Russian ports from where it would be sent to the West), Turkey and Ukraine. Tengiz oil production has a single transit corridor, namely Tengiz-Novorossiisk, placed under the control of Russian and foreign companies. Lately, Russian companies chose to keep the exploitation capacity level at 13 million tones annually, which caused irritation to the Kazakh government and the American companies Chevron and Exxon Mobil.<sup>33</sup>

Finally, Kazakhstan and China built a big pipeline to the East (to Xinjiang in Western China) and promised to supply oil for Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline and gas for Nabucco pipeline. By means of tariffs, Russia prevented big Western consortiums – Exxon Mobil, Chevron - from using CPC pipeline at the level they wanted. Russians are trying to prevent the construction of a big Trans-Caspian pipeline that would have them lose control over the Central-Asian gas and force them to buy it at a price closer to those on the free market.<sup>34</sup> This is why Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan's proposal to begin the construction of the Trans-Caspian pipeline will certainly not be welcomed in Moscow. It seems that Kazakh officials felt Russia's irritation. On 27 February 2007, Baktykoja Izmuhambetov, Kazakh energy minister, said, during a meeting with Azeri foreign minister,

Elmar Mammadyarov, that Astana held talks with European and American officials on the project, but his country could not ignore Russia's opposition, whose approval depends on the agreement of all Caspian riparian nations, including Iran.

It is now for the EU and US officials to encourage the project as convincingly as possible. But Kazakhstan has already reached a production level of 29 billion cubic meters between 2006-2007 and is expecting a level of 40-50 billion between 2010-2015. The government in Astana seems to be afraid the Russian monopoly over its gas exports will be kept in place and has therefore to choose between encouraging China's expectations (which hopes to import no less than 10 billion cubic meters of gas in the following years) and taking the Euro-American version of the Trans-Caspian pipeline. In this Trans-Caspian project, Azerbaijan seems to be the main regional link of support and Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, the big beneficiaries of the opportunity to export hydrocarbons to the West.

### **Pipeline projects**

**Georgia-Ukraine-EU (GUEU).** It is the project of a gas pipeline, under the auspices of London based *Pipeline Systems Engineering* and New York based *Radon Ishizumi* consulting companies. Its objective is to bring Caspian gas through Georgia, on the Black Sea bottom, and making this way the connection to an existing Trans-Caspian pipeline. The first exploitation capacity will rely on the big gas deposit of Shah Deniz, in Azeri waters, with an estimated 8 billion cubic meters per year. Shah Deniz alone could supply nearly 20 billion cubic meters annually. From Georgia, the pipeline could head to Ukraine or Poland. The project considers the possibility of GUEU being a pipeline derived from Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum on Georgian territory, then

to Supsa, on the Black Sea shore, to Feodosia (Ukraine). From this point it could link to one of the gas pipelines transiting Ukraine to Poland. It could end up in a parallel situation between Poland and Germany, the latter receiving gas through the Russian pipeline North Stream (the Baltic gas pipeline to be built), and the first, via Ukraine.

Some analysts say that, should Russian companies take control over the Ukrainian pipeline system, GUEU could be directed towards Romania, North of Constanța, and on its deep sea route, between Georgia and Ukraine, it would cross Blue Stream.<sup>35</sup> From 8 billion cubic meters in the first stage, the pipeline would transit 16 billion cubic meters a year and 32 billion in the third stage, by collecting important gas quantities from Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan. It is very likely for the EU nations to back this project, given their will to reduce their energy dependence on Russia.

#### **Turkmenistan-Ukraine-Balkans Trans-Caspian gas pipeline.**

It is a US launched project in 1998 with a 16 billion cubic meters annually in the first stage and 32 billion afterwards. Turkmenistan has large gas deposits but usually it did not want to ignore Russia's opposition against this project. In 2006, shortly before his death, President Nyazov had decided to no longer accept the cost which Russians were requesting for the gas they were mixing with their own and supplying to Ukraine. He had signed a deal with China on a feasibility study on a pipeline that would have transited Turkmen gas to the Eastern neighborhood. At the same time, he was very interested in the perspective of a Trans-Afghan gas pipeline, which would have allowed gas exports to India and Pakistan. The lack of power that followed his death left the country vulnerable to Russian pressures. The new interim leader Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov and his entourage left the impression they were determined to no longer accept

Turkmenistan's energy "vassality" position toward Russia. Diversifying gas export options became a priority of the country's foreign policy.<sup>36</sup> Russia is against Turkmenistan's attempt to build and supply a Trans-Caspian pipeline (TCP) together with Azerbaijan. Moscow wants Kazakhstan to be part of this project as well. In fact, Russia managed to get satisfaction in May 2007 when Presidents of Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan agreed to build a Trans-Caspian gas pipeline together with Russia, ignoring EU and US suggestions to avoid Russian territory.

**Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline** could be extended to Greece and the Balkans, once Turkey would have filled its gas needs. It would be necessary to have pipelines transiting gas from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan.

**Odessa-Brodi-Plock** (Poland). Should it have Kazakhstan's agreement to supply nearly 10-14 million tones of oil annually, the pipeline could use the services of Central European refineries, escaping Russian pressures of inducing a different route, namely to Slovakia. Poland could offer Plock or Gdansk terminals, or could lease or build a terminal at Brodi, in Ukraine, processing Kazakh oil in refineries placed out of Gazprom's control.

**Kashagan (Kazakhstan)-Ukraine** (Romania or Bulgaria) is a Trans-Caspian pipeline project, which would allow avoiding Russian intermediary and transiting hydrocarbons from Kazakhstan to Central and Western Europe.

### **The Caspian Sea and the Black Sea area**

Within the "big competition" between Russia and the West over taking control over energy resources, the Caspian Sea area

has a key-position. It is an area of special economic, geopolitical and strategic importance. We mention that riparian nations have not reached an agreement on this sea's legal statute, more exactly on the delimitation of hydrocarbons exploitation areas.

Estimates show 235.7 billion oil barrels and 560 billion cubic meters of gas<sup>37</sup>, according to the US Department of Energy (USDE). For 2005, the USDE and the International Energy Agency indicate 16-32 billion oil barrels (for sure) and a potential of 206 billion barrels<sup>38</sup>, meaning 2.7% of the world's reserves.<sup>39</sup> Kazakhstan alone could hold nearly 70-80% of these oil deposits, followed by Azerbaijan.<sup>40</sup> Turkmenistan and Iran hold big gas deposits as well, but there are geographical, political and logistic barriers impeding wide access for gas to Europe. Other estimates indicate 3-4% of the world's oil and 4-6% of the world's gas deposits.<sup>41</sup> In 1995, American Petroleum Institute indicated 659 billion barrels of reserves in the perimeter of Caspian nations, meaning two thirds of the certain world's oil deposits (nearly 1,000 billion barrels)! In April 1997, The Wall Street Journal estimated "possible" reserves in the Caspian basin to be around 178 billion barrels. The value of Caspian-Central Asia reserves lies in their easy pipeline transit to Europe, given the danger that Big Middle Eastern deposits could become little accessible because of turbulences and accidents or because Russia could use increasingly often the energy blackmail while China could acquire an increasingly important share of global resources.

Before Soviet Union's collapse, Moscow and Teheran shared Caspian waters, according to the 1940 Soviet-Iranian Trade and Navigation Agreement. The treaty did not state whether it was about a sea or a lake though. This dispute is going on today, some nations wishing to apply the Montego Bay UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, while others choosing the joint exploitation of resources. Russia, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan

want to share jurisdiction over sea bottoms on the basis of the median line principle, while Iran and Turkmenistan would prefer a condominium of all riparian countries. Following the median line, Kazakhstan would have a 28.4% quota, Azerbaijan, 21%, Russia, 19%, Turkmenistan, 18% and Iran, 13.6%. In the case of joint exploitation, each of the five countries would get 20% of the sea bottom.<sup>42</sup> In 1997, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan agreed to share territorial waters according to the median line principle, signing a deal in this respect. Russia and Kazakhstan signed in 1998 a bilateral agreement delimiting waters in their contact area, namely the sea bottoms, while waters were declared common property. In theory, all riparian nations agree only on the free navigation on all sea's surface.<sup>43</sup>

Available estimates, as well as undertaken exploitations, indicate there are rather small oil and gas deposits in the Black Sea area. It is about nearly 400 million tones of crude and condensed oil and 1,530 billion cubic meters of gas. Romania, Ukraine and Turkey are dominating GBSA's energy environment.<sup>44</sup> The importance of the Black Sea lies especially in its geographic position between Central and Eastern Europe, Middle East and Central Asia Area, being a transit area for the Caspian oil to the West.

