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Dear Reader,

It is a true pleasure to present you this copy of Harvard’s Black Sea Security Program Journal. The Harvard Black Sea Security Program morphed out of its predecessor: The Harvard Ukraine Program, which began in 1997 and was initially supported by the magnanimous support of the U.S. Department of Defense and the Carnegie Corporation of New York. All of you – and the many agencies and governments you work for – have added significantly to that support. We, at Harvard Kennedy School, have been wonderfully fortunate to have had the opportunity to organize and coordinate engagement activities between some of the most impressive regional professionals in the national security arena. We are confident in remarking that the articles you shall read here are exemplary works of selected experts from our programme. We are very proud of this edition as it includes very deep and accurate insights into the current regional situation. However, there is also something saddening about this year’s edition – it is likely to be the last one as the outside sponsorship of this program is scheduled to terminate shortly.

The Black Sea region is still in the making. Its structural institutions are still weak, particularly due to the democratic deficiency in the region (Triantaphyllou) which is spreading beyond the territories of the region. Intensified efforts and cooperation of regional states are required (Fata, US Marine Corps). Importantly, the Black Sea region serves as a kind of “laboratory for the study of so-called new wars” (Blank). And, as the wicked, intricate security knots of asymmetrical warfare continue to tighten their noose around the region, pipeline and energy security politics continue to tangle the proliferation of democracy with notions of global energy security as well as geopolitical and market competition (Triantaphyllou).

Whereas marked developments and security arrangements have been made in the Black Sea region – through inter-state cooperation and support from the US, EU and regional institutions – (Nation, Savu, Cankorel, Dascalu), certain security challenges and deficits continue to infect regional states (Bilgin, Shelest). Unfortunately, so-called “frozen conflicts” continue to thrive, impacting local populations, internally displaced persons and global politics at large. They continue to suffer from the tyranny of war, displacement, forged animosity and economic strife. A call to use smart power to resolve ongoing “frozen conflicts” (Blank) calls attention to the need for states and their representatives to appreciate that their efforts must be more than ‘smart’; they must be wise. Thus, the notion of being smart must be extended. Wisdom is called for from the policy makers and power keepers. The time has come for wisdom to be applied, for only it will balance geopolitical emotions (Chifu) with intelligence which is gathered by operatives in the field and policy makers geared towards peace (Matro, Dincovici).

Without exclusion, the states of the Wider Black Sea region have agreed by consensus, that they desire the realisation of their national security interests, which are contingent on regionalization and cooperation. Yet, with their eye on sustainable development and economic welfare, the myriad of resulting bilateral and multilateral agreements among Black Sea nations muddy the strategic regional states and waters (Gazizollin et al.).

We ask you to take the momentum and keep the spirit of this program alive. We promise we won’t run away. We have every intention to come to the region over the next year for another Regional Workshop – an opportunity for all of us to celebrate and work towards comprehensive peace. There is no reason to terminate workshops and conferences de- voted to honest dialogue and engagement. You have all demonstrated enthusiasm and have the skills and capability to continue improving the developments we have been working on these past 15 years.

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In its first five years, “Geostategic Pulse” and its supplements had over 4,500 pages, resulted from about 2,400 open sources on the markets of print in all continents, in English, French, Russian, Arabic, German and Portuguese. “Geostategic Pulse” is now known and appreciated on all the continents of the world, excluding Australia and Oceania, in almost 80 countries. The Bulletin can be found on the desks of presidential institutions, governments, parliament, chiefs of secret services, other politicians, presidents of national and transnational corporations, institutes for strategic studies.

