

IPSDMH
Occasional Papers

**Black Sea Security Dynamics
and Euro-Atlantic Alliance**

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**Institutul pentru Studii Politice de Apărare
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and Military History**

Black Sea Security Dynamics and Euro-Atlantic Alliance



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Prefață

Această nouă apariție a seriei *Occasional papers* a Institutului pentru Studii Politice de Apărare și Istorie Militară cuprinde lucrările conferinței internaționale cu tema „Black Sea Security Dynamics and Euro-Atlantic Alliance & Risks and Threats in the Greater Black Sea Area. The Regional Security Environment in the Post-Cold War Era”. Reuniunea a fost organizată de Institutul pentru Studii Politice de Apărare și Istorie Militară împreună cu Institutul de Istorie Modernă și Contemporană din Dresda, Germania, pe 5 și 6 noiembrie 2007. Manifestarea științifică, desfășurată în incinta Cercului Militar Național din București, se înscrie în activitățile planificate în cadrul grantului „Riscuri și amenințări neconvenționale în Regiunea Extinsă a Mării Negre” obținut de ISPAIM în anul 2006¹.

Acum, colectivul de autori propune o apariție nouă, ce conține comunicările susținute de o parte dintre participanții la conferința din toamna anului trecut. Trebuie spus că nu se regăsesc aici

¹ Un prim *Occasional papers* al acestui tratat, împărțit în două numere, a fost deja publicat de Editura Militară la finele anului 2007, sub titlul „Regiunea Extinsă a Mării Negre: concept, evoluție, perspective”.

toate comunicările întrucât colectarea textelor a fost făcută în funcție de disponibilitatea autorilor de a le expedia pentru tipar, conform înștiințării noastre și a intervalului de timp precizat. Așadar am cules și am editat textele regrupate tematic în ordinea panelurilor de la conferință. Limba folosită în cadrul conferinței a fost engleza, de aceea am ales să publicăm textele în această limbă.

Tema conferinței este una de interes deosebit pentru comunitatea experților în studii strategice și de securitate de la noi și din afară. În ultimii ani, comunitatea trans-atlantică de securitate a fost martora unei ample reevaluări a importanței politice, economice și strategice a Regiunii Extinse a Mării Negre (REM N). Având în vedere complexitatea evoluțiilor care caracterizează în prezent acest areal geopolitic, multiplicarea eforturilor de transformare a Mării Negre într-un spațiu de stabilitate, dialog și cooperare a condus la un grad de vizibilitate mult mai mare pentru acesta. Agenda de politică externă a României acordă o mare importanță problematicii „ancorării” REM N la comunitatea de securitate europeană și euroatlantică precum și la spațiul economic european și la cel cultural. Ca membru al UE și NATO și stat de frontieră la Marea Neagră, România a depus eforturi substanțiale spre a pune pe agenda celor două organizații această problematică.

Marile teme evidențiate în acest volum sunt: evaluarea importanței strategice a Mării Negre, principalele riscuri și amenințări la adresa securității în regiune, instrumentele și mecanismele de cooperare regională, problematica energetică, perspective de evoluție în regiune și rolul structurilor de securitate euro-atlantice.

Nădăduim că cititorii, atât militari cât și civili, experți în securitate, dar și studenți, masteranzi, doctoranzi, jurnaliști, din țară și din străinătate, vor găsi puncte de vedere interesante

și instructive, iar lecturarea paginilor care urmează le va permite formarea unei imagini cât mai corecte asupra situației reale a REM N, a caracteristicilor și tendințelor ce se înregistrează în acest spațiu.

Dr. Mihail E. Ionescu,
Directorul colectivului de cercetători al grantului
„Riscuri și amenințări neconvenționale
în Regiunea Extinsă a Mării Negre”

Wellcoming addresses

Constantin Degeratu

State Counselor, Romanian Presidency

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear Guests,

I am glad to be here with you, taking part in this conference which will debate issues related to security in the Wider Black Sea Area.

I am sure that we will have a very deep and constructive dialogue, and the exchange of opinions certainly will help us better understand the topic we focus on. The importance of the WBSA in the contemporary world is obvious and I will not insist too much on this topic, letting the participants with this conference debate it during our seminar.

I remind you, just at the beginning of this morning, that more than 2000 years ago it was the same problem, when a famous poet from Rome, Ovidius, was exiled to Black Sea Region. Maybe the weather was so bad... anyway, he wrote a book of poems called „Sadness”. I hope this conference will be more happy and we will try to manage all the aspects, except the weather, to reach this target.

To be together again, in the new generous framework of a new conference focused on security in the Greater Black Sea

Area, on behalf of the Romanian president Traian Basescu, I want to congratulate you, to thank everybody for your presence here, to wish you to enjoy fruitful debates and to try to identify, if possible, new ideas able to enhance cooperation, to consolidate democracy and to increase prosperity. I hope this conference will facilitate a constructive dialogue, will provide a better understanding of the topics we will focus on.

The importance of the GBSA in the contemporary world is a matter of interest for all the participant countries and the organizations. After the enlargement of the two major Euro-atlantic security players, that occurred in the last years, NATO has consolidated his presence in the region, while the EU has reached, for the first time, the Black Sea shores.

Concerning this new realities, Romania National Security Strategy has mentioned that our country, as a border EU state and NATO member, is highly interested in stable and prosperous neighbors, because only these countries can present peace and good relations among them, being pluralist regional communities and having a predictable behavior in foreign and security fields. From the security challenges standpoint, the region mirrors the new asymmetric risks and threats and is a potentially dangerous training area in which they could be tested.

On this short list, there are international terrorism, proliferation of WMD, local conflicts, illegal traffic of weapons, amunitions and explosives, drug trafficking, illegal migration and traffic in human beings, ineffective governments affected by endemic corruption and organized crime, characterised by a democratic deficit and to the inability of properly exercising the prerogatives of the sovereign states. The Black Sea region is Europe's richest and perhaps one of the densest parts of the world in terms of separatist conflicts, tensions, disputes, while

the cross-border crime is hallmark for the region. In my opinion, a common threat assessment in the region is already pressuring moral imperatives and it will be a good initiative. Of course, no nation need to take the lead, and no nation should see other nations as trying to do this!

But as a dynamic vector of democratic security, economic stability and prosperity, Romania has a fundamental strategic interest in seeing the WBSA stable, democratic and prosperous, strongly connected to European and Euro-Atlantic structures. Under the impact of this interest, the strategic goal of our country is to give an impetus to the EU and the Euroatlantic community involvement in the region. Promoting democracy, freedom and the rule of law in the GBSA and enhancing energy security may be one of the best ways to build a real Black Sea identity. Offering the appropriate incentives for a future EU and NATO membership to the interested countries could be another instrument, since stability and security through integration, partnership and cooperation prove to be the most successful pattern in security of the Central and South Eastern Europe.

The Romanian presidency is favoring the transformation of the security environment in the Wider Black Sea Region. Romania has a productive participation in the existing cooperation frameworks and had been a reliable partner for all the other actors with the same interest. Our activity in the BSEC, GUAM, BLACKSEAFOR and also our effort to successfully enlarging Black Sea Forum for Partnership and Dialogue have been strongly appreciated. This initiative has the role to enhance the level of cooperation and dialogue, to increase the level of trust among states that are directly interested in this region, to find flexible and creative solutions to the new security challenges. Some days, a conference which launched the Black Sea Trust

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Fund for Regional Cooperation took place also in Bucharest. BSTRC represents the outcome of the cooperation among Romania, US government and the *German Marshall Fund of the United States*. The aim of this initiative is to support cooperation, the good governance and the emergence of a strong and active civil society in the region. And there is about creating a stability area in the Black Sea, with the involvement of the experts, from all the EU and from NATO states. With regard to this conference, I want to congratulate the Institute for Modern and Contemporary History from Dresden, Germany, and the Institute for Political Studies of Defense and Military History, Bucharest, for their efforts aimed at organizing this event and for the scientific research in this area. I believe that this event will provide a new impulse for the strategic studies focused on the Black Sea region's security and I hope that more and more opportunities for attracting funds and experts in the area will be identified in the near future.

Thank you very much and I wish you all the best!

Georgios Katsirdakis

Head, Defense and Cooperation Section, Defense Policy and Planning Division, NATO International Staff

Ladies and gentleman,

I think this is an important event for me, because I feel I am at home since I have been in Romania so many times and looking around the table I see a lot of faces I know very well and I have a good memory on them.

So, I am very glad to be here, let me tell you that!

Romania is a valuable NATO member and there are 21 years since I am in Brussels and I have seen the process of development of Romania when it started in those years till today, when it is a NATO and EU member and with great prospects to further improve its position internationally. I have a correction to make – I hear all the time people speaking about the Black Sea, but the name used in Greek was „euxinos pontos”, that means „which is good to visitors”, a friendly, hospitable sea. So, one could maybe reconsidering the name, because it is a friendly sea. Look around you! We, in NATO, we see only friends!

And NATO has been in the region since 1952, when Turkey joined it! And it has been a valuable and supportive ally. Since 2004 we have Romania and Bulgaria that have joined and also the other countries which whom we have friendly and close relations. Already two countries, Ukraine and Georgia, maintain

an intensified dialogue with NATO which is the precursor of joining the Alliance and this is a good sign that we move in the right direction!

Russia is a country with which NATO maintains a strategic relationship, and we are discussing in a separate forum, the so-called NATO-Russia Council where we meet in a configuration that was unthinkable some years ago because the Russian and NATO ambassadors seat around the same table and the Council is presided by the secretary general as if Russia was a de facto member of the Alliance!

So, this is a really friendly sea, despite some difficulties! The question is how can we make it safer? Especially for the benefit of the countries surrounding this sea – states that have a Black Sea coast or are very close neighbors indeed. We have for example the case of the Caucasus. Here we have a lot of interest in NATO. I will make a trip in Azerbaijan and after that in Armenia. This indicates that we have an interest in this region, proving that we look at the broader security of NATO and EU. It is an area where a lot of energy is produced and this energy finds its way through or near the Black Sea to the West. Of course, energy becomes more and more important as the demand for energy is continually growing.

I think that we should talk also about what NATO is doing about the Black Sea area. NATO tries to maintain a low profile in the region as we believe that the littoral countries should have the lead and organize the security arrangements in the best possible way. However we contribute as an organization in building bridges and offering the possibility to organize concrete practical activities and we are not in the process of creating a large ring of framework arrangements which would generate the feeling that NATO is trying to take over the security arran-

gements in the region because that is not what we are trying to do. Now, you see, NATO has gone through a comprehensive transformation in the past seventeen years and it transformed itself for the Cold War collective defense organization to a security organization that tries to work on the basis of maintaining both the collective defense side of its work, but at the same time a very large security agenda which includes all areas where NATO's values are at risk and needs to be defended. And also, at the same time, we speak about the interest of the member-countries that need to be defended.

Now, challenges to security can appear everywhere. But the importance of this region is obvious. There is an increased interest of NATO in that region. Actually there have been some very high-level statements concerning the importance for NATO of the Black Sea and this is indicative of the fact that we have developed a lot of programs for cooperation with the countries in the region. We used different tools like IPAP which is Individual Partnership Action Plans, and we have IPAPs with several states and very special arrangements with Russia and Ukraine.

Through the process of the PfP Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes, there is a new valuable development where NATO contributes, and we have the mobile contact teams which have been set up by NATO. So, we are prepared to offer assistance to the development of such teams, actually I had the privilege to participate in a meeting in Sofia few months ago where we debated the possibility of pushing these ideas forward. Members of my staff participate on a regular basis in such meetings, so I think NATO members and the region's countries can work together but NATO should keep a low profile. We do not want to be too obviously present because we want to indicate the importance for the local countries to take the ownership of all the arrangements.

There is some important thing that is the purpose of this gathering today – the effort to identify risks and threats in the Greater Black Sea Area. We are all very much aware that despite the good arrangements among the nations in the region and the international organizations, especially EU and NATO which are very well present here, there are risks coming from different sources. One is the case of the so-called „frozen conflicts”. I don't know if the word „frozen” is a good one but many people use it to refer to them. These are problems that need to be resolved. I do not say who is right and who is wrong in these cases. As long as those conflict remain unresolved there is a potential of danger for the security of the region. There is also the question of energy and energy has become an explosive issue of international relations, especially recently when the price of energy has gone so high! It appears that it will go even higher. So, that indicates very valuable commodity that happens to be in abundance in the area of the Black Sea. And of course the Black Sea gets even more importance. But we must be careful here not to think of militarising the Black Sea and this would be a mistake because at the moment you turn the Black Sea in a heavily militarized region, then the potential for conflicts become even more obvious. This is the reason why some of the litoral countries try to maintain the point of view that one of the requirements of the cooperation is to be careful how to go about it.

In conclusion I would like to thank again the organizers for having invited me and giving me the opportunity to participate in this very important dialogue and I wish you a real succes during this conference!

Speech of Mr. Corneliu Dobrițoiu,
Chief of Defense Policy and Planning Department, MOD

Dear participants,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a real pleasure for me to be here, with you, and I want to express my wish that all of us, Romanian and foreign guests, will have the opportunity to take part in a interesting dialogue and know each other better, this paving the way for the setting up of a real Black Sea security community experts in the Trans-Atlantic and European space.

The fact that we gathered here and we are prepared to debate on interesting issues prove that the Black Sea region is a very important area in terms of security, politics, economy a.s.o. For a long time, the Wider Black Sea Region has been in the shadow of the most ardent world issues like the Middle East where many conflicts and cleavages created a complex security environment. But after the September 11 terrorist attacks, when the US and its allies and partners decided to launch a global war against terrorism, suddenly the international community realized that their region is important and should not be neglected any more.

For Romania, this region is a direct neighbour, so there is a clear interest in assessing the security environment, in monitoring

the observable evolutions and limit the risks and threats which are directly linked with the area. We are very sensitive to the risks and threats emanating from this region because the geographical proximity makes us vulnerable to them and creates a sense of responsibility and solidarity with the region's countries. We are aware that the Black Sea area is a very complex security zone and we have the interest to have democratic, stable and prosperous neighbors, in close connection with the European and Euro-Atlantic security structures. Romania sees itself as a dynamic vector of security and prosperity in the Black Sea region, as mentioned by the National Security Strategy and the Romanian Strategy for the Black Sea Area, approved by the Romanian president in June 2006.

On behalf of the Defense Policy and Planning Department I want to express my appreciation for the initiative of the Institute for Political Studies of Defense and Military History to develop a research project dedicated to the analysis of security issues in the Wider Black Sea Area. As you know, the Institute benefited from a grant of the Ministry of Education and Research and it already has a group of good experts in the Black Sea security issues. This is, I could say, a continuation of the fertile activity of the Greater Black Sea Area Working Group, launched in 2006 with the aim of enhancing cooperation and improving educational process in security issues, to help decision-makers in their activity. Since the beginning, the Institute provided the secretariat of the Working Group. And it is also a part of the general effort made by the Defense Policy and Planning Department within the Ministry of Defense to identify areas of cooperation for enhancing the security and stability in the Black Sea area. One of our main tasks is to find solutions for enhancing stability in the Balkans and the Black Sea areas, through flexibility and

pragmatism in the defense policy, through the fight against terrorism and the quest of solutions for putting an end to regional conflicts.

As an EU and NATO member, and a Black Sea coastal country, Romania wants a Black Sea dimension of the European Common Foreign and Security Policy and already acts for enhancing the ties between neighboring states from the Eastern Europe-Caucasus and the European Union. This eastern policy should also be reflected in the defense policy, at the level of the European Security and Defense Policy, where Romania has the right to express its legitimate interests.

Together, politics, military, academics, researchers, members of the civic society, we have the duty to help the Black Sea states which are not members of the EU and NATO to become anchored to the European and Euro-Atlantic security space and I sincerely hope that this conference will allow us to have an intense dialogue and find solutions for the huge challenges that this region engendered.

Thank you so much and be welcome here!