## **Energy potential of GBSA's nations**

### **Azerbaijan**

This Caspian riparian country has particular oil and gas resources, both in its subsoil and *offshore*. Following the launch of Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum, Azerbaijan has 3.8 billion cubic meters of gas coming from Shah Deniz. Other 4.5 billion of cubic gas are extracted annually from soil deposits. At the end of 2006,

Azerbaijan gave up buying gas from Russia, cancelling the contract signed with Gazprom, because this company increased without any justification, in its opinion, natural gas prices. This unpleasant event generated an energy crisis in Azerbaijan, which was partially overcome only by increasing the extractions in Shah Deniz deposit. In November 2006, British Petroleum announced it had begun gas production at Shah Deniz, being ready to start exporting should the necessary political signal exist. The South-Caucasian pipeline has not been yet completed on the Turkish territory, so for now Georgia alone can receive gas. The best gas exploitation at Shah Deniz will allow Georgia and Turkey to buy Azeri gas for 120 dollars a barrel, so a lot cheaper than the price Gazprom is asking.<sup>45</sup> This explains the hampering Russia has been doing for years to block the project.

Moscow announced its intention to increase the price of oil it is selling to Azerbaijan up to 200 dollars per thousand cubic meters, which made the Azeri president, Ilhan Alyev, declare that starting with 2007 its country would give up on Russian gas. Baku considered unjustified the price increase from 110 to 230 dollars per thousand cubic meters. In recent years, Azerbaijan has been importing annually from Russia, through Gazprom, nearly 4-4.5 billion cubic meters of gas. At the same time, in 2007, Gazprom will reduce the quota of gas transited by Southern Caucasus nations from 4.5 billion cubic meters to 1.5 billion meters. Sergei Kupryanov, Gazprom's representative in Baku, declared in December 2006 that the 1.5 billion cubic meters of gas would "fully cover Azerbaijan's needs, because the following year his country will increase its own gas production".<sup>46</sup> During the last two-three years, the Azeri president repeatedly showed its willingness to get closer to the West and get energy independence from Russia. It seems he has rejected the proposal of his counterpart, Vladimir Putin, of becoming part of a common

policy of aligning quotas and prices for the energy supplied to the West. Afterwards, some political analysts say that Azerbaijan refused to join Russia, at its request, in its action of punishing Georgia, on the background of increasing tensions in bilateral relations between Tbilisi and Moscow in 2006. Announcing a bigger tariff for the gas sold to the Azeri nation, Russia proved its will to sanction third countries that refuse to support the political-energy strategies applied to those opposing to its policies.<sup>47</sup>

Azerbaijan is therefore a 100% on Georgia, Ukraine and possibly Belarus' side in their dispute with Gazprom over energy tariffs of this monopoly company. For Baku, Tbilisi is a "natural" ally as far as both getting closer to the West and transiting hydrocarbons to Europe avoiding Russia controlled territories are concerned. SOCAR (Azeri state-owned oil company) promised to increase its gas production in 2007, up to 2 billion cubic meters. Should the route of the pipeline linking Azerbaijan and Turkey not be ready on the Turkish territory by 2007, but in 2008, the Azeris will be able to take over the Turkish gas quota for the current year as well (2 billion cubic meters) or share it with the Georgians.

The 4 billion cubic meters infusion will cover the 3 billion worth losses caused by the cancellation of the contract with Gazprom. Russian reprisals have their price, but Azerbaijan can afford to take this step. In a few years time, it can supply all its energy needs with its own production, while in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict Russia is anyway supporting Armenia and therefore Azerbaijan has nothing to lose. Until 2006, the Azeris have been importing cheap Russian gas and using it for their thermoelectric plants, supplying a large part of internal energy needs and being able to export their own gas at much higher prices. So, although going through a gas crisis, Azerbaijan says yes to delivering a certain quantity to Georgia, considering

strategic and diplomatic reasons rather than economic ones. It is the typical infusion of resources that a nation makes in another allied state's economy, or in that of a country seen as an ally, without considering a break alliance scenario.

### **Georgia**

This Black Sea riparian state has little own gas and oil resources. Therefore, it had a tradition to import these resources (mainly gas) from the Russian Federation. At the same time, in the 1990s it imported electricity from Russia and Armenia. When Gazprom rose the gas price to 235 dollars per thousand cubic meters, Tbilisi asked and received Azeris' support, given that in recent years Azerbaijan has been getting closer to the US and EU while going away from Russia. At the beginning of 2006, when Russia cut the gas supplies (the pipelines to Georgia blew out mysteriously), the Georgians used Azeri gas (3 million cubic meters a day). Azeri gas reaches Georgia through Astara-Gazi Mahomed-Gazakh pipeline, which was put back into use in 2005. In December 2006, given the insufficient Azeri gas offer and since Azerbaijan itself had difficulties in supplying its own gas needs, the Georgian government authorized several private companies to sign agreements with Gazprom for taking over small fuel amounts for January and March 2007. Georgia will probably manage to eliminate its reliance on Russian gas by the end of this year. In December 2006, following the agreement signed with Turkey and Azerbaijan on exploiting Shah Deniz gas deposits, Georgia receives annually a part of the gas transiting Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum pipeline. We are talking about 250 million cubic meters – the main supplied amount – and a 200 million cubic meter worth bonus as equivalent to the cost of transiting the Georgian territory. The Georgian state gets another 50

million cubic meters of gas for a preferential cost of 62 dollars per thousand of cubic meters as well.

According to the agreement Baku, Ankara and Tbilisi signed on 6 December 2006, Turkey agreed that a part of the quota it is entitled to from exploiting Shah Deniz gas deposit would be shared between Georgia and Azerbaijan.

Supplying gas from Iran, despite the irritation this gesture is likely to cause in Washington, could be another solution. Iran often does not consider Russia's plans in the selling energy and is following its own interests. So, the Georgians receive nearly 1.1 billion cubic meters per year, meaning two thirds of its needs. Despite these, in January 2006 Iranian President Ahmadinejad suggested Russia set up a cartel for gas exports, following the OPEC model. Even though it knew Russia would not agree to the plan, for political and economic reasons, Tehran did not want to pull to the Europeans an alarm signal on the possible consequences of sanctions taken against this nation that would not give up its nuclear projects.

Because of the frozen conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, there is no such thing like enough security for hydrocarbons pipelines transiting sensitive areas. In January 2006, a sabotage in South Ossetia cut the gas and electricity flows to Georgia, forcing this country to ask its neighbors for emergency electricity supplies. A possible solution would be to prepare hydroelectric plants, this country having a rich hydrographic network.

### **Armenia**

It is by far the nation with the poorest natural energy resources, it does not have known oil resources, but only hydro plants barely supplying 7% of the nation's energy needs. It imports oil and gas from Russia, Turkmenistan and Iran. In the summer of

2006, Iran started to supply Armenia with gas through the 160 kilometer long Tabriz-Armenia pipeline, which costed 200 million dollars. The pipeline will be fully operational in the first half of 2007.<sup>48</sup> Vartan Oskanian, Armenian foreign minister, announced in March 2007 that Iran-Armenia pipeline would be operational in March 2007, following a three month test period.<sup>49</sup> In return, Iranian officials were skeptical about this, estimating Armenians needed more time. In September 2006, the two states talked about the possibility of building a new pipeline with an initial capacity of 1.7 billion cubic meters and having 200 kilometers in length. At the same time, Gazprom oil division held talks with the Armenians on building a refinery in South-Eastern Armenia, to process raw materials from Iran. Refined oil would then go back to Iran on the railway, given that this country lacks refineries and partially compensates the lack of refined oil products by importing gasoline.

Since a few years, the two countries interconnected their energy systems, operating electricity sales. For Iran, Armenia is one of the very few allies in the region, given the hostility between Iran and Azerbaijan over the future of Azeris inhabited territories in Iran. At the same time, close relations between Russia and Iran explain why Armenia, Moscow's protégé, is trying to get closer to Iran. As long as the Turkish-Armenian border stays close at Ankara's will, as well as the Azeri-Armenian one, as reprisal after the war in Nagorno-Karabakh, the Armenian state will be able to import energy from Russia and Iran only, while exporting its goods to these countries or Georgia. Still there are some tensions in the Russian-Armenian relationship: in April 2006, facing the risk of an increase in the price of gas imported from Russia, the Armenian state signed with Russia a deal on keeping until 2009 the price cap, agreeing in return to give up a large part of its energy infrastructures to Russian

companies.<sup>50</sup> This caused irritation among certain political opposition circles in Erevan.

### **Ukraine**

Ukraine has important coal deposits and electric plants that supply its internal consumption needs. It even exports a certain quantity of electric energy. There are also gas reserves but these are not sufficiently exploited and do not meet the country's internal needs. That is why Kyiv is importing gas mainly from Russia as well as from Turkmenistan.