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- “Geostategic Pulse” is a useful and important means of information for public and government institutions and non-governmental organizations, for corporations and exterior trade companies, for institutions of education, research and studies, international organizations, and for people interested in our domains of expertise.
The Black Sea Security Program had its genesis in 1997 when Harvard Kennedy School reached out to Ukraine as a fledgling democracy. Over the years this program has expanded its reach first to include other former Soviet Black Sea countries and currently to countries in the greater Black Sea region. An overarching goal has been to encourage regional security through cooperation and integration. It is unique in its mission to bring together leading policy makers in the region with senior US officials to gain a deeper understanding of issues affecting the region and to encourage problem solving in areas of common interest. The program typically involves senior military representatives and civilian security specialists from the United States and ten regional countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine. Recent efforts to reach out have brought participants from Kazakhstan, Croatia, Slovenia and Serbia to Harvard. The Black Sea Security Program and its predecessor – the Ukrainian National Security Program – have brought together more than 400 regional participants and 200 American participants since 1997.

The program aims to:
- Deepen participants' understanding of global and regional strategy, defense organization, and military reform and restructuring;
- Identify the very broad common areas of agreement that exist among the Black Sea nations.
and expose their officials and the US participants to the strong common history and shared values of the region;

- Highlight the specific areas of current cooperation on issues of vital interest to these countries and, at the same time, identify those issues which divide them and present challenges to regional cooperation;
- Expose the Black Sea officials to the free flow of ideas inherent in the pluralistic American system and within the US national security community itself by engaging them with officials who represent a wide range of viewpoints.

The 2011 program started in Bucharest, Romania with a seminar "Strategic Goals and Security Policy" on April 4-6. The group moved on to Vienna for a conference "EU and Black Sea Region" on April 7-8, organized by Austrian MoD and International Institute for Peace. The second week was in Boston at Harvard Kennedy School from April 10-15, 2011.

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The U.S. and the Wider Black Sea Area

Several factors contributed to reversing this relative decline in interest. The opening of access to the hydrocarbon reserves of the Caspian basin, first manifested as an exaggerated “oil rush” and then as a long-term initiative with real strategic weight, recast the Black and Caspian Sea areas as a source of hydrocarbon reserves and strategic transit corridor. Following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 U.S. engagement in what came to be described as the Greater Middle East became a preoccupation enhancing the geostrategic relevance of the area as a platform for projecting power and influence. And after a brief phase of illusion concerning the possibility of “strategic partnership” with the new Russian Federation, U.S.-Russian relations soured. Vladimir Putin rallied to support the U.S. in the wake of 9/11, but disappointment with Putin’s autocratic governing style, and assertion of Russian interests in the post-Soviet space, quickly set in. NATO enlargement was interpreted by Moscow as a threat, and the Colored Revolutions in Georgia (2003) and Ukraine (2004) created significant points of discord. The strategic context for the wider Black Sea area was once being defined by the logic of geopolitical competition. In a seminal article published in 2004 Ronald Asmus and Bruce Jackson argued that the Black Sea had moved “from the periphery to the center of Western attention” while regretting the absence of “a coherent and meaningful” regional strategy.

Asmus and Jackson suggested that democratic transformation grounded in western values and the
expansion of European and Euro-Atlantic institutions could provide the requisite coherence and meaning. The cutting edge of U.S. Black Sea policy, they argued, should be the effort to attach the countries of the region to a wider West, an effort that came toward regional ambitions informed by an explicit anti-Russian logic. Though never formally adopted as such, during the presidency of George W. Bush these became the de facto premises of a policy orientation that moved the wider Black Sea area back to the forefront of U.S. security concerns.

The new orientation had consequences. In 2004 Bulgaria and Romania joined the NATO alliance, and in 2007 acceded to the European Union (EU). In 2005 the Community of Democratic Choice was constituted, with U.S. backing, as a putative alternative to the Russian-sponsored Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The EU entered the picture in 2007 with the Black Sea Synergy, a functional approach to regional cooperation in the energy, transportation, environmental, and commercial domains including the challenges of good governance. A European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) Plus initiative of 2007 recommended the prospect of eventual full integration into the EU for all Black Sea subjects. At NATO’s April 2008 Bucharest summit the U.S. pressed for the issuance of Membership Action Plans pointing toward NATO accession for Tbilisi and Kiev. Though resistance from European allies turned the initiative aside, in a final declaration the Alliance stated unambiguously: “we agree today that these countries [Georgia and Ukraine] will become members of NATO.” The Black Sea area, according to some overwrought observers, was on the road to becoming “a NATO lake.” Winning the wider Black Sea region for the western security community by enlarging the community of democratic states had become, to a degree by default, the overarching idea inspiring U.S. regional policy.