Ovidiu Dranga

Plenipotentiary Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Black Sea Forum-Trust Fund, Romania

Let me thank the organizers for this event. It is a very good opportunity for all of us to review the situation in the BS area. During our discussions may be we will approach not only threats and risks but also the opportunities for regional cooperation and how to better connect the region with the EU project and the Euro-Atlantic family. I think that we are in a very important moment because the international community is focusing more and more on the Black Sea and we have a great responsibility to present our ideas to the international community, especially the EU and NATO and see what we can do together to improve the situation in this area.

Thank you!

**Conventional and Unconventional Risks and Threats
to Security in the Greater Black Sea Area**

Mihail E. Ionescu

PhD, Director of IPSDMH, Romania

“Conventional and unconventional risks and threats to security in the Greater Black Sea area” is a research grant awarded through competition by the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research (The National University Research Council) for a three year period. Its scientific goals are the analysis of the concept of Greater Black Sea area and its security environment, monitoring and drawing a clear picture of the risks and threats to security in the Greater Black Sea Area.

The need of such a research is justified by the particular geostrategic position of the Black Sea area in the context of the international antiterrorist offensive, its place in a crossing point on the transportation routes of energy resources from the Caspian space to western Europe, NATO’s important efforts in building security in the area and, last but not least, the expansion of the EU frontiers to the shores of the Black Sea, now that Romania and Bulgaria are members of the EU. The post Cold War period and the demise of its division lines opened a new era in the vision of analysts and specialized researchers regarding this area and the related evolutions.

The Greater Black Sea Area and the evolutions of its post Cold War security environment were defined as an independent

study topic quite late and only by conjunction with other specific fields of interest. The concept was first promoted in a study by Ronald D. Asmus and Bruce P. Jackson "The Black Sea and the Frontiers of Freedom", in *Policy Review*, June 2004) and only recently was directly connected to the development of similar concepts, such as Greater Middle East. All these conceptual undertakings are the result of a manifest need of redefining working concepts in the specialized literature in order to match the new security environment and the new realities of the post 9/11 international relations system.

Beyond these positive factors that increased the potentiality of a global demarche, a holistic view of the region and related problems, conflictive developments recorded in this area and the new division lines to be created, facilitated, according to the international community, the reaction to the crisis in the Balkans, Caucasus or Transnistria, the development of punctual expertise, and, many times, focused on limited answers to the challenges coming to the attention of the regional and international actors involved in the management of the regional security environment.

The proposed research theme – Conventional security risks in the Greater Black Sea Area – intends to foster the study of the developments in the Greater Black Sea Area, especially in the recent history. Because of the numerous historical, economic, geopolitical, geostrategic, social and political determinants in this specific region, the problem of security risks cannot be approached without an enquiry, analysis and detailed knowledge of various problems which open the way for the emergence and growing of some national security threats facing the region's states and the whole regional security environment.

Our demarche will complement the current level of knowledge which is reflected in the specialized bibliography. Having in mind the complex context, it will complete, achieve and

enhance the level of the specialized knowledge regarding the security field of the Greater Black Sea Area, by providing a precise definition of the geopolitical and geostrategic unit embodied by the Black Sea, a conceptual framework which could ensure an enhanced starting point for analyzing the regional security environment, of the risks and threats which are to be found in this region.

The usefulness and utility of the outcomes we intend to produce resides not only in studies, monographs and scientific conferences, some of which already came to fruition, but also in the setting up of a national expertise centre and a data-base to be used by the Romanian political and military decision-makers and by all who are interested in the evolutions of the security environment of the Greater Black Sea Area. We are also interested in the emergence of a Romanian perspective on the risks, threats and security environment in this area.

Summary of the activities undertaken by the research team

- Monthly assessments of the security developments within the Greater Black Sea, materialized in newsletters that can be found on www.ispaim.ro/sabsa;
- Working visits in the countries of the Greater Black Sea Area, in order to assess the official and academic points of view on the conventional and unconventional threats and the related issues in the Greater Black Sea Area, as it follows:
 - o On February 19-21, researchers Șerban Pavelescu and Cristina Romila paid a working visit to Kiev, Ukraine, where they met representatives of the National Institute for Strategic Studies (subordinated to the Office of the President of Ukraine),

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the Center for Strategic Studies and International Security and the Institute of International Relations within the University of Kiev;

o On February 20-23, researchers Șerban Cioculescu and Alexandru Voicu visited Chișinău, Republic of Moldova, where they met representatives from the Association of Foreign Policy, the Public Policy Institute, the European Institute for Political Studies and the Ministry of Defense of Republic of Moldova;

o On April 3-6, researchers Cristina Romila and Șerban Cioculescu visited Istanbul, Turkey, where they met representatives of the Marmara University and the Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation;

o On April 24-27, researchers Șerban Cioculescu and Alexandru Voicu were in Sofia, Bulgaria, where they met representatives of the International Studies and Security Institute and the Institute for Euro-Atlantic Studies;

o On November 27-30, researchers Șerban Pavelescu and Cristina Romila paid a working visit to Ankara, Turkey, where they had contacts with various Turkish representatives (researchers, political analysts, specialists of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NGOs);

- The editing of two Occasional Papers (about 300 pages) on the Greater Black Sea Area, due to appear in the following weeks;

- Organizing the conference entitled “Black Sea Security Dynamics and Euro-Atlantic Alliance & Risks and Threats in the Greater Black Sea Area. The Regional Security Environment in the Post-Cold War Era”, together with the Institute of Modern and Contemporary History from Dresden, Germany.

The Importance of the Black Sea for Europe

Reiner Pommerin, PhD, Germany

Ladies and Gentleman, I have to thank my dear colleague and friend Mihail Ionescu for having supported the idea of a conference on “Risks and Threats in the Black Sea” here at Bucharest. He and his staff changed the idea into a well-organized reality. Thank you again, Mihail.

Actually, I must admit, if I look at the topic of my paper, it seems quite strange to me to talk about the importance of the Black Sea for Europe, because this importance does seem to be so quite obvious. Fifty years after the start of the policy of European integration Romania and Bulgaria are members of the European Union and both countries are littoral states of the Black Sea. Both countries are also members of NATO, which means – and who would have predicted that mere 17 years ago – an attack on Romania or Bulgaria does now mean for me an attack on my home country.

Out of a European Union or NATO point of view one could say: may it be Germany or Belgium, France or Denmark we all are littoral states of the Black Sea. The importance of the Black Sea should therefore be obvious to all Europeans in the European Union and to all NATO-members. But how much does the average European

really know about the Black Sea? What does he really know about the new two EU member states? I fear much less than we expect him and definitely even much less we would like him to know.

If you talk for example to students at my home university, at Dresden, about the Black Sea you may find out that they, mostly born 18 to 20 years ago, have no longer memories of the “Golden Beaches” of the Black Sea dating back to the time before the German unification of 1990. Such memories comparable to the memories of some of their parents who during the days of the GDR and during the days of the old Federal Republic of Germany had spent their holidays there do not exist. And their knowledge about the political or economical situation of the member states Romania and Bulgaria will – I fear – be rather limited.

Many Germans and I think also many Europeans may even not been able to list correctly the entire littoral states of the Black Sea. They surely know and may have traveled some of the neighboring countries North, West and East and even to other continents. But what do Germans and other Europeans really know about Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine, and what about Moldova, Armenia or Azerbaijan.

It may sound strange, but I think it is not as exceptional as you may think it to be, that someone like me who is 64 years old and has been nearly all over the world must admit that he has never seen the Black Sea but out of a window of an airplane and that he is for the first time in his life in Rumania. That of course is still one of the results of the period of the Cold War. A more difficult effect of the Cold War to overcome is the different perceptions and attitudes, which have been influencing our thoughts

during this period. But we are already very successful in building new trust and understanding, as you can tell by looking at Mihail Ionescu and me.

Of course I can in the following minutes only briefly touch some of the many issues relating to my subject, but maybe additional ones can and will be added during the conference.

Romania and Bulgaria, two countries which without a doubt were, by the way, historically speaking always European nations, became members of NATO and are now since January also members of the European Union. At the same time they are littoral Black Sea states. This marks, as I think, for the European Union an important and a most welcome development not only in the course of European integration but also for strategic reasons. The membership in NATO and EU of Romania and Bulgaria will help to create a Black Sea regional identity, which so far only exists to a very limited degree. The main reason for this is that the littoral states of the Black Sea look after the collapse of totalitarian socialism and the Soviet Federation with very different expectations at the European Union, Russia and at the United States of America. They therefore do also have very different orientations of the grade and the limits of regional cooperation.

Since the start of the ENP, the European Union Neighborhood Policy, in 2004, the EU has underlined its interest in the Black Sea Region. It will be important for the future of entire Europe to support the developments of stability, democracy, respect for human rights and prosperity in the region. Democratization and the development of efficient democratic institutions and good governance are – as we Germans had to learn after 1945 – quite a challenging process and require time.

The countries around the Black Sea are with different speed on their way from totalitarianism to democracy and from centrally planned economy to a functioning market economy. One cannot expect the process of state building and the functioning of state to be adapted quickly and therefore patience is necessary. But first good results are definitely visible at least in Romania and Bulgaria. Rightly, as often mentioned in the West-European press, corruption has been identified as a serious obstacle to effective projects in the Black Sea region. But one has to remind West-Europeans that corruption – as statistics tell us clearly these days – is not an unknown phenomenon in the rest of Europe and, by the way, even not in the Federal Republic of Germany.

European Neighborhood Policy has been aiming at those countries that are not or not yet or may never be member states of the EU. It therefore does include the provision for bilateral treaties and can also suit different regional needs. But this policy out of my point of view has some deficiencies and may not be able to fulfill all purposes needed. The European Neighborhood Policy may definitely suit the interest of some European institutions, while it is not necessarily supporting the idea of a United Europe. This may be the reason why the Commission of European Communities started this year on the 11th of May a new regional initiative, called “Black Sea Synergy”, in which the need of a new regional policy and the steps necessary to implement this policy are described.

The economic potentials of the six littoral states are great and the geopolitical value of the Black Sea is even greater. Therefore not only the European Union and NATO are involved and active in the Black Sea region. Well, we do not know much about the US

Department of Defense strategy plan for the Black Sea region, which if I am informed rightly is still a draft. However one cannot overlook and has to realize the considerable efforts of the United States of America to gain more influence in the region.

The geostrategic position of the two NATO countries Romania and Bulgaria are very useful as Dr. George Maier in his capacity as former Romanian Secretary of State has stated already three years ago for “launching new operations and taking new measures for prevention and for projecting security and democracy outward”. And General Mihail Popescu the former chief of Romanian General Staff added “NATO enlargement and the extension of the Black Sea area as a consequence of the US relocation and the internal transformation of the Alliance are two indissolubly connected processes”. One only has to think of the important role that Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base plays as a frequent destination for US military aircraft on their way to Iraq. And there can also be no doubt that the realization of plans of the US for a regional training center in the area would enhance regional security and bring economical benefits.

But the Black Sea is also in the sphere of interest of another big power, Russia, and therefore the spheres of interest of the two great nations United States and Russia do overlap here. It seems that Russia is trying to rebuild its former influence in the Black Sea region. There has to be considered a certain unwillingness of Russia to accept the existence of new sovereign states that might oppose the attempts of Russia to dominate as a hegemonic power.

But the political pressure applied on Georgia and on Ukraine by Russia is as real as Russian rewards to states like Armenia,

which is loyal to Russia. Remember the problems of the “Orange Coalition” at Kiev and the anti-western protests in June last year by pro Russian parties which finally forced Ukraine to cancel the planned “SEA Breeze” and “tight knot” exercises in the Crimea. One cannot call it already the “Scramble for the Black Sea” but it is visible that both big powers, the United States and Russia, and to a lesser degree the European Union are unfortunately a kind of rivals in the Black Sea Region. Just remember the brusqueness reaction of Russia when Romania last year hosted the “Black Sea Forum for Dialogue and Partnership”. Romania’s attempt to initiate and foster the development of a regional identity and consultation was cautiously but clearly downplayed by Russia and also by Turkey. The Strategic Partnership with Russia has still a long way to go, I think. No regional initiative in the Black Sea region, that is Russia’s blunt message, can be successful without Russian consent.

The European Union and NATO and also the United States of America are increasing their presence in the Black Sea region in order to promote stability and security beyond their borders. Actually the Black Sea is Europe’s new southeastern border. Especially of concern not only for the Black Sea region but also for all Europeans are the developments in Moldova, because they have an effect on the region’s security and the situation in Europe in general. This is the reason for the contribution of the European Commission to help finding a conflict solution through the Border Assistance Mission for Moldova and Ukraine. Also the still outstanding issues between Georgia and Russia do affect the region’s future as well. Other issues like the Romanian-Ukrainian dispute on maritime boundaries in the Black Sea, or the discussions on the construction of the Bastroe channel do definitely not have a stabilizing effect for a Black Sea regional identity.

All real and eventual pockets of instability in the region must automatically increase a dangerous security effect because they unfortunately cause illicit activities. The Black Sea is also an avenue for illegal traffic in persons that does include terrorists, smuggling of conventional weapons, but also components of weapons of mass destruction. No longer travels only silk on the former Silk Road, but narcotics from the opium fields in Afghanistan are making their way into Europe via the Black Sea. Control of the Sea and of the borders must therefore be much more efficient to minimize illegal migration and organized crime and money laundering. But this surely is a task for the entire European Union and not only for their members Romania and Bulgaria.

But the differences in the region are still tremendous. While Romania and Bulgaria, though different, are members of NATO and EU and stabilization points in the Balkans, the Black Sea is kind of a patchwork of overlapping spheres of interest. Romania’s neighbor Ukraine for example is caught between Russia and the West, while Georgia is tending towards the West but is – beside strong pressures from Russia – facing problems over its sovereignty and territorial integrity with the secessionists in Abkhazia and Ossetia. Russia recognized South Ossetia’s territorial independence, while the United States refused to do so. Questioning the territorial integrity of two internationally recognized states is creating a major problem for the international community. Secessionist states can – as historians have described – become breeding grounds for international smuggling, other illicit activities and even for terrorists. Russia is also supporting Transnistria’s secessionist aspirations, which do make the solution of the problems in Moldova not easier.

There may have been historical and long time problems between Turkey and Russia. And it is true that Turkey does not have diplomatic relations with Armenia. But Turkey does as all other littoral states desire and it also needs stability in the Black Sea. Only in which way this stability may be achieved seems to be within discussion in Ankara. Turkey is in the moment busy enough handling its top security problem, the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). Since the 1980's the PKK has claimed responsibility for the death of over 30.000 people. Kurdish nationalists dominate Northern Iraq and Turkey must fear rising unrest under the Kurdish minority in eastern Turkey. Recent attacks on civilians and infrastructure in Turkey prove that this perception is not wrong at all. Therefore maintaining stability and security in the Black Sea is of high interest for Turkey. This interest is helping to overcome old rivalries and the further increase of the Russian-Turkish cooperation in the Black Sea, even if the United States are trying to overcome the rift in the US-Turkish relations which is visible since 2003, by announcing the support for Turkey in solving the Kurdish problem in Northern Iraq.

Having mentioned the illicit activities one has to look at the role and importance of the Black Sea as the connecting link between the Caucasus region and Europe. A region where over 300 million people are living is clearly a region with a great economic potential and its value is related to the huge reserves of natural resources and important transport corridors. Oil and gas from Central Asia and also from the Middle East is shipped via the Black Sea and by pipelines to Europe. The Baku Initiative tries to improve cooperation in the field of energy and in the field of transport according to EU standards and principles. There are of course other important issues which are addressed for

example by the TRACECA program, the Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Central Asia program, which takes care of technical assistance for road, rail, aviation and maritime transport connections from Asia to Europe. And there is the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC); founding members were Turkey and Russia, which is including now all Black Sea countries. Germany and other EU members do have an observer status. The EU via the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank at Thessaloniki, I think, could give more financial support.