In 2003-2004, Russia, Ukraine and Germany signed several agreements on the gas transit through Ukrainian territory to the West. They mentioned setting up a gas consortium between these nations, but Moscow firmly rejected Kyiv's proposal of Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan being included in it.

Russia wanted to take control over the gas transport system of this country but also attract Germany in investments for upgrading the network. Afterwards, the new leadership in Kyiv took efforts to eliminate Russia's control over the national energy sector.

During the last year, president Yushchenko did his best to set privileged energy relations with Azerbaijan in order to get oil from this country. But the Azeri state has its own energy needs, cancelled the agreement on Russian gas imports at higher prices and offers a gas quantity at a lower cost than Gazprom for Georgia as well. At the same time, Kyiv established close relations with the political opposition in Turkmenistan, to the irritation of the country's government.<sup>51</sup> In June 2005, Ukraine and Turkmenistan signed a gas supplying deal with many new things compared to the previous one, valid until the end of 2006. The Turkmen committed to supply the Ukrainian state 59

billion cubic meters of gas for a much lower price than Gazprom – 44 dollars per a thousand cubic meters. President Yushchenko proposed the Turkmens to build a pipeline between the two countries that would avoid Russia.<sup>52</sup> An interesting fact is that 50% of the natural gas quantity Ukraine is receiving from Russia through RosUkrEnergO comes from Turkmenistan and mixing it with Russian gas results in getting a smaller price.

Ukrainian officials paid official visits to Iran discussing the possibility to import Iranian natural gas. The pipeline could be built by linking Iran to Armenia, Georgia and Ukraine, through the Black Sea or directly via Iran-Turkey-Ukraine. Ukraine's geo-economic ace against Russia is that the Russian gas transport system to the EU runs through Ukrainian territory. But, in the event of a serious bilateral crisis with Ukraine, Russia is able to cut the hydrocarbons flow from Turkmenistan to this country. In 2006, Ukraine faced a Russian gas price increase reaching nearly 220 dollars per thousand cubic meters. Therefore there is energy interdependence between Russia and Ukraine,<sup>53</sup> which in some way goes for Russia-Belarus relationship as well. Many Ukrainian officials were angry at Gazprom's price policy.

Ukraine put a lot of hope in the Black Sea's continental platform gas and oil. This nation is in dispute with Romania, judged by the International Court of Justice (ICJ), over the exploitation of gas and oil resources of the Snake Island continental platform. The Ukrainian side has already begun the exploitation, although there is no ICJ ruling acknowledging Kyiv's right to develop the island and prepare the exploration in search for hydrocarbons.<sup>54</sup>

### **Republic of Moldova**

This country has very limited energy resources, relying on Russia, Romania and Ukraine for its current needs. Nearly 40%

of Moldova's energy imports are oil products, meaning 30% of the country's overall imports. By "losing" Transnistria, the Republic of Moldova became from an energy exporter an energy importer. Over 15% of the national electricity consumption is import based.

### **Russia**

It is by far the most important natural gas and oil producer for the Eurasian region. It is also the biggest intermediary in selling hydrocarbons to other countries, almost owning monopoly on the energy resources of countries like Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan a.s.o. Not being able to compete either the US in the field of projecting military power in far away operation theatres, or the EU from the economic point of view and facing NATO and EU's expansion to the East, Russia chose to use the energy "weapon". It refused to sign the Energy Charter Treaty and the Transit Protocol (in fact, the State Duma refused to ratify the Energy Charter agreement) that would have allowed for the competition between European and Russian companies over energy infrastructures and exploiting energy resources, as well as foreign access to Russian gas pipelines. In January 2002, President Vladimir Putin lobbied for setting up a Eurasian Alliance of gas exporters, with the objective of taking control of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan exploitation and trade strategies. EU's opposition and the accusations of breaking the Energy Charter Treaty had him back off. EU's pressure to have it sign the Charter, as a condition for Russia's World Trade Organization accession, causes irritation in Moscow. Moreover, once the document ratified, countries like Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan a.s.o., would get the legal right to use Gazprom's infrastructures to export energy to the West, putting an end to the Russian monopoly over transit.<sup>55</sup>

Afterwards, in January 2006 Russia cut the gas flow to the West, invoking a dispute with Ukraine. It also increased to a

great extent energy prices for Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Azerbaijan, and Belarus, suggesting it would use this weapon against former Soviet countries willing to get closer to the West. In January 2007, following the dispute with Belarus over gas prices increase (and Minsk's decision to set a transit tax for the Russian gas), Russia cut the gas flow through Druzba pipeline, harming this way all Western consumers as well. Cutting supplies through Druzba pipeline harmed many nations: Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Ukraine, together with Germany and Poland, these two being supplied through the Northern branch of Druzba pipeline, given that nearly 12% of the European oil consumption is transiting this pipeline. The countries concerned had to use the fuel reserve stocks and refineries did efforts to find alternative raw materials sources. Among the EU, the strategy for fighting Russian monopolistic actions resides in the diversification of classical energy supplies and investments in alternative resources, according to the 2006 European Energy Strategy. Anyway, European nations are the main market for the Russian gas and this fact is likely to become even more obvious in the future. As we all know, in 2005 Russia and Germany decided to build a big gas pipeline crossing the Baltic Sea (Northern Stream), which is a highly controversial project since it could result in isolating Poland and the Baltic nations, which, on their turn, are relying on the Russian gas.

Russia seems to have the world's biggest natural gas reserves (48.1 thousand billion cubic meters – 657 billion cubic meters per year) and holds an important position in the oil field as well (according to estimates, it holds 2-5 position in the world, after Middle Eastern countries, with nearly 50 billion barrels, certain quantity, and over 200 billion barrels according to estimates).<sup>56</sup> Russia never wanted to become OPEC member in order to enjoy the freedom of petroleum exports. Russia does one third of the

world's gas exports, mainly through Gazprom company, which is controlled by groups close to the presidential administration. Gazprom supplies on the European market 30% of Europe's gas demand and is trying to monopolize other Russian and CIS but also EU exploitations as well. It is usually said that Gazprom is the world's number one company when it comes to energy production and selling, nearly 60% of the Russian gas reserves being under direct control of this giant.<sup>57</sup> Gazprom owns nearly a third of the world's natural gas reserves and set up many joint ventures with companies in Eastern Europe and the Baltic region. Among the Greater Black Sea Area countries, Russia is exporting gas to Ukraine, Armenia, Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Georgia (until 2006), Azerbaijan (until 2006) and the Republic of Moldova.<sup>58</sup>

The Russian authorities have already warned the French-Norwegian company BP-TNK to give up many of its exploiting rights over the Kovytko gas reserves (in Irkutsk department, Eastern Siberia<sup>59</sup>), blackmailing it with paying a 5 million dollar worth ecological prejudice. Gazprom will of course be the beneficiary. On 16 January 2007, Putin decided to share oil and gas reserves in Russia's continental platform equally between Gazprom and Rosneft companies, both state-controlled. In December and January 2007, the Russian energy minister, together with the managers of the two big state-owned companies, negotiated with the Algerian company Sonatrach the joint exploitation of gas deposits in Algeria, which made the EU become suspicious. It is about exploiting liquefied natural gas. The Russians put huge pressure on Western companies to "teach them into" giving up their share in exploiting the huge Stokman gas deposit near Murmansk. Gazprom announced it would begin on its own to exploit gas in the region, given the concerns raised by the decrease in Russian natural gas production, in the near future.

It is certain that Russia's spectacular economic development after 2001 is based on many European countries' reliance (not to mention China, Japan) on Russian energy resources and the global rise of oil prices. The pipeline system is vast, ramified but its state is often precarious. The most notorious pipeline is Druzba, crossing Belarus and supplying many European nations, transiting 60 million tones per year. Building the Caspian Pipeline Consortium was a great accomplishment for Russia, as was the case with Blue Stream pipeline; these allowed avoiding the Turkish Straits, with heavy traffic and tough ecologic regulations.

### **Turkey**

Riparian both to the Mediterranean Sea and the Caspian Sea, this country is not a big gas and oil exporter, having small energy resources. In the present context, Turkey is energetically relying on Russia, which is supplying nearly 65% of its natural gas needs. This reliance increased even more after Blue Stream gas pipeline, linking Southern Russia to Northern Turkey, became fully operational and was launched in November 2005.

Turkey's energy needs increased a great deal in recent years, because it was not able to keep up with exploiting internal deposits. Nearly 90% of its oil goes for export, while the Black Sea *off shore* deposits are being underexploited. Because 90% of the Russian oil exports are transiting Novorossiisk Black Sea port and most of petroleum is transiting the Straits, in 2003 Turkey restricted access in this area, invoking ecological security. But Ankara put a lot of hope in the Blue Stream pipeline which would probably be followed by a new one in the following years, on Moscow's proposal. Although Turkey wants to import from the CIS as many hydrocarbons as possible to direct towards Europe, asking for transit charges, at the same time, as shown

by some analysts, it does not want to be seen by the EU as a pawn in Russia's strategy of monopolizing energy transit to the EU member states. This perception would make even more difficult Turkey's road to European integration.