THE GUNS OF AUGUST

The Five Day War between Russia and Georgia in August 2008 shattered the foundation of this approach. Though the origins of the war were obscure, the outcome was not. Russia overcame armed resistance in a matter of days, conducted punitive operations throughout Georgian territory, imposed its will concerning the status of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and removed the issue of Georgian and Ukrainian NATO membership from the table for the foreseeable future. The U.S. and its allies, unwilling to go to war with Russia to defend Georgia, discovered that lacking such commitment they were not in a position significantly to affect Russian behavior, or react to the new state of affairs being created by force majeure. The limits of U.S. influence in the region were cruelly exposed.

The war brought relations between the two former superpowers to a post-Cold War nadir. “Russian-American contradictions,” in the words of a Russian commentator, “reached their apogee during the crisis in the Caucasus of August 2008.” In its wake the new U.S. administration of President Barack Obama moved purposefully to reconstruct the U.S.-Russian relationship on a more stable foundation. The “reset” agenda (as it was dubbed by U.S. Vice-President Joseph Biden) seeks to cultivate cooperation in areas where the U.S. and Russia share common interests, and to contain areas of discord without abandoning commitments to allies or surrendering matters of principle. The policy has achieved some notable successes. The New Start Treaty of February 2011 reestablished arms control as an area of U.S.-Russian collaboration. Moscow now actively assists the U.S. mission in Afghanistan by facilitating logistical support through a Northern Distribution Network transiting its national territory. It has become at least partially supportive of efforts to promote non-proliferation in the case of Iran. In September 2011, with U.S. backing, Russia entered the World Trade Organization as a member in good standing. The atmospherics of U.S.-Russian relations

BIOGRAPHY

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have improved and in the wider Black Sea area both the U.S. and NATO have articulated the desire to work with Russia as a responsible partner. Under these circumstances, the notions of a contest for mastery on the frontiers of freedom, or a more subtle great game where “Moscow and the West are competing to be the first to organize a soft-power alliance system in the greater Black Sea region” seems inappropriate. Without the Russian east as constituting other the very notion of a distinctive, and values based “western” security community could be called into question.

Trends in U.S.-Turkish relations have reinforced the lessons of the Five Day War. The gradual weakening of the Kemalist consensus that defined the Turkish polity for much of its existence has led to a significant alteration in Ankara's foreign policy priorities, summarized in Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu’s now familiar doctrine of Strategic Depth. Turkey is no longer constrained by the need to balance against a powerful Soviet rival. It is the heritor of a long-standing great power tradition derived from the Ottoman centuries, which sanctions aspirations to regional influence. The goal of joining the West, crystallized as an agenda for EU accession, remains national policy, but in practice Turkey's European vision seems moribund. Ankara's long-standing special relationship with the U.S. has been damaged by unintended fall out from the protracted U.S. engagement in Iraq, widely perceived as damaging to Turkish national interests. In this context Davutoğlu has championed alternative priorities through engagement with new partners in the Greater Middle East, priorities that reflect Turkey's desire for self-assertion as an independent strategic actor. The new orientation includes reduced dependence upon the U.S., and a commitment to assume a greater share of the responsibilities for security management in the Black Sea. Once the guardian of the Black Sea for the Western Alliance, Turkey today “can only with difficulty be described as a NATO member.” “Ankara,” writes F. Stephen Larrabee, now “essentially regards the Black Sea as a ‘Turkish Lake’.”