But energy security is definitely ranging on the top of all European Union concerns. Out of that point of view it is hardly understandable at all that the European Union has not yet established a European energy policy, while energy costs are skyrocketing. In Germany we were surprised and alarmed by the sudden shortage of oil running through the pipeline from Russia through the Ukraine to us. In January 2006, in mid-winter, Russia simply doubled the price of gas and Ukraine refused to pay. Russia cut off the gas deliveries and that had an impact on their European consumers who, for example in Germany, were facing shortages even if that was only the case for a very short time.

Has this taught the European Union a lesson, I think so? One suddenly does understand Poland and Ukraine better, who are planning a pipeline from Azerbaijan to Poland through the Black Sea, which does not touch Russian territory. The Black Sea is the transit area for energy, be it gas or oil for most parts of Europe. Russia tries to become the world's primary supplier of oil and gas resources. Therefore most Europeans were welcoming the initiative for new routes for the movement of oil and gas from the Middle East and Central Asia to Europe. The completion of the Baku-Tbilissi-Ceyhan oil pipeline in 2005, the project of the Baku-

Tbilissi-Erzurum gas pipeline and the planned Nabucco line which is connecting the Turkish gas network through Rumania, Hungary and Austria with the West of Europe are now warmly welcomed.

But unfortunately these lines are also creating new security risks. Energy infrastructure obviously does make an interesting target for terrorist attacks. That has been proven already in August last year, when a Kurdish terrorist group caused a massive explosion in the Agri Province of Turkey by attacking a natural gas pipeline. In general one must realize that a region where Muslims meet Christians, ethnic conflicts and ethnic separatism creates a specific milieu for the activities of global terrorism.

As much as I do understand the initiatives to create new energy transit routes, I think that risks and threats and securing these routes in the Black Sea can on the long run only be mastered if the European Union and Russia are cooperating closely. A good but only a first initiative is the INOGATE Program, the interstate oil and gas to Europe pipelines, which could improve the security by technical assistance programs. I think the agreement reached at the Astana Ministerial conference last year November to support INOGATE by the EU Black Sea and Caspian Sea Basin and its Neighboring Countries Energy Cooperation Secretariat is also pointing into the right direction.

There are also other steps that have already been taken which are pointing into the right direction, but I cannot mention them here. One step for example has definitely been the Black Sea Harmony Maritime Security program. Lead by Turkey but I think initiated by the United States, the program aims at the sharing of intelligence informations among all costal states. Unfortunately

the sharing of intelligence informations is easy to demand but in reality not an easy thing to do. It does require thrust and stabile and proven good political and military relations over a longer period.

Since April 2001 is the Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Group existing. Since August 2007 year Turkey took over the command of the Group from Russia. Ships will be visiting this year ports in Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey and join an operative-tactical exercise.

Let me conclude:

With Romania and Bulgaria, two members of the European Union are littoral states of the Black Sea, which means the European Union is littoral to the Black Sea. The Black Sea region is of high value due to its geopolitically significant status as a nexus of cultures, international trade, ideas and influence. The coastlines of Romania and Bulgaria need special protection and security measures. It must be in the interest of all members of the European Union and NATO to support the political and economic developments of the two new members and support the region in general.

It must also be in the interest of the European Union to take care of the environmental state of the Black Sea, which is terribly polluted by the Danube, Dniestr and Dniepr rivers. That does beside other things affect, by the way, also tourism which could be a much more important industry for the Black Sea. In this context one also has to mention the fact that the Black Sea is still an important fishing region and a great number of its stocks are trans-boundary. This is an issue, which obviously has, beside the work of the Black Sea Commission, which is executing the Convention of Protection of the Black Sea of 1992 against pollution, of course not received the same attention as the security of oil and gas pipelines.

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To overcome old perceptions and to develop a regional identity is of high importance. The region will only be able to master all risks and threats in the Black Sea by overcoming pure national interests, by close cooperation and by treating all littoral states as equal partners with the same respect regardless of their individual size and economical or military power. From the stability, prosperity and security reached in the Black Sea region entire Europe will profit.

Well, you think this is a mere vision and cannot come true. I am an optimist and a historian and therefore I know everything can come true, even visions can become reality, all it does take is initiative, patience and time.

Thank you very much!

Institutionalisation of Security Risk Assessment in the Black Sea Region

Hari Bucur-Marcu, PhD, Romania

Well, let me begin by proposing you to discuss security risk assessment institutionalization in the context of Partnership Action Plan for Defence Institution Building – a NATO initiative, launched at the Istanbul Summit in 2004. Addressing this topic through this NATO initiative is justified for at least two reasons: the action plan mentions explicitly security risk assessment as an objective of defence institutionalization, and the initiative is explicitly targeting partner nations of South Caucasus and Moldova as its primary beneficiary.

As for the author of these remarks, I have been involved for more than two years now in several projects addressing Partnership Action Plan for Defence Institution Building (PAP-DIB) in a holistic or sequential manner, thus developing an understanding of most of the requirements and practices related to PAP-DIB objectives, security risk assessment included. One of these projects involved the investigation of the status of PAP-DIB implementation in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Republic of Moldova at the moment of 2006.

My presentation is structured in two parts. In the first part, I am explaining some theoretical and methodological considerations, with the aim of laying the ground for the second

part, where I am presenting my own observations related to the process of implementation of security risk assessment institutionalisation requirements in the Black Sea Region, and its outcome.

1. General considerations

Seen from the perspective of institutionalisation, the effectiveness and efficiency of the process of security risk assessment is less a matter of the actual content of the eventual risks identified and analysed, or of the relevance of those risks to national security of a given nation. It is more a matter of applying the principles of democracy to this process, especially the principles that the people are the supreme holders of power in that nation, and that the national security serves exclusively the people. In this respect, how effective is the institutionalised process of security risk assessment within a given government is revealed by the outcomes of the security risk assessment process. If the eventual risks were addressing the genuine people's concerns, and the security challenged by these risks were referring to people's interests, aspirations and wellbeing, then the process would be considered effective. Also from this perspective, the effectiveness presumes that the public options are maximised, while the government agenda is minimised.

This democratic exercise is relevant only if it leads to concrete measures observed in the process of defence forces and capabilities development. When security risk assessment is not followed by defence planning actions and does not engage national resources, the public will understand that it is only political rhetoric and will soon lose interest in this issue, or will sanction the governmental actions.

An important condition is that the public should be able to observe or even take part in the clarification process of risk identification and risk analysis, and be informed with the political

decisions regarding risk assessments. The most common transparency formats, as enablers of public interest in being part of the process of security risk assessment are parliamentary actions, such as testimonies and hearings; public debates organised and conducted by governmental and nongovernmental organisations; and the possibility of different categories of members of the public to express alternative opinions in publications available to the public.

In any democracy, risk assessment is a very delicate task for the government. On one hand, the public forms its own perceptions on security threats and opportunities, making the government to factor the public opinion resulted from these perceptions into its political decisions reflecting its own security risk assessment. On the other hand, the process of security risk assessment involves interagency actions, where each agency brings its own agenda into discussion. Moreover, the government has its political agenda that some times biases the process of identifying security risks. Without a comprehensive democratic oversight, some risks irrelevant to public interest but threatening this political agenda might find their way on the list of risks to national security.

Challenges like the ones addressing democracy, effectiveness and efficiency might be overcome by a functional institutionalisation of the process of security risk assessment.

When we embarked on the project of identifying the status of PAP-DIB implementation in the nations mentioned above, we considered that the minimum requirements to consider this implementation successful and functional should comprise:

- Arrangements and procedures stated in appropriate legislation and regulations, and addressing the process of security risk assessment, detailing which governmental bodies are entrusted with the responsibility of identifying and analysing security risks and which are empowered to take political decisions based on

work of former. These arrangements and procedures should also establishing the periodicity of the process, as well as the formats of documents where the assessment is presented to the government and the public.

- Policy documents where the security risk assessment is published. The minimum documents should be a strategic policy document, either/or at security sector level (i.e. national security strategy/concept), and/or at defence sector level (i.e. national defence strategy/white paper/strategic defence review). For the purpose of reflecting the assessed security risks into defence requirements, we also considered that it is a minimum requirement for a nation to have also a military strategy, at defence staff level, where the relevant risks identified at security sector level are incorporated and reassessed from a military perspective.

- Comprehensive statements within policy documents revealing:

- o Categories or clusters of risks, grouped on criteria such as the relevance of those risks for national security (i.e. challenges to national values, goals, interests, territory, economy, public safety etc.); their nature (i.e. military/non-military, natural/industrial disasters), and their urgency (i.e. immediate, longer-term warning);

- o Security sectors of main responsibility and of supporting roles for each identified risk (i.e. defence forces with civil emergency forces in supporting role) and/or strategic missions for security and defence forces in respect of those risks and threats.

2. Security risk assessment in Black Sea Region

With the general consideration from above in mind, we are now better equipped both theoretically and methodologically to discuss the status of security risk assessment in the nations from the Black Sea region. However, when doing that, we have

to introduce also three main factors that are influencing the national behaviour on risk assessment and its outcome: the level of statehood and democracy development, international position, and level of security and defence institutionalisation.

We considered that the level of statehood and democracy development is an important factor shaping the behaviour of the states in the region in regard with their exercise of assessing security risks. At the same time, this factor reveals the diversity of states included in the entity of Greater Black Sea Region.

From the start, when we discuss this topic of institutionalisation of security risk assessment, we are positioning ourselves in the place of the public. That is to say that we are using open sources of knowledge about these states, and we are analysing them as informed members of the public. It is important to make these remarks, because there might be some governmental activity on this issue concealed from the public eye we were not aware of. And we want to underline the fact that our findings are subjective and represent individual or personal opinions, and they do not include official or organisational points of view, neither from the nation, nor the organisation we belong to.

Moreover, we acknowledge that we are not in the business of giving ratings of democracy or assessing the levels of statehood. There are other organisations, both governmental and non-governmental doing that with appropriate instruments and methodology.

The picture drawn from this perspective reveals that the region comprises nations with various degrees of statehood and democracy.

There are strong states and strong democracies. Here we may include Bulgaria and Romania, and this assessment is given by the fact that both are members of European Union and NATO. These nations should have a fully-fledged institutionalised

process of security risk assessment along the criteria and requirement discussed in the previous section. However, the realities are not that straight forward. Neither Bulgaria, nor Romania has fully institutionalised security risk assessment. They indeed have provisions in their legislation on arrangements and procedures for security risk assessment, and they produced some security and defence policies documents identifying security risks, but there is no visible correspondence between these documents and actual development of security and defence requirements.

Then there are strong states and emerging democracies. We may include here Russian Federation and Turkey. Being strong states, their governments are fully involved in providing security, as they consider appropriate. But being emerging democracies, the inclusion of people's interests and aspirations, perceptions and opinions is not on the priority list of these governments and of their security and defence sectors. Moreover, they allow political or interest groups to shape the assessment of security risks.

Finally, there are weak states and emerging democracies. When we say weak we do not intend to diminish the efforts of the remaining states in the region to develop strong statehood, but we have to recognise that they are not there yet. These states, namely Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine have only very recent endeavours to institutionalise the process of risk assessment, and they are doing that with various degrees of effectiveness and efficiency. But this exercise is reflecting the level of statehood and democracy development, namely they are hovering between rhetoric and some practical relevance of their policy documents revealing security risk assessments.

The factor of international position occupied by the states in the region is also relevant for security risk assessment institutionalisation.

For one reason, all these states are members of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and all are recognising the OSCE Code of Conduct on Political-Military Affairs and the Defence Planning OSCE document. Both these security enhancement instruments contain clear provisions in line with the requirements of democracy and justification of defence forces based on requirements driven from transparent security risk assessment processes. Nevertheless, these OSCE initiatives are only politically binding, and the states are free to implement them at their own pace.

The members of EU and NATO (Bulgaria and Romania) or only NATO (Turkey) may argue that they do not necessarily need a security risk assessment of their own, as they recognise the risks stated in policy documents of these organisations, such as EU Security Strategy and NATO Strategic Concept. However, these nations, and especially Romania and Turkey develop defence forces in excess of NATO requirements (force goals). Seen from the eyes of the public, the process of developing security risk assessment to justify these forces in excess is not transparent enough, and leaves room for interpretation that it is not institutionalised along the agreed requirements.

With a declared ambition to join NATO, Georgia singles itself as a nation that seeks to implement security risk assessment institutionalisation at its best, and recently developed appropriate instruments for this purpose, under international assistance and guidance.

The members of the Community of Independent States (CIS) with Russian Federation in the lead do not put an emphasis on security risk assessment, nor do so the corresponding Collective Security Treaty Organisation, represented in the region by Armenia and Russia.

Azerbaijan, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine are less interested in shaping their security arrangements in close connection with their international posture and membership of international organisations.

The level of security and defence institutionalisation was considered the third factor of significance for security risk assessment institutionalisation. It is aimed to give consistence and organisational meaning to the products of risk assessment, namely the identified risks and their corresponding security and defence requirements. It is also essential for the democratic control and democratic oversight of security and defence.

The region of Greater Black Sea does not witness any fully institutionalised security and defence sectors, in any of the nations included in this region. Some nations are short of fully institutionalising requirements of democratic oversight (i.e. Azerbaijan, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Turkey), others are short of applying all the requirements of defence planning and defence management (i.e. Armenia, Ukraine), and others are short of implementing all good practices in their governance of the defence sector (i.e. Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania).

In these conditions, there is too much room in the region for arbitrary or biased security risk assessment products, such as policies and strategies, or for rhetoric declarations of security concerns without real assessment at origins. The public interaction with the process of security risk assessment is sporadic and without predictable consequences.

3. Conclusions

How deep the process of assessing security risks is institutionalised gives the dimension of credibility and confidence that

the military power benefits from in the region of the Greater Black Sea region, along with the requirements of democracy.

The exercise of building transparent and functional defence institutions is quite new in this region, and the component of security risk assessment institutionalisation is even newer. With different degrees, this situation allows for arbitrary decisions in terms of what are the risks and threats to the nations in the region. That's all.

Thank You!

Transnistrian “frozen conflict”: a fertile soil for asymmetric and conventional risks and threats to the Security, Stability and Democracy in the Black Sea Region

Victor Chirilă, Republic of Moldova

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, allow me to express my sincere congratulations to our hosts for excellent organization of this conference, as well as for this opportunity to have a useful exchange of opinions over the latest security dynamics and evolutions in the Larger Black Sea Area.

Distinguished Guests,

Today, some presentations have underlined the challenges that “frozen conflicts” pose to the security and stability of the Black Sea Region. The truth is that as long as these conflicts will remain unsolved we are going to have a volatile security environment in the Black Sea region and the international efforts to promote *prosperity, democracy and stability* will continue to be undermined.

As we know, the so-called “frozen conflicts” refer to separatist regions that are out of international order and beyond the constitutional control of the states they belong to. Or, as 9/11 tragic events highlighted in a horrible manner, this kind of unlawful regions are fertile soil for different sorts of asymmetric and conventional risks and threats to the security of the states concerned, as well as to the regional, European and international security.

For instance, in the case of the Republic of Moldova, the Transnistrian separatist region is a place where the non-conventional and conventional security risks are intertwined. Illegal smuggling of goods, illegal trafficking of human beings, smuggling of drugs and arms, money laundering, illegal migration towards the European Union – are activities that prosper in Transnistria. It is obvious that the all afore-mentioned activities represent serious challenges to the regional and international order.

Transnistria is a black hole on Europe’s map and a weak chain-link in international community’s fight against international terrorism. Moreover, the Transnistria separatist region is one of the most armed regions in Europe. The Transnistrian Army, which in fact is a Russian military force outside of its territory, outstrips capabilities of the Moldovan Army. Thus, Moldovan armed forces personnel is 6.500, Transnistria is over 10.000; Moldova has no tanks, Transnistria has 18; in terms of air-power Moldova’s 8 MI-8 helicopters, 6 MIG-29 and five transport aircraft are counterbalanced by Transnistria’s around 30 combat aircraft and helicopters.