There are also political and security difficulties. The pipeline that used to link the Iraqi town of Mosul to Turkey is not working on a permanent basis (Sunnite insurgents in Northern Iraq sabotaged Kirkuk-Ceyhan pipeline) while Ankara does not conceive the scenario of establishing an Iraqi Kurdistan that would control Mosul oil area. To this end, Turkey is putting pressures in favor of the Turkish minority in Northern Iraq, asking for economic rights in its benefit. In January 2006, the Turkish government protested against Iraqi government's decision to delegate competence on oil trade between the two nations to competent authorities in Iraqi Kurdistan, seeing this as an injury. There is also an Iran-Turkey pipeline but it is underused because at present the Turkish market is oversaturated with Central Asian and Caucasian gas.

The internal gas production barely meets 2% of the population and industry's needs in Turkey. It receives gas from Azerbaijan through Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum pipeline and from Russia and Turkmenistan through Blue Stream pipeline. From 2001 it also receives gas from Iran.

While it is importing from Russia nearly 65% of its gas needs, Nigeria and Algeria are supplying liquefied gas. So Turkey is relying on these countries, especially on Russia. In order to diminish this geoeconomic weakness, Ankara has been showing lately a special interest in the gas from Turkmenistan and there are voices saying that the Turks want to set up a trans-Caspian pipeline by building a connection between the future Nabucco pipeline and Turkmenistan gas deposits. Nevertheless we should not forget the fact that in 2003 Turkmenistan committed itself

to supply Russia with 80 billion cubic meters of gas per year, for 25 years. Still Turkmenistan will export gas to China, but possibly also for the future trans-Afghan gas pipeline that will transport energy to India and Pakistan. So, from this point of view, it will be able to supply the companies that will make the connection to Nabucco or Baku-Erzurum with limited fuel quantities only. On shorter term, the scenario of a very quick production increase is not very likely.

Turkey agreed to get involved in the big Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline, as well as in Nabucco project, suggesting it will not give up either on Russian pressures or to Western pressures. Although it is a small hydrocarbons exporter, Turkey is carefully making the best of its position of geopolitical bridge between the big exporting countries (Russia, Azerbaijan, Iran, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan) and the importing nations (EU countries). Certain political circles in Turkey think this interface position will facilitate the country's EU membership, given the Europeans' need to control energy routes. Turkey is also a bridge between Greater Black Sea Area and the Mediterranean basin.

### **Romania**

While during World War II Romania was one of the main oil exporters in the world, afterwards, given the intense exploitation and selling of oil and gas in other regions of the world, in 1976 the country was extracting annually 14.6 million tones of oil. Petroleum is exploited in the sub-Carpathians and, for now in an initial phase, *offshore* in the Black Sea plateau. The dispute with Ukraine over the Snake Island continental plateau prevents Romanian companies from identifying and exploiting offshore resources in the area – oil and natural gas. In 2000, Romania extracted nearly 6.04 million tones of oil, 13.6 billion cubic meters

of natural gas and also 29.3 million tones of coal.<sup>60</sup> Then they reached 5.70 million tones in 2004 and 5.4 million tones in 2005. According to several studies, Romania's oil reserves reach only 1 billion barrels (73.7 million tones, according to the draft document "Romania's energy policy between 2006-2009"<sup>61</sup>), which suggests these deposits will vanish in 15-30 years time. The daily consumption reaches nearly 110,000-130,000 oil barrels, with imports covering a little more than 50% of its needs.<sup>62</sup> Nevertheless, our country holds the fifth position from the point of view of oil production. Gas deposits are estimated around 184.9 billion cubic meters.

In 2005, Romania's national gas production reached 12.5 billion cubic meters. Romgaz analysts think that the existing natural gas deposits in Romania are situated mainly in Transylvania plateau (65%), while the rest, in Eastern and Southern Carpathians. US Geological Survey thinks that Romania could have important natural gas deposits (nearly 400 billion cubic meters) at depths reaching 4,000 meters, which makes them difficult to exploit.<sup>63</sup> If Romania's hydrocarbons deposits are not too significant, and even decreasing, in exchange, our country has many refining capacities, allowing it to export many oil and petrochemical products. If until recently the refineries were still state-owned and working at normal capacity, now important foreign investors have been attracted in joint ventures, and the Caspian oil can successfully be directed to these refineries. National energy market is meeting step by step the European standard in this field. As an European Union member state, Romania will participate in defining a long term energy strategy, in accordance with the European paper presented in the summer of 2006. The Romanian state is clearly supporting the European strategy of diversifying energy imports, acknowledging the risky nature of Russian reliance in the field. There are great hopes

especially for the two big pipeline projects that could soon transit our country: Nabucco and Constanța-Trieste.<sup>64</sup> The 2006 national security strategy touches upon the energy field in the chapter on Black Sea area. Developing “corridors” linking the Pontic area to the Euro-Atlantic nations is one of our country’s top foreign policy priorities.<sup>65</sup>

### **Bulgaria**

This country has small coal deposits (lignite) and very small amounts of oil and natural gas. More than 30% of the national energy consumption comes from coal. Bulgaria is importing its necessary hydrocarbons mainly from Russia, which is encouraging it to support Burgas-Andropolis pipeline project. Gas covers 14.4% of its primary consumption needs.<sup>66</sup> At the same time, Bulgaria had until recently six nuclear reactors at Kozlodui, three of which were disabled at EU request, while a new one is to be built in Belene. Bulgaria tends to become an energy importer until the new reactor is completed. Previously, it was Balkans’ main energy exporter.

### **International projects on infrastructures**

**International projects on energy infrastructures** are very important for the Pontic region’s geo-economy. In this respect, INOGATE (Interstate Oil and Gas Transport to Europe) is one of EU’s economic pillars in the region.<sup>67</sup> It is financed mainly through EU’s Tacis Regional Co-operation Programme, addressing CIS nations. INOGATE stood out thanks to the technical assistance given to nations exporting as well as to those importing hydrocarbons. Romania is one of the first countries to have got involved in INOGATE, in 1999. Unfortunately, Russia did not want to participate in this project, in order

to keep its freedom in the energy sector. INOGATE's priorities in drawing oil pipelines are<sup>68</sup>:

- Upgrading and expanding Druzba pipeline to Northern Europe.

- Expanding Odessa-Brodi pipeline to Plock with the possibility of connecting it to Gdansk terminal or to Druzba pipeline.

- Building Constanța-Omisalj-Trieste oil pipeline and Burgas-Alexandropolis oil pipeline in order to ease traffic in Bosphorus and Dardanele straits.

### **Priorities in the field of natural gas transport:**

- *Northern Trans-European Gas Pipeline*, a 1,300 kilometer long pipeline, that would link St. Petersburg to Northern Germany, the Netherlands and Great Britain. It would transit nearly 20-30 billion cubic meters. Stockman deposit has a great value, given its short distance to Murmansk Barents Sea port.

- A second Yamal-Europe pipeline with alternative routes through Belarus to Poland and through the Baltic states to Poland.

- A system linking Turkey-Greece and Italy for transiting oil from the Middle East and the Caspian Sea. It would be 3,400 kilometer long, transiting 22 billion cubic meters.

- Turkey-Bulgaria-Romania-Hungary-Austria gas pipeline, called Nabucco. 3,630 kilometer long and more than 20 billion cubic meters annually.

- Greece, FYROM, Serbia, Bosnia, Croatia, Slovenia gas pipeline.

- Azerbaijan-Georgia-Turkey (Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum) gas pipeline begun operating at the end of 2006, relying on the 450 billion cubic meters Shah Deniz deposit.

- Turkmenistan-Iran-Turkey gas pipeline.

*Tacis Regional Co-operation Programme* 2004-2006 aimed, and in a certain measure managed, at promoting trade and investments in the field of energy and transports, having a 50 billion euro budget for the period 2004-2006. INOGATE Programme (*oil and gas networks*) had an 18 million euro budget for the mentioned period.