What of the other residents of lakefront property? Ukraine's 2004 Orange Revolution stimulated democratic transformation and the search for pro-western alignment, and supporting Kiev's efforts to integrate with European and Euro-Atlantic institutions became an important U.S. policy goal. Unfortunately the momentum of change in Ukraine could not be sustained. Following the election of Viktor Yanukovich to the presidency in February 2010 Kiev signed a treaty with Russia extending Moscow's lease on naval facilities in Sevastopol for its Black Sea Fleet through 2042 in exchange for a contract to supply Ukraine with Russian natural gas at guaranteed price levels; reiterated commitment to non-alignment including a ban on association with military blocs; and articulated the desire to maintain positive relations with Russia in the context of a balance or “third way” between East and West. Basing for the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol is an egregious violation of Ukrainian sovereignty, but it is an issue of particular salience for Moscow for both practical and symbolic reasons, and was made a precondition for normalization of relations. Despite protestations to the contrary, Kiev's dependence on Moscow is becoming more pronounced.

Bulgaria is embedded in the Western Alliance and EU, but also seeks to cultivate positive relations with the Russian Federation, from whom it receives nearly 100 percent of its natural gas supply. Cooperation in the energy sector is expanding despite Bulgaria's refusal to support the construction of a Burgas-Alexandroupolis gas pipeline project, and cancellation of a nuclear reactor facility in Belene intended to be jointly sponsored by Russia. Sofia maintains the lowest level of defense spending of any NATO member. Romania has been the most outspoken regional champion of the project to bring the wider Black Sea area into European and Euro-Atlantic institutions, but pressures occasioned by global recession have fragmented the country politically. Both Bulgaria and Romania have been subjected to criticism by the EU for failure to implement reforms. Abkhazia has been recognized as an independent state by Moscow (though virtually no one else), and although its status is contested it is
not likely to change. Indeed, Russia’s support for Abkhazia and South Ossetia is a direct challenge to U.S. and its vision of regional order, and a clear manifestation of the weakness inherent in policy of inclusion. Georgia is the recipient of considerable western largesse, but it is a weak polity whose democratic transition is considered by some to be regressing, with limited options given the poor state of its relations with Russia.

The aspirations of democratic enlargement have not been abandoned, but the Five Day War dealt a hard blow to their substance and practicability. Global and regional trends in an era of economic contraction, political polarization, and revived great power competition are moving against the logic of a grand strategy of transformation and inclusion in the wider Black Sea area.

**STRATEGIC PIVOT OR ABOUT FACE?**

Changing priorities are also affecting the relative weight accorded to the region in the U.S. policy spectrum. On 5 January 2012 President Obama released strategic guidance articulating a new U.S. defense orientation, including what was described as a “strategic pivot” toward the Asia-Pacific region. All trends are shifting toward the Pacific,” asserted Chair of the U.S. joint Chiefs of Staff Martin Dempsey in the wake of Obama’s announcement, “our strategic challenges will largely emanate out of the Pacific region.” The initiative has been interpreted as an attempt “to beat back any Chinese bid for hegemony in the Asia-Pacific.” Both U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta and General Dempsey have publically refused any intention to “contain” China, but by any measure the U.S. turn toward Asia is an ambitious gambit that if pursued purposively will restrict policy options in the European and Eurasian arenas. U.S. force structure in Europe and the Greater Middle East will be reduced substantially. Army personnel in Europe, during the cold war decades numbering more than a quarter million and now down to about 40,000, will drop to under 30,000 by 2015 with the elimination of two heavy armored combat brigades now based in Germany. The Pacific theater will be prioritized over the Atlantic with sixty percent of U.S. naval forces moved to Pacific ports by 2020 (the present balance is 50/50). Size does matter, and force reductions will mean that the U.S. capacity to reassure its allies and promote theater security cooperation will be reduced. Spokespersons for the administration hopefully assert that “the United States and Europe have never been more aligned, both in overall strategic goals as well as the tactics we use to achieve those goals.” But it is not certain that America’s European allies will continue to see it that way, or that it will in fact be the case.