Also, there are 1.300 Russian soldiers and officers of the Operational Group of Russian Forces (former 14th Soviet Army) whose formal mission is to guard are about 21.000 tons of ex-Soviet Army munitions stockpiled in Transnistria, at the Colbasna arms depot. More than that, there about 42.000 light weapons - Kalashnikov gun machines and Macarov pistols – stockpiled in the capital of Transnistria, Tiraspol. And this entire arsenal is in the immediate vicinity of the new Euro-Atlantic border in the Eastern Europe, 500 km of which go along the border with the Republic of Moldova.

The very existence of the Transnistrian separatist regime is a direct threat to Moldova’s sovereignty, territorial integrity, stability, democracy, prosperity, credibility and viability of its

institutions. Yet, the Transnistrian “frozen conflict” is not anymore exclusively a problem of the Republic of Moldova. The real facts show that it is an international issue as well.

At the 1999 OSCE Istanbul Summit, the Russian Federation took the commitments to withdraw and destroy all hard military equipment that fall under the provisions of the Adapted Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) by the end of the 2001. As well, Russian Federation pledged to withdraw from Transnistria all its armed forces by the end of 2002.

Until now, Russia fulfilled the first part of its commitments, but failed to complete the full withdrawal of its troops from the territory of the Republic of Moldova. Russian Federation insists that the international calls for full withdrawal of its armed forces from Moldova soil by the end of 2002 have nothing to do with the Adapted CFE Treaty and that they are only political in their nature. Moreover, at the 2002 Porto OSCE Ministerial Council, Russia succeeded to change the notion of unconditional commitment into conditional intention further increasing its margin of maneuver. And finally on July 14, 2007, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a federal decree “On Suspending the Russian Federation’s Participation in the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and Related International Agreements” which raises serious doubts about the willingness of the Russian Federation to fulfill its international commitments.

Faced with these realities, Moldova continues to condition the ratification of the Adapted CFE Treaty on the full withdrawal of Russian forces from Moldovan territory. At the same time, Moldova promise that when the withdrawal will be accomplished, the Russian armed forces are not going to be replaced by military contingents from other countries, but with police and civil observers under international mandate.

Yet, Moldovan stance on the CFE Treaty could be diluted if the NATO members will reach a compromise with the Russian Federation that would provide the latter with a *face-save solution*. For instance, we know that there have been some backstage informal discussions about “*reforming*” the current peacekeeping operation dominated by Russia. According to this solution the Russian peacekeeping contingent would be complemented with Western armed forces, each participant country would provide no more than 30% of peacekeeping contingent and the entire operation would be under OSCE mandate. If this solution will be materialized, it could bring some improvements to the current situation. Nevertheless, it imply the risk of providing Russia with an international mandate for legitimizing its military presence in the Transnistrian region of Moldova, as well as may weaken Moldova’s arguments concerning full and unconditional withdrawal of the Russian armed forces from its territory – a position that has been so far supported by United States and its NATO Allies.

It has become more than obvious that in order to change the situation in the Transnistria region of Moldova, we need an increased role of the Western partners – EU, US, OSCE and NATO as well.

First if all, the exclusive military presence of the Russian troops in the region has to be brought to an end, by replacing so-called “Russian Peacekeeping” with a Multinational Civilian Peacekeeping Mission under international aegis. Such a solution is supported more and more by the United States as well. At least, on November 5th, 2007, during the testimony to the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe of the US Congress, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State David Kramer has indicated that the United States favors a complete civilianization of the peacekeeping operation in Transnistria under international auspices.

Secondly, the EU and United States of America should be recognized as full-fledged participants at the negotiations table on Transnistria along with Russia, Ukraine and OSCE.

Thirdly, EU, United States and OSCE should step up their efforts aimed at supporting democratization of the Transnistrian region and a major attention should be given to reforming the Transnistrian security sector, otherwise the democratization efforts will be botched from the beginning.

Fourthly, the EU should endow its European Neighborhood Policy with a clear European perspective for its Eastern European neighbors. In the case of Moldova, the afore-mentioned perspective will increase significantly the attractiveness of the Republic of Moldova in the eyes of its population living in the Transnistrian region.

Meantime, the European Union (EU) involvement in finding a viable settlement to Transnistria problem has increased alongside with that of the United States. For instance, the Transnistrian issue is part of the Action Plan signed between EU and Moldova in February 2004. In September 2005 EU and United States were invited to join the negotiations table on Transnistria as *Observers*, thus balancing the mediator status of Russia at these negotiations. In the same context, in fall 2005, a Special Envoy of the EU has established his office in Moldova, while since November 2005 the EUBAM (EU Border Assistance Mission) was launched to strengthen customs and border control on the Moldovan-Ukrainian common border.

Yet, in parallel, Moldova has to offer an attractive model of integration to all its citizens from both banks of the Nistru River. The transformation of the Republic of Moldova in accordance with the European Union's principles, values, norms and standards can be a solid base for reuniting the Transnistrian region

with Moldova. Nevertheless, domestic incentives must go hand in hand with international ones. This shall open long overdue opportunities for promoting democratization, demilitarization, and decriminalization of the Transnistrian region.

Thank you very much for your attention.

South Caucasus as a part of the Wider Black Sea

Diana Ananyan, Armenia

Since January 2007 the South Caucasus *de jure* and *de facto* can be considered as the formal neighbor to the European Union, as well as a bridge between the Wider Black Sea and the Greater Middle East.

At the same time, for the West as a whole, the South Caucasus is seen as quite an unstable and problematic region, taking into account at least that the three of four ethno-political conflicts of the Black Sea region, uncontrolled illegal migration and the use of this area as a transit zone for illegal trade with arms, drug traffic and trafficking and smuggling which are present in the region, especially in Georgia and Turkey.

However, the importance of the South Caucasus is increasing along with the West's intention to secure:

- alternative sources of energy and the ways of its supply;
- prevention of resumption of military actions in the immediate closeness to its borders,
- ensuring stability of the political behavior of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia by means of support to continuation of democratization processes in these countries.

The main mechanism for keeping a relative stability in the South Caucasus, according to some European states and partly

United States, is the inclusion of the South Caucasian states into the New Neighborhood Policy of the European Union.

Europe, first, is trying to unify its approach to the South Caucasian states, proposing some pattern, i.e. the Action Plan within that program; second, unifying its efforts with the USA, Europe is in consistent search for some frameworks, within which it could achieve at least a minimal interaction of the three completely different states on the sub-regional level.

In its turn, engagement into the ENP is something like a *carte blanche* for Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan, but the essence is that integration of such a problematic region cannot be considered as priority goal for the European Union as an international structure, which is going to play, first of all a consultative role and become donors for some period of time.

First of all such approach is quite exposed, referring to the four unresolved ethno-political conflicts within the Black Sea area: the Transnistrian conflict, the Abkhazian and the South-Ossetian conflicts as well as Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. They are extremely devastating for the direct parties to these conflicts, and they are really impeding the economic development of these states, creating opportunities for outside manipulation of the parties to the conflicts. Undoubtedly, the escalation of each of these conflicts can have negative consequences at least for immediate neighbors, and on the regional level, for the whole Black Sea area.

However, despite the threat of resumption of the military actions in the areas of the conflicts, the EU stems from the thesis that active engagement into the settlement process is not desirable for it.

Besides determination of priorities and, therefore, the steps aimed at overcoming some challenges (corruption, poverty), as it already

has been mentioned, the states of the South Caucasus within the borders with somewhat other configuration, i.e. the Wider Black Sea region, can expect a more active role, depending on the level of their attractiveness for the other states of the newly shaped region. Each of the South Caucasian states choose its own way to present different kinds of attractiveness using different labels: Georgia – democracy, Azerbaijan – energy sources and Armenia – predictability and internal stability.

There are also vectors of coinciding and non-coinciding interests of the states of the Wider Black Sea region, but it is necessary to pay a special attention to distribution of the states by already existing or just newly shaped political alliances i.e. NATO, EU, CIS. The internal political processes in Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan, on the one hand, are a real impediment to their active participation in creating a new region, and on the other hand, it lets them act in one front first of all against Russia - now in the area of the Black Sea. One should expect activation of their efforts aimed at engagement of Turkey, if not to the direct participation in GUAM, then as an observer. In this case GUAM, in parallel to NATO, can become another internal military and political axis of the Black Sea region. Besides stating that today Turkey's participation in the economic and political life of the mentioned states is intensifying under such objective factors as:

- energy resources of the Caspian, the ways of their supply to the West;
- the lack of any shifts in the Armenian-Turkish relation toward improvement;
- the possibility of election of a representative of the Islamist circles as President of Turkey with further intensification

of the Islamization of Turkey and its kickback from the EU, it is understandable that Turkey intensifies its activity in all organizations, able to provide a dominating role within the format of the Wider Black Sea and Greater Middle East.

It is also necessary to mention that taking into account the objective realities, strategic interests of the great powers, international institutions and such subjective factor as the vision of the South Caucasian states of their own role, it is possible to state the following:

- Europe and the European institutes are on the way of overcoming the inertia in perception of the South Caucasian states as countries – situated outside the zone of their interests; however, a substantial increase of such interest should not be expected;
- Europe is not ready to take up the whole responsibility for tackling the whole complex of inter-related and serious problems of the sub-region of the South Caucasus; so Europe will try to confine itself with following-up the compliance or not compliance of the democratic transformations with the high European standards, allotting the South Caucasus just the role of division-line with the problematic Middle East;
- the South Caucasus in all large-scale Euro-Atlantic projects will still be holding the peripheral status for long;
- the only project where a relative *subjectness* of Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan is possible is the Wider Black Sea project;
- the actual deadlock situation will force the South Caucasian states to search the ways for mutual understanding and the way out to the level of the trilateral cooperation and creation of the regional security system on their own;
- in the long-term perspective under the targeted and consistent enforcing of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia from outside toward cooperation, one can expect that participation of these

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states in the European integration projects may stimulate their positive interest toward each other, and with the appearance of which some formation of security environment there can be started in the South Caucasus. In case of the successful realization of that approach, the importance and attractiveness of the South Caucasus as a component of the European security system will increase.

From the view of formation of the security system in the South Caucasus configuration, "Wider Black Sea" may be not only an interim link for our three states toward a larger-scale participation in the European processes, but also the environment, in which there can be creation of favorable conditions at least for probing the potential of the sub-regional South-Caucasian cooperation.

Thank you very much!

The European Unions's External Energy Security

Iulian Chifu

The subject of Energy Security entered the mainstream of debates in the EU after the 2005/2006 and 2006/2007 blockages in supply on oil and gas transportation from Russia via Ukraine and from Russia via Belarus. After some days of cuttings, EU realized the real problem in having the commitments on supplies not observed by Russia and the fact that disputes on the way to Europe can be solved at the expenses of the consumers from the EU. But the real strategy is far from being reached, especially because of the differences of view between member states. Let us take a quick step into the themes of energy security and also present another type of addressing energy security that everybody should think about.

I. Themes of the energy security

1. Reducing the consumption: economy of energy

This is one of the most important (and forgotten) way of addressing the energy security. Limiting the consumption does not mean to cut ourselves from the usual facilities and way of living, but to make the best use of the new technologies that

could offer us the same facilities with less consumption and to reduce the excesses of consumption, when these are not needed.

2. Clean energy

It's the second direction of the energy security in the EU, linked with the concern of global warming and excessive CO2 emissions in the atmosphere. This is related to hydro electric plants that are already used in the EU at the maximum. New capabilities could be exploited, especially the small hydroelectric plants, on the small rivers, for domestic and community use.

In line with that comes the energy produced by clean natural sources like the sun energy and the wind energy. Even though those could not be representative for industrial consumption, they could be very well used in domestic, community consumption and also in small industry and office supply.

The third source is linked to bio-diesel. Here the first controversy is rising, and this is a moral one and a juridical one linked to the support for poor countries and FAO's policies, as well as to the commitments of rich countries to African countries that face mass starving. Taking away fields from the agriculture to be used in the production of bio/diesel could be a good and cheap idea but a controversial one. It happens in Brasil and the US, but the controversy also hits the very countries where the prices of food and agricultural products increased after the new industry developed. In Europe it is even more complicated to get so large fields to offer to the production of bio-diesel since the surfaces are not so generous. However, the strategy imposes a percentage of bio-diesel in the car carburant in the near future.

3. Nuclear power plants

This is an issue even more debated since the issue is seen in different forms by the most important states of the EU: France is relying on nuclear power plants, Germany is closing its own. At the same time, the dispute with environmentalists is still at a high level since some are debating the security of the nuclear power plants for the environment, as well as the way of dealing with the residues from the process. Recently, Romania was subject to a huge misinformation by Greenpeace who sent the alarm that Cernavodă town was infected and asked the mother and the young children to leave the city. It was proof it was a full bluff, a process that will cost Greenpeace a huge deal of credibility in Romania.

At the level of the EU, the nuclear solution is coming more and more in the forefront of the agenda. Romania is now developing the 3-rd and 4-th group at Cernavodă and is looking for a new site in Northern Transilvania for another nuclear power plant.

4. Oil and gas

EU is dependent and will accentuate its dependence on oil and gas for the next period, until a new generation of energy resources will come in force. In this respect the energy security is linked to the following ideas:

- alternative and diversified sources: trying to find alternative places and reserves for oil and gas;
- alternative and diversified routes: this is link to alternative pipeline routes, that do not cross the same territory of one country that could become a monopoly of transportation and

impose its rules in a privileged, non-competitive manner. This is also linked to alternative ways of transportation through pipelines, seas and ports as well as alternative rail transportation, including the issue of equalizing the distance between rails European and Russian style and trans-boarding this through ferries;

- Propriety of the infrastructure: This is another debate not yet solved between EU countries. One approach is the national, state owned of the infrastructure critical or strategic, like there is the case in Ukraine or Hungary, another way is through conserving a state “golden share” or a kind of control of the state for the next owner – Romania, Ukraine – which enters in conflict with the European rules of competition;

- The best alternative is the British approach which involves private ownership with some market rules and competitiveness conditions – blockage of the takeovers of private companies by state own or partial state owned companies, non dominant position, etc.

- European ownership first is another principle that supports the fact that private owners of the European infrastructure – private one – should be European registered companies, that observe competition rules. The most prominent case about this is the future Burgas-Alexandropolis pipeline done and owned by Gazprom, Transneft and other Russian state owned companies, as well the Nabucco Greek contribution proposed to be shared by Greece with Gazprom;

- Another recent rule to be discussed is the one involving avoiding cannibalism in the EU – with the idea of OMV/MOL case. This is also about offering the shares in a private company proprieties in a different country in exchange for access to oil

or gas fields, or other advantages in Russia, the most prominent case being the Royal Dutch Shell properties in Germany or OMV attempts to do so with the future hostile take over of Hungarian Mol;

- Market rules and competition rules are the most effective to be used in this respect, and we are talking about avoiding the dominant position and monopoly abuses. The EU made a good job tackling the case of Microsoft (100% monopoly), and it is expected to do so if the consortium of Gazprom, Transneft, Rosneft and other state owned Russian Companies will get a dominant position in the transportation or downstream in the EU. Now, the three have only 2% of the downstream;

- Separation between production, transportation, downstream distribution is another rule discussed.

II. A new line of argumentation: from big to huge oil and gas prices

In the recent month, the EU has thought, at the level of experts, on the perspectives of having the constant rise of prices to big prices, un-sustained by market explanations. In this respect, the new approach evaluated was the one of really rising the prices two times in a very short time.