INOGATE technical secretariat in Kyiv is coordinating the “Baku Initiative” (BI), a political dialogue meant to enhance energy cooperation between EU nations and Greater Black Sea Area and Caspian countries. Baku Initiative” goes back to November 2004. The objective is accomplishing a unitary energy market also integrating Eastern Europe. The EU is participating in the BI through its Directorate General for Transport and Energy and Europe Aid Cooperation Office, the Directorate general for Foreign Affairs. The countries involved are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kirghistan, Republic of Moldova, Russia (observer), Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Tadjikistan, Turkey and Turkmenistan. Their objective is to enhance and expand energy infrastructure and guarantee energy transports security.<sup>69</sup>

At present, the process of implementing EU’s guidelines for Trans-European Networks is on going, with the objective of developing projects for transport lines within the *Pan-European Transport Area* (PETRA). In the case of PETRA, an EU initiative, there is also a Black Sea sub-group (*Black Sea Pan-European Transport Area-Petra*) which is analyzing the possibility of drafting trans-Caspian transit routes running from Ukraine to Turkey.<sup>70</sup> GBSA has been involved in drafting the *Black Sea Petra* concept too, but received only an observer statute within this group.<sup>71</sup> The working commissions of this group met in Bucharest, in 2001 and 2002.

## **Big external players and their energy interests in the GBSA and the Caspian**

### **EU**

EU member states share the interest of having as much access as possible to energy sources in the Black Sea and Caspian areas as well as in Central Asia. At present, nearly 50-60% of their oil and gas needs are imported, mainly from Russia or other CIS nations, mostly through Russian pipelines. Direct Russian imports cover 25% of energy needs (nearly 130 billion cubic meters of gas) – 40% in 2030, according to estimates – while Middle Eastern imports, 45%.<sup>72</sup> Nevertheless, it is possible for imports percentage to reach 70-75% in 2025, according to *Petroleum Economist* pessimistic estimates.<sup>73</sup> EU's overall vulnerability comes from the fact that Russia owns almost full monopoly over transit corridors for hydrocarbons. Although Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline is working at a higher capacity, only the launch of Nabucco pipeline and the extension to Plock of Odessa-Brodi oil pipeline would significantly diminish this reliance. Unfortunately, not all EU member states understood the necessity for the Union to negotiate energy deals in a unitary manner, as equal partner to Russia. For instance, Germany took the bilateral solution for the construction of the Baltic gas pipeline (Northern Stream), which caused irritation in Poland and the three Baltic countries, which felt being left aside, despite their EU membership. Since 2006 the EU has also a European Energy Strategy focusing on diversifying energy supplies and making the best of energy alternative sources. The paper does not name the Black Sea as a vital area for the Union, but only the Caspian area.

Nevertheless several EU officials, including the commissioner for energy, Andris Piebalgs<sup>74</sup>, acknowledged being disappointed at Russia's often cutting energy flows for political reasons and having lost their confidence in Moscow. Still, certain sensitivity can be noticed within the Union concerning relations with Russia. The European officials do not want to "irritate" Russia and therefore usually avoid mentioning the Black Sea area's energy importance in official papers. Of course, the EU could develop step by step a regional dimension of the Black Sea within the European Neighborhood Policy, a dimension including also the energy issue.

During the EU General Affairs and Foreign Relations Council meeting on 22 January 2007, former Romanian foreign affairs minister Mihai Ungureanu proposed the setting up of a "Bucharest Process", after the well-known "Barcelona Process", which, together with the European Neighborhood Policy, would define relationships with countries in the Mediterranean and Northern Africa.<sup>75</sup> This way, EU would manage relations with the Pontic nations in a unitary manner, acting coherently within its policies on the region, including in the field of energy transit.

At the beginning of 2007, the EU continued its efforts to sign with Russia a new cooperation agreement that would also include energy aspects, on the basis of the European Energy Strategy (EES). Unfortunately, the European Commission has not received yet a mandate from member states to begin negotiations. A first step would be Russia's signing the EES, but, even if this does not happen, minimal behavior rules could be set in order to avoid in the future energy crisis in the EU-Russia relations.

It is vital for the EU to reduce its reliance on Russian infrastructures and develop direct relations with hydrocarbons exporting

or transit countries in the Black Sea area, Caucasus and Central Asia. Even if, on medium term, neither Ukraine, nor Georgia, Republic of Moldova or Azerbaijan have the chance of joining the EU elite club, by means of the European Neighborhood Policy, they must be encouraged economically and politically to supply energy to Europe. At the same time, they should be protected against destabilizations from other countries. The EU cannot stop Ukraine and Belarus sell their energy infrastructures to Russia. It can only encourage them diplomatically and economically not to do this. In return, the EU will have to ask its member states to gradually stop giving up to Russia energy infrastructures on national territories until Moscow agrees to sign the European Energy Charter and, implicitly, liberalize and demonopolize its own infrastructures and hydrocarbons exploitation areas.<sup>76</sup> The EU has a particular interest in diversifying hydrocarbons supply sources. At the beginning of 2006, officials in Brussels were talking about the possibility to build a gas pipeline that would run from the Adriatic Sea coast to Central Europe transiting gas from the Middle East and Northern Africa. The objective was still to reduce the reliance on the Russia imported energy.

## **NATO**

Although the Northern Alliance is a political-military organization, it is also concerned about other security levels and energy security is part of NATO's 1999 Strategy Concept. During the Northern-Atlantic Council in Riga (2006), the allied leaders considered the need for their countries' energy security to avoid the sudden cut of hydrocarbons flows ("vital resources"), because it was necessary to have a joint effort of assessing energy risks, putting the emphasis on the security of energy infrastructures.

The objective is the protection of allies' energy interests, upon their request, and defining the action fields in which NATO could bring an "added value".<sup>77</sup> Of course, the Alliance's interest in oil and gas caused Russia's irritation, given that this country wants to control to a great extent hydrocarbons' transit from Central Asia and the Caspian Sea through the GBSA. At the same time, at the beginning of 2007, NATO showed interest in opening access to the Pan-European pipeline network, to the private companies' benefit. This network was built during the Cold War in order to supply the energy and lubricants' needs for the allied army, even in times of penury and crisis. At the end of the Cold War, the allies discussed the possibility of economic capitalization of this energy infrastructures network to the allied countries' benefit. NATO's networks system (NPS) is based on nine military systems of hydrocarbons stocking and distribution, with more than 10,000 kilometers of infrastructures crossing Greece, Italy, Turkey, Portugal, Great Britain and Norway.<sup>78</sup> There is also Central Europe's Pipeline System, including Belgium, France, Luxembourg and Germany, as well as the Northern European Pipelines System, based on Denmark and Germany infrastructures. It is possible in the future for some of the main pipelines in Romania and Bulgaria to be included in the NPS, which will ensure energy security on the Black Sea's Western coast. Turkey has already two distinct systems, the Eastern one and the Western one, and therefore in theory it is possible to make a link to one of these.

## **USA**

Even if the US oil supplies come mainly from Southern America, the Middle East and Northern Africa, we cannot deny the American interest in supporting strategic allies and partners in

the GBSA and the EU. For Washington Turkey, Georgia, Azerbaijan and even Ukraine are important points on Eurasia geopolitical map. Romania, Bulgaria, Poland, the Czech Republic, the Baltic States are not ignored as well, on the contrary. Including these former Soviet nations in the transatlantic security community is of a long term interest from the point of view of relations with Russia, but also with EU and China. That is why the Americans want to contribute to the security of supplying hydrocarbons to these countries. At the same time, they do not want to see Iran enter these nations' energy markets (as hydrocarbons exporter) because they realize this would also mean political influence too. Both through the State Department and the Department of Defense, the US has a growing interest in the GBSA, the Caucasus and Central Asia, trying to help find ways to avoid Europeans' reliance on the Russian transport corridors and infrastructures. The Americans seem to encourage NATO's involvement in ensuring the security of energy flows from the East to the West, as seen during the debates at Riga summit. Should they reach the common conclusion that energy security is vital to the transatlantic security, the Europeans and Americans will look for strategies to break the Russian monopoly and liberalize access to hydrocarbons. Political analyst V. Socor suggests in this respect the setting up of a permanent consultative mechanism EU-US that would evolve into a political planning cell.<sup>79</sup> NATO's involvement in ensuring energy pipelines, transit points and reserves' security is not something special. In fact, Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan coordinated their efforts to monitor Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline and the GUAM nations could soon do the same. The military alliances that become multi level security providers can get involved in the energy security of member states. NATO (and/or US) forces could be directly

involved in securing Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum pipelines, but also in training security forces in the pipelines transit countries.

### **China**

One of the world's top three hydrocarbons consumers – necessary to keep the actual economic growth level of 8-9% annually – China is looking mainly at resources in Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, the Middle East, Africa but, of course, it does not ignore GBSA and Caspian strategic and economic importance as well. The main pipeline transiting oil from Kazakhstan to Xinjiang (China) (Atasu-Alashankou) was launched in December 2005 and is based on the Caspian resources. It is more than 1,000 kilometers long.<sup>80</sup> The Kazakh company managing the pipeline is KazTransOil, a Kazmunaigaz subsidiary (state owned). The investments in this project reached 806 million dollars, co financed by Kazmunaigaz and *China National Petroleum Company* (CNPC). A new segment of the pipeline that would link Kenyak and Atasu has been planned for 2011. In the best scenario China will manage to supply 5% of its national oil needs from Kazakh imports, lending oil fields and buying infrastructures in Kazakhstan.