The current retreat of the European idea has also become a strategic factor. The EU’s power of attraction, combined with an enlargement strategy defined by conditionality, has been an important driver of democratic enlargement. The EU’s efforts to promote transformation have pragmatic foundations – to open up new markets, export values, and insure stability and security on its eastern marches – but they track well with U.S. objectives. Now the EU enlargement strategy is in crisis, for reasons both internal and external to the organization itself. Internally, the European sovereign debt crisis has paralyzed initiative. Economic shocks have buffeted Eastern and Central Europe with particular force, and from the first stages of the crisis Brussels made clear that it would not make a priority of assisting the troubled economies of its eastern partners. Enlargement fatigue among European electorates, coupled with a series of administrative initiatives designed to slow down the process of accession, has made further enlargement (with the possible exception of the countries of the Western Balkans) a receding prospect. Until recently the Black Sea was regarded as a new frontier for European enlargement and a fruitful ground for EU-led conflict resolution. Today these aspirations have been greatly reduced. Major initiatives such as the ENP Action Plans, Black Sea Synergy, and Eastern Partnership have begun to look like little more than tepid substitutes for a credible prospect of accession.

More generally, and despite the initiatives of the 2009 Lisbon Treaty (including the creation of a High Representative for Foreign Affairs and External Actions Directorate) the EU has not evolved into a robust strategic actor. The need for consensus among member states to validate policy limits initiative, deployments under the aegis of the European Common Security and Defense Policy have fallen off sharply since 2008, and European publics remain skeptical about funding the hard power attributes requisite for credibility. U.S. Defense Secretary Robert
Gates commented strongly on the perceived inadequacies of European defense capacity during the 2011 Libya campaign, going so far as to evoke the possibility of the Atlantic Alliance’s “collective military irrelevance.” Against this background the possibility of a gradual U.S. disassociation from its traditional European partners and responsibilities has become more pronounced. European disillusionment with U.S. leadership may also become a factor. Commenting on the U.S. strategic pivot, the UK Parliamentary National Security Committee remarked pointedly on the need to ask: “fundamental questions if our preeminent defense and security relationship is with an ally who has interests which are increasingly divergent from our own.”

Following Russia’s punishment of Georgia in the Five Day War the strategic environment in the wider Black Sea region altered profoundly. The momentum of NATO enlargement was interrupted and it is not clear that it can be revived. The EU’s internal dilemmas have dimmed prospects for additional accessions. U.S. strategic realignment toward the Asia-Pacific region threatens to reduce the salience of Europe and Eurasia for U.S. strategy. A more assertive Turkey with aspirations to regional leadership no longer functions as a loyal and subservient ally. Structural sources of rivalry in the U.S.-Russian relationship have not been overcome by the limited achievements of the reset agenda. The region’s smaller polities are increasingly beset by domestic problems and attracted by reviving national exceptionalism. Under these circumstances a policy of inclusion designed to attach emerging democracies to a U.S. led western security community while engaging Russia at the margin is no longer convincing. The context has changed; are U.S. and western strategy capable of changing along with it?

**A NEW U.S. STRATEGY – WHEN LESS IS MORE**

Since 2008 the U.S. has retreated from assertive policies in the wider Black Sea area. The aspiration to develop a comprehensive regional approach based upon democratic enlargement and soft containment has virtually disappeared. The salience of the region in the spectrum of U.S. interests has declined. Policy is now defined by a series of parallel bilateral engagements with regional actors. These are significant – in their own right – but the whole is no more than the sum of its parts. American and EU influence is receding while other local players, and above all Turkey and the Russian Federation, have become more active.