Five arguments why EU would like big prices:

- Technology and competitiveness: through these advantages, products that attract more knowledge and technique are more competitive than the one that rely only on energy (or cheap energy). In this respect, if the prices are rising dramatically, EU takes over China, India, Russia (there quarters of the production

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in the internal market). Moreover, Russia already has the problem of domestic consumption that should rise by 25% next year, to get closer to industrial price, even though President Vladimir Putin promised no more than 12-15, maybe 17% of raise. The industrial prices are the same as the international one, theoretically, so the whole Russia industry will take the coup. If Russia enters the WTO observing the rules, the shock will be even tougher.

- The rise of prices will rise the competitiveness of Norwegian oil prices, drilled in harsh conditions in the Northern Sea. Norway could supply Europe with near 40-45% of the needed external oil and gas.

- The same process would make a higher competitiveness of clean energy – wind, sun, now supported by subvention from the Commission and the states. This is a major European project linked to the Environment and to the global warming.

- Huge prices will make a bigger competitiveness of the big infrastructure investments – especially pipelines – and will shorten the time of covering these investments.

- The same process will make the pressure for the economy of energy in Europe.

The side effect: the costs will be taken by underdeveloped countries, and countries in transition, especially from Central-Eastern and post/Soviet countries.

Strategic gain: breaking the chain of political and security pressure through energy control.

Romania, EU and the Nabucco Project

Serban F Cioculescu

The contemporary world has many security concerns, among which terrorism, WMD proliferation and organized crime are the most visible ones at least within the Trans-Atlantic space. But the issue of energy is at least as important for the security agenda of the EU and NATO states. Until the world experts would find alternative resources of energy, and provide them in huge quantity, all the countries in the world are bound to make energy issues focal points in their security strategies.

The Wider Black Sea Area is a strategically and economically important area, being an important producing and a transit space, especially for the European Union and its member states. It is well known that the EU is already one of the most important gas and oil consumers in the world and it is dependent on imports from outside. Bringing oil from the Middle East and Africa, gas from Russia, Algeria a.s.o., the EU has a major interest in developing its own energy projects in order to reduce dependency from foreign countries.

The European Union

EU imports about 50-60% of its oil and gas from abroad, from which 25% comes from Russia. In the future, about 80% from

the gas will be imported, 40% from Russia. Therefore, for the EU it is an imperative need to build a natural gas pipeline carrying up energy from the Caucasus and Central Asia/Middle East, and being out of control by Russia. In this context, the importance of the Nabucco project must be emphasized. In June 2006, the European Commission agreed with the energy ministers from six European nations to go ahead with a multibillion euro project for the construction of a pipeline to deliver natural gas from the Caspian basin to the heart of Europe. The project, named Nabucco, envisaged a 3,300 kilometer pipe delivering some 25-30 billion cubic meters of Caspian and Central Asian gas per year to a terminal in Austria, from where it would be distributed around Europe. Nabucco will be built probably between 2009 and 2011 but become fully operational in 2015-2019 with about 30 billion cubic meters by year. Its estimated price will be about 4,5 billion euros. When the Austrians came with the idea of building Nabucco, they had in mind the vast gas resources from Iran and secondly from Azerbaijan, but later new countries were taken into account – Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, even Egypt and Iraq etc. Many EU experts and decision-makers hope that in some years maybe, the sanctions against Iran will be diminished or eliminated and the Iranian gas becomes available. The “Nabucco” project is included in the EU’s Trans-European Energy Network and constitutes a priority for the EU and some of its neighbouring countries and has an approximate price of 5 billion USD.

Romania

All the assessments show that Romania will need more and more natural gas from outside. Romania consumes annually about 17-18 billions c.m. of gas and the imports are about 30-40%. Romania

will rise its consumption from about 18 billion in 2003 to perhaps 29 billion c.m. in 2025 and the imports may rise to 50%.

The Nabucco project is officially the most important energy cooperation framework for Romania because together with the Constanta-Trieste oil pipeline (Pan European Oil Pipeline-PEOP), they will guarantee access to natural gas and oil and also important transit fees, employment etc. This is the reason why our country has constantly and warmly backed these projects and had voiced concern when different obstacles emerged in face of their implementation. For the PEOP, the investments on Romanian soil would be about 1,25 billion USD at a volume of 40 million tons/year.

Also, Romania will have to contribute with about 800 millions euros to the Nabucco gas-pipeline. Worth to mention that 457 kilometers length will be on Romanian territory. In June 2006, Romania signed in Vienna, together with the other participating states, the agreement for building the gas pipeline from Turkey to Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Austria. Nabucco is mentioned in the energy strategy of Romania as one of the main projects. Nabucco is one important step in the process of the liberalization of the gas markets, as stipulated by the South-East European Energy Community Treaty, signed in October 2005 and in vigor since July 2006. These South Eastern European states should strive to adopt EU rules regarding the single market of energy and liberalize their gas and electricity markets till 2008 for companies and 2015 for consumers.

For the EU, Nabucco will represent a forth source of natural gas beyond these in Russia/Central Asia, Africa and the Northern Sea. Romania is expecting a positive role for stimulating the competition on the energy domestic market, the increasing of its role as a transit country and the diminution of the dependence on Russian gas.

Romanian company Trans Gaz Mediaş is involved in the project together with Botas (Turkey), Bulgar Gaz (Bulgaria), MOL (Hungary), OMV Austria and maybe Gas de France.

At the beginning, Nabucco will most probably count only on the gas from Azerbaidjani Shah Deniz field. Worth to remember that some years ago, when the pipeline project was proposed, Iran had to be the most important provider of gas. But Iran is under international sanctions and the US has threatened the OMV with sanctions if it bring Iran into this business.

Regarding the natural gas from Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, it could also be used by Nabucco but there is a competition with Russian company Gazprom, which is also very interested in these resources. Some estimations show a reduction of the resources available for Gazprom, so this company could be forced to find new ones in Central Asia. These three states, members of the CIS, have already signed an important agreement with Russia for providing natural gas and this means that the amount of gas could simply be not enough to “feed” also the Nabucco. In a press interview, European commissioner of energy Andris Piebalgs recognized that there is not enough gas for Nabucco and that Iran could have been a solution. Iran and also Iraq have enough gas but a volatile political situation. This is a dilemma: should be build Nabucco before being sure that it will have enough gas to transport?

The rule of the game

The building of the Nabucco is often understood within the EU strategic circles as a zero sum game with Russia but this is the common perception. The phrase “war of pipelines” is mere a metaphor and it doesn’t mean that rivalry between Russia and EU will become each day more dangerous and difficult to manage.

There are two point of view within the EU and its member states. Some of them cultivate a negative vision based on Russia being depicted as a “predatory” state, with a destructive energy policy. The adepts of this vision mention the constant refusal by Moscow to sign the European Energy Charter Treaty, the refusal to allow free and competitive access to its energy domestic market and infrastructures, to liberalize its domestic energy market, the discrimination against foreign companies (see the Stockman case near Murmansk) and the often competitive building of pipelines to parallel the EU and US-backed transit routes. Poland and the Baltic states are well known for their intransigent stand vis a vis Russia. On the other side, states like Hungary, Austria, Greece, Italy, Bulgaria seem more open to the idea of involving Russia into the European energetic projects. They are not geopolitically filo-Russian but they simply expect huge economic advantages.

As I said, one should not held a purely negative view on Russia as an axiom because this country doesn’t automatically have negative, destructive aims. It is also about economic and strategic interests and the protection by the Russian political leadership of the energy giants like Gazprom and Transneft. But this could also be a Russian strategy to counter the EU and NATO expansion in its traditional sphere of influence and the US military presence in Romania, Bulgaria, Georgia etc. But progressively a consensus is emerging among EU states that EU should speak with one voice in relation with Russia and that it must defend its energy projects against any attempt of delaying or abolition.

Romania agrees with European Commission’s recent proposal to allow foreign companies to enter the European energy market and buy assets only if they belong to states which also allow EU firms to operate without hindrances on their energy markets. EU principles: transparency, non-discrimination, reciprocity.

Until now, Russia seems to put itself out of the access to EU energy assets if it does not agree with European Energy Charter and block the access to its energy market for foreign companies.

Romania sees Nabucco and Constanța-Trieste pipelines in the context of the EU's efforts to enhance its size on the world energy market, to reduce dependency on foreign supplies and to find alternative sources of energy, not controlled by one single power or located on a single continent. The European Energy Strategy launched by the European Commission ("**A European Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy**)," clearly indicates this goal. But in this strategy, there is no reference to the Black Sea area, only to the Caspian basin. Later, in the **Black Sea Sinergy**, the strategic approach to energy crossing this region is emphasized.

In my opinion, there is no need to transform Nabucco in a joint project with Gazprom, it must be kept as initially planned. Also, if Italy's ENI (Enai) and Russia's Gazprom will decide to build the so-called South Stream gas pipeline, it is important for Nabucco to be built first and immediately to find enough gas to transport. Romania will probably not jeopardize Nabucco by getting involved in the South Stream (Russia, Turkey, Greece, Italy) or in the Blue Stream II (Turkey, Hungary), because the geopolitical price would be too big in the long term.

In January 2006, Russia had an argument with Ukraine on energy prices and for some days blocked the flux of gas to Europe. This is precisely the point. Romania and most of the EU states don't want energy to be a political instrument of pressure for a foreign political actor. President Traian Băsescu constantly repeated this point: energy should be seen as a commodity and be put on a European competitive market, not as a weapon for blackmail. He met on October 25, 2007, the European Commi-

ssion coordinator for Nabucco, Jozias van Aartsen and expressed Romania's full commitment to support the project, including the logistical and financial burden sharing.

But there are some obstacles on the way of building Nabucco. Energy, like all other goods, is a valuable thing and when there is a cooperation framework among many actors, one could expect sometimes a tendency towards lack of trust and immediate gain by breaking the cooperative ties. In the International Relations Theory this is called the "dilemma of the stag hunters" and it refers to the fact that when a group of hunters go together to hunt a stag, one could be tempted to kill a hare who comes closer to him, even if that would compromise the stag's capture and the success of the whole group. This happens frequently in cooperative games, when one of the players finds an easier solution to gain something but jeopardizes the common goal.

Many people in Romania had been concerned some months ago, with the Hungarian government idea of paralleling Nabucco with Bluestream 2, after Budapest initially agreed with Russia's Gazprom plan to expand Blue Stream into Hungary via Bulgaria and Romania. Some experts said that Hungary could be in the strange situation to contribute to the building of two rival pipelines sharing the same limited amount of gas. Of course, each country has the right to aspire to becoming a major energy hub in Europe but this should come as a result of negotiations and bargaining and not in an unilateral way. Romania also would like to become an energy hub, as it has increased its gas storage capacity from 1,3 billion c.m. in 2000 to about 2,6 billion in 2004 and possibly 4,5 billion m.c. in 2025, but it is well aware of the necessity to respect the EU main strategic lines in the energy area.

In 2006, EU launched the European Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy where one of the priority areas

is “the security of supply and solidarity between Member States in the event of a crisis” and the coherence of the external energy policy.

All the countries involved in Nabucco project recognized the importance of the Baumgarten terminal and storage point in Austria and it is dangerous to play a solitary game when the common gain is in sight. We do not demonize Gazprom project, but there is a risk that Bluestream 2 would be build before Nabucco and so would disproportionately benefit from central-Asian gas that Nabucco will no more have. This is only a hypothesis and a point of reflection. Also some concern was expressed with the too direct attempt by Austrain company OMV to take over Hungarian MOL and the Turkish warning to break negotiations with the French company Gas de France if France recognizes the Turkish actions against Armenians. In our opinion, it is totally wrong to make a political case from an economic and strategic issue like this pipeline. There is a tendency to get the political reasons into the energy realm and also a tendency for each state to protect its national companies against takeovers by other European states’ companies but these inherent disputes should not endanger the common EU strategy on energy. It is obvious that Nabucco could also be subject of sabotage and attacks by insurgents and terrorists, especially concerning its Turkish segment and the possible Iranian connection. In light of this facts, Romania welcomed the proposals made by US senator Lugar at the NATO summit in Riga, in November 2006, concerning the possibility for NATO to assume a bigger role in ensuring the security of pipelines in the benefit of the member states.

Romania, as an EU member, supports a real, coherent, European energy policy and an external strategy for supply diversification. Even if there will be some attempts to divert its

attention from the existing energetic projects, our country will probably remain loyal to Nabucco and Constanța-Trieste (PEOP) pipelines, on the condition that we see also the other involved countries showing a sense of unity and solidarity.

Thank you for your attention!

Analysis of current realities in the context of Black Sea Security-A view from Azerbaijan

Elkhan Mehtiev

This is a great pleasure for me to be here, again, in Bucharest. Let me thank the organizers for inviting me to this event.

We are focusing here on Black Sea, and the Caucasus is part of the Wider Black Sea. My topic is entitled „Analysis of current realities in the context of the Black Sea security”, but I will focus basically on Caucasus and specifically on Azerbaijan.

Well, the Black Sea security dimension is becoming an indispensable part of the new European security architecture and post-Soviet security environment has linked the BS with South-Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus and also diverse cooperation and partnership programs with Central Asia. The Istanbul North Atlantic Council Summit in June 2004 confirmed the importance of the Black Sea area for Euro-Atlantic security and expressed the will to enhance security and stability in the area.

In this respect, the growing importance of Caucasus is influenced by its geographical location – situated between Black Sea, Caspian Sea and now the borders with EU and NATO, and giving direct access to Central Asia and Middle Eastern countries. For Turkey and the Western Europe, it is an open door to Central Asia and now to Afghanistan and for Russia it has always been a gate to the Middle East.

Well, the security environment in the Caucasus is, you know that, far from stability and peace, and the situation can be characterised as a cease-fire regime but not a real peace. The region is divided by territorial and separatist conflicts and mistrust to each other is the dominating factor. Sixteen years have passed from the disintegration of the Soviet Union but the landscape of the region is not so much changed and the region is struggling for sovereignty, security, stability and the removal of soviet legacy – the military occupation of a part of Azerbaijan’s territory, Georgia and its rebel territories, also the separatists’ relations with Russia, and internally, the opposition to democratic transformations by the local authoritarian regimes, which has become one of the main obstacles to the region’s change of landscape and values. So, the foreign and security policies of these nations, consequently, had been based on this mutual confrontation rather than on the vision of common security and development. New threats and challenges related to the security of international transportation energy routes, religious radicalism, terrorism, democratic development, corruption, lack of economic development are dominant issues today.

We speak about risks and threats in this region. Well, from our point of view, we should say that Azerbaijan situation is without precedent due to Armenian occupation of large parts of Azerbaijani territory, the size of which is equal with half of Armenia! The number of military hardware stationed in Armenian-controlled Azerbaijan exceeds what Azerbaijan itself has in its military arsenals. The rebel weapons are out of any form of control and they are part of a single military command in Yerevan. The bellicose statements coming from Armenia show the intention of this country to attack the regional infrastructure which has been created in Azerbaijan, linking the region to the Black Sea and the European market.

It should be stressed that the first risk for security in the entire region is the presence of hostile elements outside the region which encouraged separatist movements. The main risk from our point of view is the foreign military occupation of territories and this could lead to unpredictable, explosive consequences for the entire area. I should also mention that the continual tension between Georgia and Russia in the area affects all the situation there and Georgia's uncontrolled rebel territories remain a big source of insecurity in all the Black Sea region.

Third risk to mention is linked to Iranian nuclear program and the threat for invasion or fights should also be seen as risks which can destabilize again the situation in the Caucasus. Possible military activities can lead to overall change of the security environment in the immediate environment of the Black Sea. Iranian confrontation can lead to deployment and expansion of foreign troops to the region and consequently the settlement of existing armed conflicts and their settlement could be postponed for an uncertain period.

The next risk may be identified as the situation in the North Caucasus. The instability there and possible spill over to Georgia and Azerbaijan remains an additional risk for regional security. Religious activities and the infiltration of foreign religious groups into the Caucasus and in the case of Azerbaijan, the potential infiltration of foreign moslem radical groups and their dogmatic anti-Western purposes could be potential for terror against foreign missions and forces, regional projects etc.