So, it is the project of a 3,000 kilometer long pipeline that would allow China to directly exploit Caspian energy resources.

The construction of a 400 kilometer segment linking Atyrau (the oil richest area in Western Kazakhstan) to Kenyak, the CNPC controlled oil area, was completed in 2002. CNPC prepared the supply of the new pipeline buying in 2005 the Canadian company PetroKazakhstan, including Kumkol oil area. Kazakhstan is pretty happy about no longer having to rely on Russia and the *Caspian Pipeline Consortium* only to sell oil abroad. Of course,

if Kazakh oil production does not increase as foreseen, there will be a competition over attracting oil flows between Atasu-Alashankou, Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and Nabucco, beside CNPC. Still, the government in Astana does not want big external players – Russia and China – buy major infrastructures networks in the country, which would lead to the loss of energy autonomy. At the same time, Kazakhstan’s energy “polygamy” meets the so-called *tous azimuts* foreign policy strategy, meaning the refusal to choose between Russia and the West, the way Uzbekistan, Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan did. All doors have been left open and a pragmatic foreign policy has been announced. It is not likely for the Chinese to lend its oil pipeline for oil transit to Central and Western Europe, so the Chinese are expecting a European and American attempt to build pipelines on Kazakh territory to the West.

Decision makers in China noticed the Russian president Vladimir Putin is doing some kind of blackmail towards EU and China, indirectly threatening them that in the event of “problems” in the bilateral relations he will direct gas and oil flows to one of them disadvantaging the other, without excluding Japan from the equation. Although Russia is a major strategic, political and economic partner for China, Chinese goods are exported mainly to the EU and US. Given the decrease in Russia’s gas reserves, China could gradually become more aggressive towards Moscow, competing over the attraction of the Caucasus and Asia nations, rich in resources or having a key position for controlling transit corridors. Especially because in the Middle East and Northern Africa it is facing US rivalry or unrests caused by Islamist regimes, failed states, terrorism. If NATO and GUAM get involved in securing energy pipelines and deposits, it is possible for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to gradually take this role.

## **Conclusions**

The existence of important oil and natural gas resources in the Greater Black Sea Area is certain; the only differences lie in estimated quantities. Most deposits are situated in the Caspian Sea basin (nearly 4-5% of the world's oil reserves), while the Black Sea is poorer in resources, but has a bigger geopolitical value thanks to its geographic position. The Black Sea is a favorite transit region for Caspian and Central Asia gas and oil, on their way to Europe. At the same time, it is possible that some of Iran's resources will in time be directed towards the same region as well, in search for the European market.

A real problem lies in the disparity between the resources of some regional players (especially Russia, but also Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan) and others poorly endowed (Turkey, Romania, Ukraine) or almost lacking in hydrocarbons (Bulgaria, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia).

On the background of big hydrocarbon consumers' growing concern about the natural resources' exhausting, the political instability in the Greater Middle East (the world's main oil provider) and the need to keep sustained economic growth levels, many political and economic analysts think Russia has become a "specialist" in a policy of intentionally maintained energy crisis. Rising over night gas prices, cutting energy flows through key pipelines to the EU nations (such as the famous Druzba on which many countries are relying – Poland, Ukraine, Germany etc.) in the context of the "fighting" with Ukrainian and Belarusian neighbors, Russia showed it could use its resources as a weapon in the global political-strategic game. Moreover, Russia wants to be the compulsory intermediary of countries without direct access to other seas. On the other hand, Russian authorities

are denying these accusations and say they have the best intentions towards their European partners, but cannot accept some clauses in the European Energy Charter that would seriously harm Russian hydrocarbons exporting companies.

The competition between rich nations over Eurasia energy resources goes more than a century back, but the development of top industries and services, as well as the perspective of these resources' exhaustion, seem to have increased the rivalry and combating perceptions. If for the Caucasus and Central Asia hydrocarbons exporting countries the big problem is the way they can export without restriction these resources to Western markets, the consumer countries are willing to find politically, economically and security stable supplying sources. EU's member states' economic growth perspectives are closely linked to access to imported hydrocarbons, and the Black Sea-Caspian region holds a key position on the EU's economic agenda. The special interest in protecting transit corridors against accidental or voluntary cuts, caused by political blackmail, sabotages, terrorist actions, is also present in NATO's case, which decided at Riga summit in 2006 to set up a plan for securing these routes considered to be of strategic interest to the member states. There is no fatality in this field and reserves exhaustion, their cut because of political-military reasons in unrest regions or the monopoly of some power centers will not necessarily lead to crisis and military conflicts. In the meantime, alternative resources (wind, nuclear, hydraulic a.s.o.) will be exploited, new partnerships with countries in the Middle East and Africa will be set up, and so the competition over the Eurasian hydrocarbons is not a zero sum game.

In this context, the geostrategic importance of the pipelines transit countries, playing the role of energy "bridges" or "gates"

between East and West (Turkey, Ukraine, Belarus, but also Romania, Bulgaria), does not need further explanations. The main beneficiaries of energy resources will try to attract or keep these nations in their influence area in order to secure the sustainability of supplying flows. Technical literature often call the pipelines geopolitics *the great game*, an expression suggesting the very high stake of these projects that strong nations want to turn into reality.

#### **NOTE**

<sup>1</sup> Stelian Fizeșan, *EU-Russia Cooperation and the Security of Oil and Natural Gas Supplies*, "Strategic Monitor", no. 3-4, 2006, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> Nick Butler, *Energy Security. A New Agenda for Europe*, Oct-Nov 2004, "CER Bulletin", Issue 38, [www.cer.org.uk](http://www.cer.org.uk).

<sup>3</sup> Olexandr Pavliuk, Ivanna Klimpush-Tsintadze (eds), *The Black Sea Region. Cooperation and Security Building*, East West Institute, 2004, p. 134.

<sup>4</sup> Ioannis Michaletos, *Energy Developments in South Eastern Europe*, 16 February 2007, [www.isn-ethz.ch](http://www.isn-ethz.ch).

<sup>5</sup> *Burgas-Alexandropolis pipeline importance to European Oil Consumers*, 2 February 2007, Interfax News Agency Via Thompson Dialog NewsEdge, [www.tmcnet.com](http://www.tmcnet.com).

<sup>6</sup> Russia and Kazakhstan have a daily production capacity of 180 million tones of oil, a lot more than Bosphorus transit capacity, of maximum 130 million tones. Ioannis Michaletos, *Energy Developments in South Eastern Europe*, 16 February 2007, [www.isn-ethz.ch](http://www.isn-ethz.ch).

<sup>7</sup> Marian Rizea, *The Black Sea – the Epicenter of European-Arabian-Asian Strategic Ellipse. Petroleum Geopolitics*, in the 11<sup>th</sup> scientific communications session of the National Information Academy, security and national security section, vol. 2, 8 April 2005, National Information Academy Publishing House, p. 72-77.

<sup>8</sup> Vladimir Socor, *First Russian-Operated Pipeline On European Union Territory Rears Its Head*, March 2, 2007, [www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article\\_id=2371965](http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2371965).

<sup>9</sup> Andrew Rettman, *EU unfazed by Putin's gas OPEC idea*, 01.02.2007, [www.euobserver.com](http://www.euobserver.com).

<sup>10</sup> Alexandros Petersen, *BTC Security Questions Persist*, 7.11.06, [www.eurasisnet.org](http://www.eurasisnet.org).

<sup>11</sup> Hasene Karasac, *Actors of the New Great Game, Caspian Oil Politics*, "Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans", vol. 4, no. 1, 2002, p. 18-19.

<sup>12</sup> Marat Yermukanov, *Kazakhstan Downplays Political Risks of Energy Corridor to Europe*, [http://jamestown.org/edm/article-php?article\\_id=2371904](http://jamestown.org/edm/article-php?article_id=2371904), February 12, 2007.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>15</sup> *Gas removal begins at Shah Deniz*, 18 December 2006, [www.today.az](http://www.today.az).

<sup>16</sup> Rovshan Ismaylov, *Azerbaijan: Russia to Blame for Delayed Gas Deliveries to Georgia?*, 18.10.2006, [www.eurasisnet.org/departmentsinsight/articles/eav101806.shtml](http://www.eurasisnet.org/departmentsinsight/articles/eav101806.shtml).

<sup>17</sup> Diana Petriashvili, *Gazprom Makes the Georgian Government Pay*, 1.09.2007, [www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav010907.shtml](http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav010907.shtml).

<sup>18</sup> Tiberiu Troncotă, *Energy Resources Geopolitics. The Caspian Sea Potential, Geopolitics*, year IV, no. 19, 2006, p. 133-149.