I would also identify the authoritarian regimes in the region and the issue of human rights violation as these generate potential security risks emanating from domestic instability. The issue has become a very important one in the context of democratization, transparency and free elections in the BS region since these elements could ensure a firm ground for security and stability in the region.

The social-economic conditions, the emigration of working force to Russia from Azerbaijan has become a security issue, one of the major issues in bilateral relations with Russia. Potential expulsion of millions of people from Russia in case of deteriorating relations could have disastrous effects for Azerbaijan's internal situation and destabilize the whole security environment in the whole area.

So, our policy with Russia is dictated by this situation on the ground. Also, the unresolved disputes in the Caspian sea states, the tension between Azerbaijan and Iran, and the opposition of Russia and Iran to the involvement of foreign states to the Caspian affairs have been a source of potential deteriorating relations between Azerbaijan and these two states. Azerbaijan launched security cooperation with NATO and USA in the Caspian Sea.

Major determinants of regional states' foreign and security policy are dictated by this relation with Russia, considering these above-mentioned factors. Russia is still a dominant actor in the Caucasus since the problems inherited from the USSR are not settled and Russia has significant influence over these issues but, at the same time, Russia itself is part of the problem.

It is obvious that Russia has a pain in accepting the departure from the orbit and makes efforts to oppose or prevent it. This factor has been remaining as mistrust to sovereignty and political independence between Russia and former Soviet republics, including the Caucasian ones. The relations between Azerbaijan and Russia are guided by the imperative of restoring the territorial integrity and by dominating military security concerns about Russia in Azerbaijan and Caspian basin.

Russia wants from Azerbaijan not to go too far in relations with NATO and USA because Russia is concerned with the arrival of foreign military in this area. Iran and Russia are reluctant

when Azerbaijan wants to maintain military cooperation with US and Turkey, opposing any foreign military presence in the region.

Azerbaijan and Turkey security cooperation is bilateral, multi-lateral, with Georgia and it is going to be expanded by exploiting the BTC pipeline, secure transportation energy routes etc. The recent proposal of president Putin for cooperation for Caspian radio location gave us a sign of encouragement, and this is a sign of change of atmosphere on the Russian side.

A major problem in Azerbaijani-Russian relations is the continuous military support of Russia for Armenian side, and Azeris believe that the occupation of Azeri territories is maintained only due to the Russian considerable support in armaments for Armenia. The militarization of the country is enhancing and Azerbaijan considers that Russian base 102 is an additional source of weapons for Armenia and part of transferred weapons from Russia and Russia's bases in Georgia to Armenia and Armenian militarily-controlled occupied areas.

Of course, Azerbaijani relations with the US had changed after September 11, and this basically focused on border maritime security operated on air defense systems and intelligence cooperation. US had helped us to build two radio stations with modern equipment in area neighboring Russia and Iranian borders, with the purpose to better control the air-space of Azerbaijan. And security cooperation in the Caspian sea with US is coordinating the activities to ensure long-term stability of mineral resources and presumably for the purposes of surveillance of trafficking of illegal products in international waters – drugs, WMD etc.

The relations with NATO are also shaped by the enhanced sensitivity of Russia over this issue and Azerbaijani leadership has stated many times that NATO membership is not on the

agenda of Azerbaijan's politics and our country is not willing to host foreign troops on its territory, due to Russian concerns.

From a security point of view, Azerbaijan is now in a disadvantaged position as it is not a member of the Collective Security Treaty and has no mutual treaty with Russia or Turkey, and of course NATO has no commitment towards Azerbaijan. So, I believe, proceeding from the classical notion of security, Azerbaijan may be considered as being in a security vacuum. Generalizing the existent risks and threats, the main issue for the region should be the resolution of the existing conflicts based on the countries' sovereignty and integrity and certainly, Caucasian security should be considered as part of the Black Sea security. Security should be assessed through the influence of the military, social, economic, ethnic factors as well as by corruption, emigration and complex processes of internal development.

Thank you very much!

**Black Sea – Caspian Region Dimension of European Security:
EU Neighborhood Policy, Energy Security Strategy and Ukraine**

**Prof. Alexander Goncharenko
CISSS President**

There are two major European/Euro-Atlantic players in the Black Sea – Caspian Region (BSCR) – NATO and EU . In the last years these actors and USA persistently try to play more active role in the region in spite of all counteractions and opposition from Russia and paradoxically Turkey. The necessity to elaborate a new global agenda for NATO activities is obvious, and the Wider Black Sea should play in this agenda very important role with the long term goal to transform BSCR Sea into the internal sea of the alliance. The question is how this agenda will correspond to the international law and the provisions of the Washington Treaty.

The present day security situation in Europe especially in the vast “gray zone” on the borders of NATO and EU in a whole is very disturbing, inconsistent and controversial. More rightly is to say that EU for the time being has no strategy for the region at all. The problems with EU Constitution have only increased this controversy. EU Black Sea Synergy is only the first little step in the right direction. But it is rather the declarations of intentions than a comprehensive regional strategy. It is very far from the realities, makes accent mainly on the technical questions and generally ignore the vital strategic issues. It is based on the absolutely absurd for the European countries

concept of neighborhood policy, presupposes the policy of appeasement toward Russia and rejects the European prospects for the BSCR post-soviet countries.

The policy of neighborhood in general is a real *fata morgana* for all including bureaucracy in Brussels. But if almost 30 years of bureaucratic procrastinations toward Turkey’s membership in EU could be partly explained by civilization differences, the case with Ukraine and Moldova is simply ridiculous. I do not want to say here that the CEE countries like Ukraine or Moldova should be immediately invited to join EU, but at least the reasonable road map for the future should be clearly charted and articulated. Ukraine instead for years has been denied even the European style associated membership status.

The status of neighborhood invented by the Gaullist France to its former colonies in Africa under any circumstances could be considered as an adequate for the European country like Ukraine. Especially if through this country more than 80% (!) of 150 Bln. cubic meters (bcm) of gas is transported annually to 22 European countries. It is important to stress that neither Shah Deniz (Azerbaijani-Caspian line-11,5bcm), nor Greenstream (Libian line 9 bcm) nor Galsi and Medgaz) Algerian line-15-18bcm) nor even potentially perspective Ormen Lange Norwegian gas field will not change drastically this tendency in the years to come, especially if the Nord Stream Blue Stream-2 will be build.

Current EU Energy policy documents are clearly overoptimistic and underestimate the forthcoming threats.

The year 2006/2007 blackmail of Ukraine, Belarus, some other CEE countries and recent scandal over artificially created 2bln USD gas debt of Ukraine should be very important signal to Europe. Growing Kremlin monopoly on the gas supply to EU and consolidated control over gas transportation systems of

Belarus, Ukraine and other transit countries will allow Russia to dictate not only gas prices, but a lot of other much more sensitive issues, transforming energy policy into a powerful geopolitical weapon.

This is only part of Russia's master plan for the future.

Munich speech of Mr Putin that shocked many western analysts and political leaders marked the turning point in the Russia's modern history. Russia for the first openly declared its growing geopolitical ambitions inside FSU and abroad. The dead end situation in Iraq, sharp raise of oil and gas prices and little success of US attempts to install its domination on the periphery of FSU- in the Caspian - Black Sea region and Central Asia – open for Russia a new window of opportunities.

It seems that some West European countries only now started to realize that current short sighted EU policy of appeasement of Russia could very easily lead to the same results as the policy of the appeasement of Nazi Germany before the WWII

To understand Russia's Energy expansion policy one should start with the very interesting document: "The Energy Strategy of Russia up to the year 2030" officially approved in 2003. This document clearly proclaimed "that the export of hydrocarbons is the key factor that will determine the economic and political future of Russia in the world community... The ultimate priority of Russia is to consolidate its presence on the internal markets of neighboring states, to receive control over strategic energy infrastructures "in other words to create the *new Energy Empire*" under the Kremlin control.

Since then all the major policy moves of Moscow in energy and geopolitical spheres are only fragments and components of this master plan.

2003 – blockade and "drying" of Latvian pipeline and oil terminal in Ventspils.

2004 – scandal around "Orlen Affair" in Poland – attempts of Russia's special services to install control over Polish oil-processing industry.

2005 – Baltic Sea pipeline and "chancellor Schroeder" affair. Installation of full control over Belarus part of strategic pipeline "Yamal-Europe". Attempts to reconsider gas prices for Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Turkey, Ukraine.

2006 – corruption scandal over Russia's attempts to buy 49% of Slovakia oil-transportation system. New Russia's sponsored Transbalkan pipeline Burgas-Alexandropolis. Persistent attempts to revive the idea of Ukraine – Russia Gas Consortium (under full de facto Russian domination). Growing pressure of Putin's Administration on Shell to install Gasprom co-ownership over huge \$20 bln Sakhalin II project .

2007 – blackmail of Ukraine and artificially created 2bln USD gas debt presented on the second day after the democratic forces won the 2007 parliamentary election. Numerous evidences, summarized in the report of NATO counselors, that Russia is trying to build a new powerful cartel of oil producer countries together with Algiers, Qatar some Central Asia countries and possibly Iran.

But the key goal and golden gackpot of this Russian energy noulette, in which EU so easily agreed to play, is the biggest in the world Ukraine's gas transportation system with unique natural gas storages that are absolutely necessary to stabilize

the functioning of the whole European gas supply mechanisms for the years to come. May I remind you that president Reagan in his time bitterly opposed the whole idea of building this Soviet Russia's control over gas transportation system to Europe.

Control over this system together with – 1/3 of the world gas reserves undoubtedly will guarantee “Russia's return to the greatness”, as many analysts stressed. And this is not a “Chaotic Process”, – but thoughtfully elaborated and – systematically implemented strategy. The roots of this strategy and the whole idea of using energy as a new Russian geopolitical weapon can be found in of Mr. Putin's Ph.D. dissertation in St. Petersburg Mining Institute.

The major strategic mistake of the West after the time of Cold War was the lost of Belarus. In early 90-s Belarus did have the democratic government, desperately tried to return to Europe, but has been rejected by Europe and West of the whole. Now West enjoys the present day very special relations with President Lukachenka and his entourage. This situation repeating itself now in Ukraine with much more serious consequences.

Russia having learned its lessons from the Orange revolution and resent democratic election in Ukraine started to work very professionally and effectively. Artificially created oil and gas crises in Ukraine could be a good example here. Ukraine is a key element of a new Russia's great power strategy. Without Ukraine any attempts to expand Russian power on FSU and beyond will be meaningless. Let me remind the prophetic words of Zb. Brzezinsky, – who said that, without Ukraine, Russia ceased to be an Empire, with Ukraine absorbed and subordinated Russia automatically will become the new Empire. Look like it is exactly what Europe risks to receive in a-not-so-distant future.

Some remarks about possible EU energy security strategy in the region.

1. The main problem of EU energy security derives from the chronic ill practice of certain EU countries (first of all Germany, France, Italy) to solve the energy problems on the bilateral basis with Russia and this approach only increases the monopoly status of Moscow. Divide and rule technique is well known to Russia and Moscow for centuries used it very effectively now on post soviet and not only post-soviet space. So coordinated implementation of a comprehensive EU common energy security strategy to ensure the direct access to the alternative to Russia's control over gas and oil fields and installing national or EU / not Russian / control over the energy transportation systems in the CEE should be recognized as a principal security priority to Europe.

2. The best possible EU response to the current Kremlin's attempts to use energy and resources in general as a geopolitical weapon will be a Joint Euro-Atlantic Approach to energy and regional security with active participation of NATO and US in the framework of consolidated strategic answer of the West to new threats and challenges from Russia, reasserting itself as a great power. Without this new Russia's projects like Northstream and Bluestream-2 could completely undermine any EU attempts to diminish energy dependence from Moscow.

3. Special attention to the security of new EU members on the Baltic Black Sea belt: Estonia, Latvia, Latvia, Slovakia, Romania. These countries are most vulnerable to the possible energy blackmail, because the developing alternative transportation routes are designed mainly for western Europe countries.

4. One of the possible EU strategy to counterbalance the current Russia's attempts to install control over region national energy transportation systems is to take direct part in the crea-

tion of European sponsored Consortiums for reconstruction and support of existing and new built energy transportation facilities of Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus. The continuation of “Odessa – Brody” pipeline to Gdansk and participation of EU countries and capital in this project could become very important step in this direction.

5. Under the existing geopolitical realities, security vacuum and high level of symmetrical and asymmetrical threats in the region, unresolved geopolitical status of some CEE countries, regional conflicts and territorial arguments, one the most perspective solution of the European energy security problems is the developing of regional security structures with the participation of the countries of the Wider Black Sea - Caspian region (possibly including GUAM, NATO and EU members).

These regional security structures could play an important role in counterbalancing the growing Russia’s geopolitical ambitions, emerging Turkish – Russian condominium in the Black Sea area and current Russia’s efforts for the implementation of “divide – and – rule” policy in the region. Potentially, the regional cooperation and security systems could become the natural elements of the general pan-European cooperation security architecture for the years to come.

US Hands Ukraine and Georgia to Russia: Will Europe Become a Hostage?

United States Iraq – Iran stalemate provoked much broad geopolitical consequences.

Reincarnated Russia quickly understood the unique window of opportunities created by the second “American Vietnam” and stated the massive offence to regain its lost empire.

Consorted campaign to reassert the former USSR sphere of influence includes in itself not only objections to the U.S. anti-missile shield, questions about conventional or nuclear weapons in Belarus and Europe in a whole, but much more broad and principal issues concerning the future world order in Eurasia.

Russia understands quite well that it has a lot of opportunities to make American missions in Middle East very close to impossible. Completing Buser nuclear plant, supply to Iran of dabble-purpose nuclear-linked technology, air defense systems like S – 300, sea missile complexes “Tarpon” and Su 27 and Su 30 fighters – that could completely undermine American SEAD (suppression of air defense) strategy and easily transform any possible American campaign in a very costly and politically suicidal mission. This mission inevitably will lead any American President to the political crisis at home and to loose credibility abroad.

Russians make quite clear that they can easily do it and may not. That of course depends but they want something in return. General goal is obvious – regaining control over FSU and dividing the spheres of influence for the future.

Regaining control over Ukraine at any price is an absolutely necessary element of this strategy – without it, all other steps will be meaningless. Undermining the unstable “Orange coalition” from inside and at the same time increasing political, economic, energy and military pressure (Russian military contingent in Moldova, paratrooper divisions on northern – eastern borders of Ukraine), – from outside.

Second step will be Georgia and Azerbaijan – control over these countries will allow Russia to “secure” the Caucasus, including Chechnia and create all preconditions for further projection of power to the Middle East.

There is a strong suspicion in Ukraine and not only in Ukraine that to make a new “big deal” with Russia US needs “only” to signing away and waste-off so-called allies on the post-soviet space. For Ukraine this is not a new idea. It is now the third time when this country will be used as a bargaining chip in the US – Russia game.

(First time in 1993-1994 when Ukraine deliberately has been left in the Moscow sphere of influence and was excluded from NATO and EU enlargement processes and the Bush – Putin St. Petersburg agreements after the 9/11 events was the second).

So nothing principally new is happening. Neither with Ukraine nor with Georgia and recent remarks of Secretary-General of NATO, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer in Tbilisi in early October 2007 only confirm the fact that “Double-Track” approach – weak formal declarations of support its FSU allies combined with simultaneous concessions and appeasement technique toward Russia is still a cornerstone of US the NATO policy on the post-soviet space.

But let us speculate a little about further possible developments. Regaining and consolidation control over the “near abroad” only the first stage of Russian strategy on the future. Next step will be Baltic states and Poland. Formally NATO and EU members they are still very vulnerable to the Russian pressure and economic and energy blackmail especially if Germany will be successfully “neutralized” , A. Merkel will lose the battle over Kosovo and Baltic – Russian crisis will demonstrate complete impotence of US and its security obligations.

To this time, the new China – Russian anti-NATO alliance created by the members of Collective Security Treaty and Shanghai Cooperation Organization in October 2007 in Dushanbe will be consolidated. This powerful Eurasian anti-NATO structure on

the enormous space from Belarus to China but with centre in Moscow will change completely the balance of forces in Europe and world and transform the EU in the hostage of US selfish geopolitical games and its own hypocrisy.

Internal situation in Ukraine: “Déjàvue”

The present days situation in Ukraine provoke the reminiscent of previous unsuccessful attempts of Ukrainian state building in XVII and beginning of XX-th centuries.

Enormous social enthusiasm and drastic move toward liberal democracy values of 2004-2005 ended in disillusion and loss of credibility at home and abroad. The weak and inadequate president and his corrupt and ignorant entourage spoiled and wasted everything in touch. Desperately needed for the country reforms almost stopped in 2006-2007, the uncontrolled process of reincarnation of old and maturing of new enemies of Ukrainian sovereignty started to undermine the very base of the national security system.

Second very narrow, mainly based on populist demagogy of Yulia Tymoshenko reincarnation of the “Orange revolution” still risks find itself at the dead end.

Good summary of the current “political bordello” in Ukraine, created by joint effort of “orange-blue” Ukrainian political elite, gave the UK delegate of PACE who stated:

”Both Victors deserve each other but the people of Ukraine worth better fate”

Paradoxically but the current negative processes simultaneously revealed more fundamental tendencies and historical

perspectives, made possible to foresee more clearly the alternative ways of development of Ukraine as a key factor of the geopolitical changes on the post-soviet space.

Key system factors that determine current processes in Ukraine:

1. Birthmarks of historically divided nation. Absence of internal consensus in the ruling circles and society in a whole on the key aspects of internal and external policy. Unhealthy personal ambitions and wide spread corruption of Ukrainian political elite. Absence of consistent strategy of development for the future. Weak and ineffective civic society structures. Inadequate legal base for national state building, badly prepared constitutional reform and systemic constitutional crisis.

2. Competitive perception of national security priorities by different social and regional groups. As a result - ineffectiveness of social and economic reforms, systemic chaos in the internal and external policy, decline of social and economic standards and national security level for all social groups without exception.

3. Post - imperial “Orange syndrome” of Russian Federation. Systemic intervention of RF and Russian special services, in the Ukrainian internal affairs on all levels and in all key spheres. Strategic goal-undermining of the whole idea of Ukraine’s sovereignty, block any attempt to break away of Russia’s sphere of influence, stimulation of all destructive processes in the country simultaneously installing control over strategic spheres of industry and economy, and persistent attempts of discreditation and physical elimination of Ukrainian national political leaders.

Other wide used instruments – political provocations, massive anti-western propaganda and anti-NATO campaign, collecting and spreading of sensitive and compromising information, stimulation of quarrels inside political elite, organization of economic blockades, artificial crises, social unrests and inter-ethnic conflicts, support of anti-Ukrainian groups and movements (recent Moscow – organized anti-Ukrainian action on Goverla is a very good example here), formation of agent and sabotage groups in key legislative and executive bodies, including supervisory bodies, military structures and special services.

4. Short sighted and counterproductive “Double-Track” policy of the West– verbal declarations on Ukraine’s support with simultaneous concessions and appeasement technique toward Russia.

Ukraine today becomes the arena of geopolitical competition between West and Russia. The difference is that Russia considers this struggle as the last and decisive geopolitical battle but unconsolidated and internally divided West still look on it through the glasses of economic benefits and gains. The far reaching consequences of this approach potentially could be extremely dangerous.

After the elections, Ukraine desperately tried to solve the current crisis by itself. But not all in this process depends on Ukraine. One should never forget external “Russian factor”.

West and first of all some EU countries doomed to understand,- better sooner than latter, – that further procrastination, continuation of current “Double Track” policy and denial of the European perspective to Ukraine in the long term is the suicidal operation. Current tendencies of developments in Russia and

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on the post-soviet space in general, new and very effective RF strategy of using energy and many others strategical resources as geopolitical weapon and future eminent, mutually beneficial China-Russian geopolitical and geo-economic alliance, leaves a narrow choice to the West.

Ukraine, as many leading western analysts and political leaders repeatedly stated, objectively is and will be the crucial factor of Euro-Atlantic stability and security for the years to come.

Integrate it to the European civilization community is in the best interest of the West itself.

The Strategic Importance of the Greater Black Sea Area

Șerban Pavelescu

The Greater Black Sea Area represents an ancient geopolitical and geostrategic complex that is considered to be not only a bridge of communication, but also a place of confrontation for three major geopolitical areas – Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East.

Representing both a stage for the balance of forces and a point of contact between the two military blocks during the Cold War, the Greater Black Sea Area has been subjected to profound political, administrative and territorial changes during the post-Cold War era. Instead of only four countries with clear geopolitical and geostrategic interests and a Soviet dominance over the area, after the collapse of the Soviet Union we are facing a completely different picture. The emergence of new states, the inner and inter-state conflicts, as well as the competition for influence and geopolitical supremacy – all these elements have generated the radical transformation of both the strategic equation and the security environment of the Black Sea area. Over the last decade of the 20th century, partly because of the low level of interest coming from the biggest international actors, the Black Sea Area has suffered from regional instability and insecurity.

The fluid and unpredictable regional security environment, the major security risks and threats generated by the geopolitical and geostrategic shifts and changes, all these combined have determined the appearance of a new strategic view concerning the Black Sea area.

At a regional level, the inventory of the risks and threats has the following main elements: “frozen conflicts”, systemic instability within the ex-communist states which found themselves at the epicenter of the political and economic transformations and their unavoidable consequences (unemployment, transnational organized crime, weak civil society, horizontal proliferation of the production of weapons of mass destruction, illegal migration, “weak states”). Along these risk factors, other security threats – in the “classic” sense – may be added, such as the risk of ethnic and religious tensions with their unavoidable consequences, such as the inner-state conflicts.

The first decade of the 21st century brings along a re-evaluation of the region. From an academic point of view, the main proof of this process consists in the launching of the Greater Black Sea Area concept, by Ronald Asmus and Bruce Jackson, in June 2004, in the “Policy review” magazine. However, the demarche of the two researchers was not isolated; just days apart, also in June 2004, under the aegis of the EU’s Institute for Security Studies, there has been published a study on the same topic – the Greater Black Sea Area – whose author is Mustafa Aydin.

The renewed interest for this region has not taken place by chance. It responds, on one hand, to the specific problems of the region which are by no means negligible for the continental security, as a whole, once the processes of European and Euro

Atlantic processes started off. On the other hand, under the new rules of the post 9/11 system of international relations, the Black Sea Area gets a new geopolitical dimension and becomes a somewhat privileged subject of study for the specialists in this field and others.

From this perspective, the demarches concerning the defining and analyzing the Greater Black Sea Area, as well as the preoccupations for its security deficit, respond to a certain need that was caused by the current tendencies in the evolution of the international relations system and in the changes that intervene in the external political actions of some of the major international actors.

Romania’s position concerning the Greater Black Sea Area in the post-Cold War period and the major rethinking of its strategy towards it during the previous years fully illustrate these evolutions. In what Romania is concerned, the regional stability and security in the Black Sea area have constantly represented a major preoccupation. That is why the Romanian state has been actively involved in the creation and functioning of various initiatives of regional cooperation, such as the BLACKSEAFOR or BSEC. The existing conventional and unconventional risks to the regional security environment have imposed (and also shaped) the Romanian political and diplomatic actions in this region. The “frozen conflict” in Transnistria, the border issues with Ukraine, smuggling and trafficking of all kinds, the issue of energy resources and their routes of transportation are just some of the points that can be found in the Romanian security agenda for this period. Subsequent to the materialization of the European and Euro Atlantic processes of integration, the change in status and position, from a regional geopolitical and geostra-

tegic perspective, was demonstrated by Romania's role of promoter of the European Neighborhood Policy, doubled by a sincere desire of contributing to the success of the transition to market economy and democracy in the states of the region. The accumulated experience in edifying a viable market economy and a stable democratic regime, as well as the lessons learned from the creation of structures of cooperation in the Balkans represent the main components of the Romanian expertise in the Black Sea Area. Beyond these preoccupations, Romania is deeply involved in identifying, transporting and processing the energy resources in the region and those from the nearby regions, especially the Caucasus and Caspian Sea. The creation of multilateral structures of cooperation in the ex-soviet space (such as GUAM) and the profound restructuring for a better accommodation to the new geopolitical and geostrategic realities in the region represent another major direction of the Romanian state.

Speech of Ambassador Murat Bilhan, Turkey

Honored participants, ladies and gentlemen,

I noticed that the distinguished speakers until now have dealt with the issues of newly emergent concepts of risks and threats after the Cold War mainly, when the Black Sea began to gain more importance. But what happened during the Cold War, in my opinion, has ironically began to gain more importance than in the past. During the Cold War, the BS was divided into 2 fronts and there was a stalemate of non-conflict. There was no hot conflict in the area. In the classical sense there was no warfare but there were 2 fronts. Immediately after the Cold War, with new emerging status of affairs, all of the sudden, BS area turned into a mosaic of conflicts. Most of these conflicts have irrupted after the Cold War, including the frozen conflicts, all four frozen conflicts.

When we deal with the Larger Black Sea area and put forward some observations much of which are shared, so I must do my best to prevent any repetition.

I intend to touch upon some sensitive issues which could be provocative and that what I want because discussions between different opinions to achieve converging views is the only way.

So, we should be different in order to be able to produce something new and positive.

The strategic importance of the BS region is not controversial but it is of course important and nowadays this is more obvious. Because, as my colleague, mister Katsirdakis, said this morning, it is a corridor of many different international developments. It is a crossroads, a corridor of energy, the main line of energy routes between the East and the West. It is a painful area where security is badly needed to provide not only the security of energy routes but also the diversification of energy routes. Unless you do this, you cannot reach a secure result. Monopoly means danger! Almost all the alternatives routes are going in and around the BS area, including Turkey too.

This of course is influencing the positions of the energy producing area and the consuming area in the West. In between in a conduit and it needs special attention. The statistics we have in hands show energy reserves in the world, by 82% at the world level (hydrocarbons), lay from Southern Russia to the Caspian basin and little towards Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, down to Iran, the Gulf and Arabic Peninsula. 82%, that is involved, remember that! This is why American strategies for the 21st century are designed mainly to protect these energy resources and their routes of transit to the West. We can see that 82% of the energy are located on a North/South axis, and Americans by themselves consume 25% of the whole world energy resources, a huge number. This is why America is so deeply involved in that strategic region which includes also the Middle East – oil regions. Iran is also on the North South line of the energy routes and it constitutes something like 17% of the world oil reserves.

Beyond that, if we focus the attention on Black Sea region, we see that there are migration corridors over there. The most

sensitive migration routes, from the land and from the sea, are passing through that region. I say migration, not immigration or emigration, because migration is a two ways street. Because there is not only migration from East to West, it is also from South to North. In that sense, Turkey is a very sensitive point as migration is concerned. There are many nationalities involved in illegal migration in Turkey, and they stop in Turkey and work there, many of them. So, my country is also a target of immigration, it used to be once one of the emigration countries in Europe, but not anymore. Because the economic level has raised, even if there are still many big economic problems in Turkey about income distribution, whereas the economy is the most important issues for Turkey now.

Communications corridors – cultural communication, economic etc between EU and non-EU world. This area is also very sensitive.

Now, about dialogue between cultures, religions. The terms used like clash of civilizations or, the opposite, the dialogue of civilizations, from my point of view both are non-existent. In my view, the world “civilization” cannot be used in a plural sense, as it is a singular case, a combination of what is produced by human beings during history, and that product is called civilization. Within it, one can find religion, culture, tradition, ethnicity, also sometimes high technology. These civilizations have been created not by a single nation or by a group of nations, religions a.s.o., but by all humanity, including the remote tribes of Africa. Therefore, there can be clashes of civilizations, of religions, of ethnicities. There could be differences, of course, but also dialogue between these civilizations. Therefore, instead of clash of civilizations we should speak about different traditions, they we may judge as good or bad, they interact to create what is now the end result of civilizations.

Good and bad, innocent and the evil are also trespassing this area, both of them. Many innocent cultural exchanges are passing through the area, since Marco Polo, the old spice and silk routes, since the Crusades, there is a tradition of exchanges between the West and the Orient, and they are more intense now, including in the Black Sea area. Why? Because the world is globalized, it is a single big village encompassing all. In this cultural cocktail, exchange and communication may be sometimes a good thing and sometimes a Molotov cocktail, an exploding one. The Black Sea area is one of the strategically most important areas in the world. So, it needs special attention. In our region there are only four frozen conflicts and I really hope and wish Kosovo will not become a new one. In this sense it is part of Eurasian continent, it concentrates in this region.

Now, coming to Turkey again, my country has its goals, special responsibilities, sensitivities and also duties in and among the BS countries. This is due to its holding the straits, under its sovereignty and responsibility keeping and the responsibility in keeping and observing the rules of free, uninterrupted passage of the sea traffic between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea in accordance with the Montreux Convention of 1936. It has been established after very sensitive negotiations, a kind of balanced situation, solutions have been reached by the local countries which seem to me the most viable ones in the present circumstances. If you want to open that box it may turn into something very dangerous. If the balance is shaken once, no one can recoil the situation again, so, once it has gone, it becomes impossible to turn back to the previous one. This is a kind of Pandora box! It should be a box that we must keep very carefully and without inference.

In this Montreux Convention some major states like the US was not a signatory one, therefore US has a special look for this issue. As far as I know, Americans are not part in the convention.

Japan was part to the convention. But US are not part of many conventions including Kyoto one. Americans generally carefully balance their own national interest and defend their points, they have evaded many conventions but they have their explanations and this could be understood. Turkey attaches great importance to the BS region, we are part of it, and we have a special responsibility even for having the longest coast on the BS. Turkey has a special situation in the BS area and as you know, 15 years ago Turkey has launched and sponsored the Black Sea Economic Cooperation initiative. This project has been designed to provide a fertile ground for cooperation just like the Helsinki Process and the safe conduct between energy producing areas and consuming markets in West and help the BS population to integrate into the global system as market economies and large amounts of peoples sharing the same values, same concerns about security and encountering similar threats. The BSEC could be considered a modest successful organization, but with a good record. It is going on and adding to its life but not very ambitiously maybe, because of the rivalry with other organizations. But it tries to link itself with the other organizations. Even countries with very different opinions meet within BSEC and discuss. Extra regional powers and organizations are present there. Turkey is surrounded by Europe, but it is an island of Asia in it. The South Caucasus until Ural mountains is geographically considered Europe, so there are near thousand kilometers deeper to the East than Turkey, so Turkey is in the West of Ural Mountains but still considered Asia. In the South and Eastern Mediterranean, near Middle East or may be part of it, Cyprus is considered more European than we, but Ankara is more to the West than Cyprus. Turkey wants its BS coast to be considered an EU interest area, Turkey is very interested in this, because it would be a stigma, a good thing, an encouragement for the region to solve its

problems. That is why it's a good catalyst, being a honest broker. So, the more EU is interested in this BS area, the more Turkey is happy. Surrounding Turkey by Europe is a good idea, so we will still have a long border with Iran, while in Iraq we are neighboring the Americans, and Syria, all the rest being Europe. Low profile staying could be understood. As you know, Europeans did not want to get involved into the Balkans so the Americans had to do it. They have played a crucial role in the partition of Yugoslavia but the Europeans were quite idle and only watched. Lately and gradually European began to take part in it. Finally they reached a kind of *modus vivendi* in the Balkans and these problems are not yet resolved but there is no more bloodshed and things are going in the good direction.