<sup>19</sup> Khadija Ismayilova, *Pipeline Politics in the Caspian Basin Makes for Strange Political Bedfellows*, 13.09.2006, [www.eurasianet.org](http://www.eurasianet.org).

<sup>20</sup> Vladimir Socor, *New Complications in Ukraine's Energy Situation*, 14 December 2006, [www.jamestown.org](http://www.jamestown.org).

<sup>21</sup> Mevlut Katik, *Russian Pipeline Play Poses Dilemma for Turkey*, 27.09.2006, [www.eurasisnet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav092706a.shtml](http://www.eurasisnet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav092706a.shtml).

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>23</sup> Federico Bordonaro, *The Blue Stream Gas Pipeline*, 22 November 2005, [www.pinr.com](http://www.pinr.com).

<sup>24</sup> Marian Rizea, *The Black Sea – the epicenter of European-Arabian-Asian Strategic Ellipse. Petroleum Geopolitics*, in the 11<sup>th</sup> scientific communications session of the National Information Academy, security and national security section, vol. 2, 8 April 2005, National Information Academy Publishing House, pag. 76.

<sup>25</sup> Igor Munteanu, Iulian Chifu, Iulian Frunțașu, Nicolae Chirtoacă, Valeriu Prohnițchi, Dan Dungaciu, Ion Naval, Radu Gorincioi, Boris Asarov, *Moldova on*

*the way to democracy and stability, from the post-Soviet space to the world of democratic values*, Cartier Publishing House, 2005.

<sup>26</sup> Iran is already exporting oil to many European nations, EU member states, Germany, Italy, France, Spain, Austria, Holland a.s.o.

<sup>27</sup> *Nabucco changes Russia with Iran*, "Cotidianul", 9 February 2006, [www.cotidianul.ro/index.php?id=3961&art=9100&cHash=fe84d5bb95](http://www.cotidianul.ro/index.php?id=3961&art=9100&cHash=fe84d5bb95).

<sup>28</sup> Marat Yermukanov, *Kazakh Foreign Minister Shifts Priorities from Superpower to Next-Door Neighbors*, January 30, 2007, [www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article\\_id=2371854](http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2371854).

<sup>29</sup> Vladimir Socor, *Kazakhstan Oil Output and export Data Dramatize Need for Trans-Caspian Outlets*, January 19, 2007, [www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article\\_id=2371821](http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2371821).

<sup>30</sup> See Roman Kupchinsky, *Moscow Extends Its Pipeline Web*, June 23, 2006, [www.rferl.org](http://www.rferl.org).

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>33</sup> Vladimir Socor, *Discussions Intensify with Kazakhstan on Trans-Caspian Gas Pipeline*, March 2, 2007, [www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article\\_id=2371966](http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2371966).

<sup>34</sup> Sergei Blagov, *Russia Tries to Scuttle Proposed Trans-Caspian Pipeline*, 28.03.2006, [www.eurasianet.org](http://www.eurasianet.org). It is worth mentioning the signing, in May 2007, by the Russian, Kazakh and Turkmenistan presidents of a deal on building a trans-Caspian gas pipeline transiting Central Asian gas to Russia. The agreement caused irritation in Brussels and Washington, because it is obvious that Moscow is trying to monopolize access to energy resources in the Greater Black Sea Area and Central Asia.

<sup>35</sup> Vladimir Socor, *Trans-Black Sea Pipeline Can Bring Caspian Gas to Europe*, "Eurasia Daily Monitor", December 7, 2006, vol. 3, Issue 226.

<sup>36</sup> Stephen Blank, *Turkmenistan and the Azerbaijani Connection*, 29.01.2007, [www.eurasisnet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav012907a.shtml](http://www.eurasisnet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav012907a.shtml).

<sup>37</sup> Other estimates show 250-270 billion barrels, of which 10-12 billion belong to Azerbaijan, as proven resources (and 32 billion barrels possible reserves), and Kazakhstan has 13-17 billion barrels certain quantity and 90 billion barrels possible quantity. See Kamer Kasim, *The Transportation of Caspian Oil and*

*Regional Stability*, "Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans", vol.4, no. 1, 2002, p. 38-39.

<sup>38</sup> Or 60 billion oil barrels. See J. Robinson West, Julia Nanay, *Caspian Sea Infrastructure Projects*, "Middle East Policy", VII (3), June 2000, p.113.

<sup>39</sup> See Hasene Karasac, *Actors of the New Great Game, Caspian Oil Politics*, "Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans", vol. 4, no. 1, 2002.

<sup>40</sup> [www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/Caspian/Links.html](http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/Caspian/Links.html).

<sup>41</sup> Marcel de Haas, *Curent Geostrategy in the South Caucasus*, [www.cfr.org/publication/12268/pinr.html](http://www.cfr.org/publication/12268/pinr.html), 19 December 2006.

<sup>42</sup> Chietigj Bajpae, *Asia's Coming Water Wars*, 22 August 2006, [www.pinr.com](http://www.pinr.com).

<sup>43</sup> See Tiberiu Troncotă, *Energy Resources Geopolitics. The Caspian Sea Potential*, in "Geopolitics", year IV, no. 19, 2006, Bucharest, p. 133-142.

<sup>44</sup> George V. Georgiev, *Gas-Oil Potential and Exploration Opportunities of the Black Sea Region*, Department of Geology, Sofia University, [http://aapg.confex.com/aapg/barcelona/techprogram/paper\\_83671.htm](http://aapg.confex.com/aapg/barcelona/techprogram/paper_83671.htm)

<sup>45</sup> *Russia hinders cheap Azeri natural gas*, 20.11.2006, [www.today.az](http://www.today.az).

<sup>46</sup> Rovshan Ismayilov, *Baku Banks on Independent Energy Policy*, 13.12.2006, [www.eurasisnet.org](http://www.eurasisnet.org).

<sup>47</sup> Svante Cornell, Anna Jonsson, Niklas Nilsson, per Haggstrom, *The Wider Black Sea Region: An Emerging Hub in European Security*, Central Asia Caucasus Institute and Silk Road Studies Program, A Joint Transatlantic Research and Policy Center, 2006, [www.silkroadstudies.org](http://www.silkroadstudies.org), p.79.

<sup>48</sup> <http://europenpipelines.blogspot.com/2006/01/planned-iran-armenia-gas-pipeline-very.html>.

<sup>49</sup> *Oskanian: Yerevan Ready to Exploit Iran-Armenia Gas Pipeline*, [www.panarmenian.net/news/eng?nid=20551&folder=1&attr=16](http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng?nid=20551&folder=1&attr=16).

<sup>50</sup> Emil Danielyan, *Russia Set To Expand Economic Presence in Armenia*, 6 February 2007, [www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article\\_id=2371879](http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2371879).

<sup>51</sup> Some analysts anticipate that Kyiv's too close relationship with the Turkmen opposition will make the government in Ashgabat increase charges on natural gas delivered to Ukraine. See Pavel Korduban, *Turkmen Opposition Invite May Spoil Career of Ukrainian Minister*, January 31, 2007, [www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article\\_id=2371858](http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2371858).

<sup>52</sup> Vladimir Socor, *Ukrainian-Turkmen Gas Agreement Brings Radical Change*, June 27, 2005, [http://jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article\\_id=2369941](http://jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2369941).

<sup>53</sup> A. Necdet Pamir, *Energy and Pipeline Security in the Black Sea and Caspian Sea Regions*, in Olexander Pavliuk, Ivanna Klimpush-Tsintadze (eds), *The Black Sea Region. Cooperation and Security Building*, East West Institute, 2004, p. 129.

<sup>54</sup> Dominuț Pădurean, *Snake Island*, Muntenia Publishing House, Constanța, 2004.

<sup>55</sup> Gareth M. Winrow, *Energy Security in the Black Sea-Caspian Region*, "Perceptions", Autumn 2005, p. 85-98.

<sup>56</sup> A. Necdet Pamir, *Energy and Pipeline Security in the Black Sea and Caspian Sea regions*, in Olexander Pavliuk, Ivanna Klimpush-Tsintadze (eds), *The Black Sea Region. Cooperation and security Building*, East West Institute, 2004, p. 123-155.

<sup>57</sup> Stelian Fișean, *EU-Russia Cooperation and the Security of Oil and Natural Gas Supplies*, "Strategic Monitor", year VII, no. 3-4, 2006, p. 36-47.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 38.

<sup>59</sup> It is one of the biggest natural gas deposits in Eurasia, with an estimated quantity of 1.9 thousand cubic meters of gas and 115 million tones condensed gas. TNK-BP owns 62.4% of Russia Petroleum shares, the company managing Kovytko exploitation site. The Russian company Interros and the Administration of Irkutsk region own 25.8% of the shares and 11.2% respectively.

<sup>60</sup> Horia C. Matei, Silviu Neguț, Ion Nicolae, *The World's States from A to Z*, Meronia Publishing House, Bucharest, 2000, p. 468.

<sup>61</sup> Draft – *Romania's Energy Policy for 2006-2009*, 19.10.2006, [www.minind.ro/foaie/PEN\\_19\\_10\\_2006.pdf](http://www.minind.ro/foaie/PEN_19_10_2006.pdf).

<sup>62</sup> Interview with Iulian Iancu, PSD deputy Laurențiu Gheorghe, *Nationalism vs Privatization*, "Bilanț Magazine 27-28", issue 28, December 2006.

<sup>63</sup> Ancuța Bălan, *Natural Gas has been Discovered in the Department*, "Ziarul de Iași", 19.08.2006.

<sup>64</sup> See the speech of the Romanian President, Traian Băsescu, given on 28 July 2006, opening the conference "Caspian Energy and the Black Sea Corridor", organized by the US Jamestown Foundation. "Romania – an Energy gate to the eastern Europe", press release, Romanian Presidency Public Relations Department, [www.presidency.ro/?\\_RID=det&tb=date&id=7863&\\_PRID](http://www.presidency.ro/?_RID=det&tb=date&id=7863&_PRID). The chief of state criticized Gazprom monopoly over gas imports from Russia and CIS and lobbied for diversifying energy supply resources. Băsescu made clear that

Romania is promoting two big projects: Constanța-Trieste pipeline and Nabucco project. He also mentioned the project of a LPG pipeline from Qatar to Constanța, a solution that could also be in Ukraines interest in order to reduce the energy reliance on Russia.

<sup>65</sup> *Romania's National Security Strategy*, Romanian Presidency, Bucharest, 2006, p.22, [www.presidency.ro](http://www.presidency.ro).

<sup>66</sup> A. Necdet Pamir, Energy and Pipeline Security in the Black Sea and Caspian Sea Regions, p.125-126.

<sup>67</sup> See also the analysis of Dr. Mihail E. Ionescu, *Greater Black Sea Area: a Historical View and Contemporary Dynamics* in the present volume, p. 27-80.

<sup>68</sup> [www.inogate.org/en/resources/map\\_oil](http://www.inogate.org/en/resources/map_oil).

<sup>69</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external\\_relations/energy/baku\\_initiative/index.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/energy/baku_initiative/index.htm).

<sup>70</sup> Svante Cornell, Anna Jonsson, Niklas Nilsson, Per Haggstrom, *The Wider Black Sea Region: An Emerging Hub in European Security*, Central Asia Caucasus Institute and Silk Road Studies Program, A Joint Transatlantic Research and Policy Center, 2006, [www.silkroadstudies.org](http://www.silkroadstudies.org), p. 112-113.

<sup>71</sup> Panagiota Manoli, Director of Studies and Research, ICBSS at *The European Neighborhood Policy – Energy and Transport Cooperation Around the Black Sea*, Conference in Athens organized by EKEM, 20-21 April 2005, [www.ekem.gr/archives/2005/04/speech\\_by\\_dr\\_pa.html](http://www.ekem.gr/archives/2005/04/speech_by_dr_pa.html).

<sup>72</sup> Marcel de Haas, *Current Geostrategy in the South Caucasus*, 7 January 2007, [www.eurasianet.org](http://www.eurasianet.org).

<sup>73</sup> <http://www.evz.ro/article.php?artid=287127>.

<sup>74</sup> Piebalgs: "I think Russia lost some of its credibility as a supplier following the recent oil delivery cuts. The damages will be difficult to restore, but we hope that Russia too will try to change this situation, since it is interested in remaining an EU supplier". See in this respect the article Energy Commissioner: Romania's Initiative at the Black Sea is essential to the European Union, 15 January 2007, [www.euractiv.ro/uniunea-europeana/articles|displayArticleID\\_9146/Comisarul-Energiei-Initiativa-Romaniei-la-Marea-Neagra-este-esentiala-pentru-Uniunea-Europeana.html](http://www.euractiv.ro/uniunea-europeana/articles|displayArticleID_9146/Comisarul-Energiei-Initiativa-Romaniei-la-Marea-Neagra-este-esentiala-pentru-Uniunea-Europeana.html).

<sup>75</sup> *Romania is officially asking an EU Policy for the Black Sea*, 24 January 2007, [www.euractiv.ro/uniunea-europeana/articles|displayArticle/articleID\\_9243/Romania-cere-oficial-o-politica-UE-pentru-Marea-Neagra.html](http://www.euractiv.ro/uniunea-europeana/articles|displayArticle/articleID_9243/Romania-cere-oficial-o-politica-UE-pentru-Marea-Neagra.html).

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<sup>76</sup> Vladimir Socor, *Caspian-Black-Sea region: Key to Diversifying Europe's Energy Supplies*, in "European Energy Security. What should it mean? What to do?", Working Paper 23, European Security Forum, 30 October 2006, [www.ceps.be](http://www.ceps.be).

<sup>77</sup> *Riga Summit Declaration, sued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Riga on 29 November 2006*, [www.nato.int/docu/pr/2006/p06-150e.htm](http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2006/p06-150e.htm).

<sup>78</sup> *NATO could open its Cold War fuel network*, "Adevărul", 28 February 2007.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibidem*, p.26.

<sup>80</sup> *Kazakhstan is emancipating from Russia with a new pipeline*, "Le Monde", 15.12.2005.



## **ABBREVIATIONS**

- BDN – Baku-Daghestan-Novorossiisk pipeline  
EIB – European Investment Bank  
EBRD – European Bank for Reconstruction and Development  
IBRC – International Bank for Reconstruction and Development  
BLACKSEAFOR – Black Sea Naval Cooperation Group  
BSEC – Organization of the Black Sea Economic Co-operation  
BSFOCS – Black Sea Fibre Optic Cable System  
BSTDB – Black Sea Trade and Development Bank  
BTC – Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline  
CDC – Community of Democratic Choice  
CFE - Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe  
ICJ – International Court of Justice  
CPC – Caspian Pipeline Consortium  
CSCE – Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
CIS – Commonwealth of Independent States  
DOKAP – Eastern Black Sea Telecommunications Project  
EAPC – Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council  
ENP – European Neighborhood Policy  
IMF – International Monetary Fund  
FYROM – Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia  
GBSA-WG – Greater Black Sea Area – Working Group

- GUAM – Organization for Co-operation including Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and the Republic of Moldova
- GUEU – Georgia-Ukraine-EU gas pipeline
- ICBSS – International Centre for Black Sea Studies
- CEI – Central European Initiative
- INOGATE – Interstate Oil and Gas Transport to Europe (UE financed program for Interstate Oil and Gas Transport)
- IPAP – Individual Partnership Action Plan
- IPP – Individual Partnership Program
- ISAF – International Security Assistance Force
- KFOR – Kosovo Force
- MAP – Membership Action Plan
- MFPSEE – Multinational Peace Force South-Eastern Europe
- NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization
- NIS – Newly Independent States
- NPS – NATO Pipeline System
- NUC – NATO-Ukraine Commission
- OAE – Operation Active Endeavour
- OCC – Operational Capabilities Concept
- OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
- UNO – United Nations Organisation
- OSCE – Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
- PABSEC – Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Co-operation
- PAP-DIB – Partnership Action Plan on Defense Institution Building
- PARP – Planning and Review Process
- PCA – Partnership and Co-operation Agreements
- PERMIS – Permanent International Secretariat of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Co-operation

- EDSP – European Defense and Security Policy
- CFSP – European Union Common Foreign and Security Policy
- PETRA – Pan-European Transport Area
- PfP – Partnership for Peace
- SPSEE – Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe
- GBSA – Greater Black Sea Area
- SAC – Senior Advisory Council
- SECI – Southeast European Co-operative Initiative
- SEDM – South East Defense Ministerial Process
- EES – European Energy Strategy
- SEEBRIG – South-Eastern Europe Brigade
- SEECAP – South East Europe Common Assessment Paper  
on Regional Security Challenges and Opportunities
- SEECP – South-East European Co-operation Process
- SEEGROUP – South East Europe Security Co-operation  
Steering Group
- SEESIM – Southeastern Europe Simulation
- SIMIHO – Satellite Interconnection of Military Hospitals
- SPPD – Strategic Pipeline Protection Department
- START – Strategic Arms reduction Treaty
- TACIS – Technical Aid to the Commonwealth of Independent  
States
- TAE – Trans Asia-Europe International Optical Fiber  
Communications Network
- TEN – Trans-European Networks
- TET – Trans-European Telecommunications
- TRACECA – Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia
- EU – European Union
- UNOMIG – United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia
- USDE – United States Department of Energy
- WCO – World Customs Organization



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