Now, Turkish-American relations, you know, have started with the Marshall plan and Truman doctrine. That was the first situation when Turkey was punished for not joining the war on the part of the allies, being isolated. It was a prey for the greedy USSR! Soviets wanted territory from Turkey plus a joint control of the straits. In our archives you could find good information on this. Stalin has wanted without shame territories and shared control on straits in 1946. Turkey was not in a position to counter a Soviet threat, being very weak and isolated. The Americans knew they needed Turkey and also Greece for their program of reconstructing Europe after the world war. Both states needed Western assistance and they received it. So, Turkey had very positive feeling towards Americans, with great affection, great sincerity. What happened then? The bilateral problems appeared only during G W Bush administration, not earlier. Turkey has not been consulted regarding the Iraq war. One day after September 11, 2001, Turks heartedly supported America in the streets and 87% of Turkish people were sympathetic and friendly

to US. Now, we have a world negative record of disliking America, 91% being against America. During such a short period of time, Americans managed to change the public feeling, a success-story for America!

Let's face the facts. No nation has eternal friends and eternal enemies. But eternal interests as British diplomacy say. So Turkey is an independent and sovereign country, with eternal interests. A proud country which keeps its tradition and its dignity, to decide for itself. When Turkey defends its national interests, very unfortunately sometimes it clashes with American interests. We still have converging interests like in the energy issues where both nations interests converge 100%! Still...

Then in Turkish accession process in the EU both states are non-EU but we all agreed 100% that Turkey should be a EU member. US used its influence to help Turkey get EU membership and that produced sometimes some irritation in the EU states.

But in the case of Iraq and some domestic politics in the US, we perceived that as openly working against Turkish interests. This caused a retaliation and backlash from Turkish public opinion. American public opinion seems less open now to Turkish interests. That was my point of view!

Thank you very much!

Energy Security and the Black Sea Region: A perspective from Turkey

dr. Özgür İbrahim Özdamar

I will begin by asking a question: What is energy security? A simple definition could be like this: a condition in which a nation and its citizens and industries have adequate access to energy resources at reasonable prices, for the foreseeable future, free from serious risks of major disruption of service. You know that energy security is important for the global markets, and insecurity can arise from many factors. This could be geopolitical instability, national disasters, terrorism, poor regulatory frameworks and lack of investments. Today, we talk a lot about investments and Turkey is positioned as a country for diversification for Europe.

Well, today the EU is 50% dependent of energy imports! And according to the estimated, to 2013, this could rise to about 65%. Reliance on imports of gas it can rise from 57% to 80 percent in the next 20/25 years, and for oil from 82% to 93% by 2030.

On the other hand, when we see the Black Sea countries and their dependence position, Russia and Azerbaijan being the major producers in the region, whereas Romania, Bulgaria and Moldova are net importers. This is a little bad for Romania in terms of oil, but Bulgaria and Moldova heavily depends on foreign energy. And Greece, it has some oil, and almost no gas, and

Turkey is a net energy importer and specially it depends on Russia on gas supply. In 2006, 65% of natural gas used in Turkey was imported from Russia. Ukraine, on the other hand, has limited gas and oil resources and it is a net importer, highly dependent on Russia. Georgia is a net importer and had a lot of problems with Russia, while Albania too, but is has an important role in this story, because it can be an important port for gas transit in the near future.

So, the pictures says that the Black Sea and EU countries are heavily dependent on Russian gas and oil. But how do we see this picture? I think Black Sea and Central Asia is in-between 2 large trading blocks: the EU and China, and between them BS and Central Asian countries are trying to integrate into the world economic system. And Turkey is a democratic free market economy, a NATO member and an EU candidate state, it can be the focus of change in the region, creating security zone and being the locomotive of regional integration skills.

There could be 2 specific issues that Turkey can help itself, Eastern and Western Europe in terms of energy security. These are diversification and controlling geopolitical risks. But I will focus on diversification today and I will talk about some transit projects that Turkey deems important and these projects can be a part of the solution to the EU dependence on Russian energy. Turkey's role. Now Turkey is a transit country but it could improve it role. Its aims to be a major energy supplier and energy hub. It is on the East-West energy corridor and it can be good competitor to Russian supplies. But lack of investments and lack of political support on many issues are important. I don't know if you know that but now there is only one gas pipeline between Turkey and EU. It is important for Eastern and Western Europe to be connected to Turkey for natural gas from Caspian and Central Asia region. And also this is true for oil too.

Turkish routes can be alternative routes for energy. But we must recognize a fact: Turkey alone will not be able to make arrangements to transit oil and gas to Europe. Which means that the support of US and EU is absolutely necessary for Turkey to become a more important transit country and energy hub.

Let me talk a little about the existent energy projects, be they completed or not-completed. First BTC is an oil pipeline that extends from Baku to the Ceyhan port in Southern Turkey, so there are more than 1700 kilometers of length and a potential daily capacity of transport reaching 1 million barrels! The second one is the south Caspian gas pipeline from Azerbaijan's Shah Deniz to Erzurum and it has the capacity of 16 billion cubic meters by year. These are completed projects because the US strategic interest and involvement at the end of 99's.

Others pipelines are in a phase of to be completed or only planned. For example, Turkey, Greece, Italy, gas pipeline one. The Turkey – Greece line is almost completed and these states make the arrangements with the EU to extend this pipeline to Italy. This pipeline will help the EU diversify its energy imports. On the other hand, there is the Blue Stream II project which is actually rival to Turkey Greece Italy and the Nabucco pipelines. There is already a completely operational pipeline between Russia and Turkey, which is Blue Stream and BS carries Russian gas to Turkey. If Russia manages to defend its project, it will be able to export its gas to Hungary and Central European countries through Turkey.

The rival project to this is Nabucco. This is a proposed pipeline connecting Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Austria. Thus, the EU will diversify its energy supply. It will have a 25-31 bcm capacity by year by 2020, and it will carry Caspian or Middle East gas from Erzurum to Europe. Here the important

thing is that there is no Russia involvement. If there are problems with Russia, this is a kind of insurance for the European countries.

There is also the problem that the Turkish straits are quite narrow and crowded, there are tens of thousands of tankers passing every year. Turkey and Russia are discussing some by pass projects, like the Bosphorus by-pass one. Samsung-Ceyhan connects Northern and Southern Turkey and the idea is to bring oil to this Black Sea port with tankers and then pump it to Southern Turkey and then pump it to the tankers again, thus bypassing the Bosphorus. If this is completed this could help also Turkey's human security in a sense and it will protect the biggest city in Turkey, plus some economic advantages too! Turkey may build this infrastructure unilaterally, without foreign help, because it is very important one for it.

On the other hand, there is the trans-Caspian gas pipeline project, a proposed submarine pipeline which would bring, once built, gas from Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan to Azerbaijan and from then to Turkey and Europe. But the latest deals between Russia, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan this summer put a blow on this project because now Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan made deals with Russia to sell their gas to it. This will create some investment problems because the Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan do not look like they have enough gas to support both Russian and Turkish pipelines. Lastly there are some important deals between Turkey and Iran – there is already a functioning pipeline from the Iranian city of Tabriz to Erzurum, over 2500 km bringing Iranian natural gas to Turkey and South Caucasus and Tabriz will be the main suppliers for Nabucco pipeline to Europe if ever the capacity of the Iranian-Turkish pipeline can be increased. The latest deal with Iran is very good for Europe, for energy diversification but

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has some disadvantages because the US is committed to isolating Iran, so this project may be sacrificed to some political issues.

In conclusion, Turkey has a geographical advantage as appearing as one of the main routes to Europe. Various projects, if completed, will definitively help Europe diversifying its exports. The problems in this area are the Russian rivalry, investments in Caspian, political support from Western institutions and countries.

Thank You!

Black Sea Security Cooperation – Problems and Opportunities. A view from Bulgaria

Vesselin Petkov

First of all, let me express my thanks to the organizers of the conference for having invited me here.

I divided my presentation into 3 parts: the first part concerning the strategic importance of the BS, then the issues of regional cooperation – problems and opportunities and third, a very specific area of the regional cooperation.

I want to single out 3 main reasons for which the BS area is so important.

First, energy, second, the proximity to the Middle East and third, the issue of organized crime. The region has many features but in my opinion, the most important refers to frozen conflicts, then US rebasing in Romania and Bulgaria, and third, the domination of national agendas. Each of the countries in the area have national agendas which dominate over the regional ones. For example, Ukraine still strives to resolve its East-West controversy, Bulgaria and Romania are very much concerned about their membership problem, Turkey is very occupied with its PKK problem and has significant maritime security concerns.

Of course, one should not ignore the interest of the major players: the US, the EU, Russia. I think it is a region where a “soft war” is being waged for influence and for domination. Each player has its favorite tools: Russia has the energy – oil and gas.

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Against this background we have to ask ourselves how to develop the regional cooperation and what goals to achieve. Regional initiative so far were only focused towards building trust and confidence rather than capabilities. Two approaches for developing regional cooperation are present: the identification of blank areas for cooperation, for example the establishment of joint expeditionary forces. Next week, a joint logistic support union will be functional under the CJTF concept. The extension of successful Balkan initiatives like the civil-military emergency planning council or SEEBRIG – Ukraine will be member of SEEBRIG as it became obvious at the last meeting of the SEDM ministerial.

But each of these blank areas of cooperation requires a successful security sector reform, and the human dimension is very important. On the military side, we have the Traveling Contact Teams and this proves how the security education should take place. But on the civilian side we did not yet have adapted the tools to build civilian security expertise.

This is actually the area that I would like to single out. In fact my organization, the Center for South Eastern European Studies, is very involved in the process of building the next generation civilian security experts. We believe that such an approach will be a significant step towards the improvement of regional security environment. So, I would like to put on the table the issue of security sector education for civilians and I would like also to here your opinion on this.

Thank you very much!

The Black Sea security – a View from Romania

Ovidiu Dranga

I plan to address you today with the intention to open a discussion on the Black Sea from a distinct prospect: the future more than that what has already happen in the Black Sea. Please, take my remarks as a personal contribution to this seminar not as a view of the Minister of Foreign Affairs or the division I belong to!

Well, one of the main assumptions for any planning on the Black Sea is that we are facing a changed reality in this region. First, we have in the region countries with aspiration for European and Euro-Atlantic integration, states that have started reform processes on an unprecedented scale. Then, we have a new climate in the security situation of the region that is more conducive to cooperation than it was probably a decade ago. We have regional cooperation initiatives and organizations that has improved the political atmosphere in the region due to their achievements and accomplishments. We have also a changes international reality concerning the Black Sea. First, we have a changed reality between NATO and Russia. Despite the current situation between NATO and Russia I may say that a lot of avenues have been open since the middle of the 90s and the dialogue is going ahead. Then we have a new relation between the EU and

Russia and this is important because anything that is connected with the Wider Black Sea Region has a connection a connection with the EU-Russia cooperation!

Last but not least we have new international players in the Black Sea – the EU mainly and this presence there has significantly changed the situation in the Black Sea region. Why? Because Romania and Bulgaria have joined the Union and secondly because the EU as such has focused its attention towards the Black Sea and has initiated the Black Sea Synergy.

But this new reality in the Black Sea includes a new set of risks that affect the area. Not only migration and illegal trafficking, but also climate change and environmental problems that are affecting all the riparian countries.

There is also a new set of opportunities related to the Black Sea. I mention the fact that a number of organization initiatives has emerged since the Cold War – the most comprehensive is the BSEC of course. Other initiatives are to be mentioned: the Black Sea Forum and the BlackSeaFor.

Given these assumption on the changed realities in the Black Sea there is a moment for decision-makers inside and outside the region to make a strategic choice. That is what kind of region we will have in 10 years from now. Will it be a stable and prosperous region? A region connected to Europe? A region where investments are more likely? Will it be a region that will face a rhythm of development comparable to other regions of Europe? Or may be an instable region, one which is prone to instability and conflict, being also avoided by foreign investors, a region that will create more problems for Europe and Euro-Atlantic community?

The answer to this question is obvious! We all want the Black Sea to be a region of peace and stability, a region that is able to contribute to the stability of Europe and the Euro-Atlantic family.

In order to achieve that, of course, we have to think about means, how we can get there, to create together a new reality in the Black Sea such as to have an asset for Europe. We do not have in this region a new kind of relations between countries and these new kinds of relations should be based on common values and principles. One of the most important values is the promotion of democratic rule of law and this element is uniting all the states in the Black Sea area, for the years to come. Second principle is pragmatism – what should be made here is the commonality of problems and the commonality of approaches regarding these problems!

We should start to reset the entire package of regional cooperation instruments, based on a common list of priorities. For instance, we should cooperate better to strengthen critical bases of institutions that lay at the nexus of states and societies. We should work better to facilitate public-private dialogues that engage outside experts and ordinary citizens in the reform of key state sectors from education to health care. We should strengthen civic initiatives that encourage transparency, citizens' participation and government accountability.

A very consistent step forward could be made if we concentrate on the Black Sea citizens rather than Black Sea states and organizations, because this is probably our ultimate goal of improving regional cooperation and eliminating sources of tensions.

On the other hand we have two options regarding the concrete cooperation in the Black Sea region: first, we can favor country to country better relationships – bilateral relationship between states that had disputes in the past, and then favoring thematic cooperation in the Black Sea. Well, the thematic cooperation should be based on creating a network of networks

in the BS region. What we would like in the Black Sea and could be one of our priorities is engaging all the states there in the regional cooperation.

We should focus also on the private sector and I would have been happy to listen to more private sector representatives here, in this conference. Because they have a different view on regional cooperation. I am sure. Of course, another important group of stakeholders include academic circles and civil society. Last but not least, the media.

Unfortunately, the Black Sea region as such is not necessarily a priority for the Black Sea media, not to speak about European and Euro-Atlantic media! Practically the BS region does not exist on the screens of the international press and we have to change that.

I want to turn back to some principles and ideas that could lay as a background for future endeavors. First is flexibility. Let's face a truth. Cooperation in the BS area with the existing instruments and organization is at a turning point. There is no significant progress in this realm of cooperation which has a bureaucratic nature. We need to reinvent more flexible instruments and start discussing and approaching problems that are common to all states and communities around the Black Sea. Civil emergency planning is one field that could be seen as a priority! We are all faced with the BS problems regarding potential natural and man-made disasters. We need to reassess existing capabilities and procedures of communication among BS states. We could cooperate better on environment issues. In the BS area we are facing pollution which is linked to the Danube and also to a lack of coordinated the process and policies around the BS.

The Black Sea Forum is a very flexible and project-oriented initiative that has been endorsed by almost 10 countries in the

region, excepting Russia which did not signed the founding act, so there are countries that have committed themselves to a new kind of cooperation once again based on flexibility, pragmatism, on projects that would engage all stakeholders that are able and willing to contribute.

The Black Sea Forum has started from the prerequisite that in the BS we have to avoid the very bureaucratic institutions and ways of communication. We need to find ways to bypass the inevitable blockages that exists in some regional cooperation mechanisms! Well, the BS Forum has been recognized as a regional cooperation initiative by the European Commission and it is mentioned in the document "The Black Sea Synergy".

The place that the Commission allocates to the BS Forum is appropriate and it is in the spirit of the BS declaration! We have been witnessing recently the growing interest coming from the private sector to engage the governments of the region and put some pressures on governments to unblock the dialogue and cooperation and find new ways to move forward with the common agenda.

I would like to conclude by saying that we have a very important opportunity: that is the importance and the interest given by international players to the Black Sea area. The EU has launched its initiative on the Black Sea. NATO is considering new ideas regarding the BS. The UN also has a focus on the BS and also the OECD which recently has begun a process of drafting a study on the BS economic development. We should take advantage of these positive circumstances and try to turn that interest of the international community in the benefit of regional countries. Once again we have to decide upon a common agenda of the BS states and try to promote our problems and our voices in the international fora: UN, EU, NATO.

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A Black Sea voice in these organizations will make the difference!

We could import the experience we had in South-Eastern Europe. Many initiatives that were successfully in that area could be taken as a source of inspiration.

Let me stress that the Black Sea Trust that have been launched recently is ready to promote regional cooperation projects that would contribute to better cooperation and more confidence in the BS.

Thank you!