The situation is incongruous, for despite reduced leverage, U.S. interests in the wider Black Sea region are substantial, and substantially intact. The hydrocarbon reserves of the Caspian basin are a significant strategic resource. Facilitating “the flow of Caspian resources along an East-West corridor” and ensuring “that a large portion of Caspian oil flows through non-OPEC countries and countries that do not have competing interests” (i.e. Russia and Iran) remain relevant concerns. Gradual disengagement from Iraq and Afghanistan will not mean abandonment of goals in the Greater Middle East, particularly in view of the instability connected with the uprisings and transformations underway in the Arab world. Iran is a problem unto itself, and forward presence in the Black Sea area is essential if it is to be addressed successfully. The U.S. missile defense effort, intended to neutralize an Iranian threat, is now concentrated in the Black Sea region through cooperative endeavor with Bulgaria, Romania, and Turkey.

The Black Sea is still a crossroad where East-West and North-South avenues of communication intersect, a geostrategic platform that remains vital to any kind of regional shaping strategy. The Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits, which connect the Black Sea to the world ocean, are critical maritime choke points. The majority of Black Sea states is relatively impoverished, politically unstable, and burdened by divisive social, political, and interstate conflicts. Zbigniew Brzezinski’s concept, introduced in 1978, of an “arc of crisis” that encompasses the region with the potential to generate explosive instability has not lost its relevance. In the past ceding effective control to a potentially hostile power was construed as an unacceptable risk. Today the risk is still in place. Restoring a “new partnership” with Turkey on a basis of mutual respect “in order to make a strategic relationship a reality” has been articulated as a high U.S. priority.
the Russian Federation so that competition can be muted and cooperation in areas of mutual interest forwarded is national policy. Some of these mutual interests derive from new security dilemmas that are essentially transnational in character – organized crime, drug dealing and human trafficking, missile defense, counter-terrorism, critical infrastructure protection, and the emerging demands of cyber security. This panoply of interests is becoming more, not less significant.

The U.S. is a global power with interests and responsibilities in all major world regions. In the future resource constraint may require it to define choose commitments more carefully, but it will not lead backward toward national withdrawal. The pivot toward Asia does not imply and is not intended to express an about face in Europe and Eurasia – too much is at stake and the risks of disengagement are too great. In the wider Black Sea area the U.S. will remain an active player because objective interests and *raison d’état* compel it to do so. And these interests encompass both threats and opportunities.

The Black Sea region’s protracted conflicts cannot be ignored. Albeit with varied degrees of intensity, all continue to pose threats to regional stability. The Transnistria conflict may be the most liable to a negotiated solution. Russian subsidization of the breakaway region is an economic burden and Moscow might be brought around to support the reunification of Moldova in exchange for guarantees for the status of the Transnistrian population, protection for Russian economic interests, and a prohibition of further NATO enlargement in the area.

The United States can help to facilitate such an understanding. A possible side effect might be to reopen the door to democratic enlargement in Central Europe – first for Moldova, and possibly, looking ahead, for Ukraine as well.

The same cannot be said of the conflicts over Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Nagorno-Karabakh. Discussions of the problems within the Geneva forum on Security in the South Caucasus (including representatives of South Ossetia, Abkhazia, Russia, Georgia, the U.S., the EU, the UN, and the OSCE) seem to be leading nowhere. Russia and Georgia have not restored diplomatic ties following the Five Day War and their relationship is embittered. The large Russian military presence within and around what are internationally recognized as Georgian territories represents a standing threat that the small EU monitoring mission in place is ill equipped to manage. Most threatening is the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh, where both Armenia and Azerbaijan are engaged in force build ups, ceasefire violations along the line of separation are on the rise, bellicose rhetoric is commonplace, and the potential for a spontaneous outbreak of large scale hostilities is real. A new war in the region would have dire consequences. Even without an outbreak of hostilities, the effects of the stalemate are damaging. Armenia’s exposure leaves it no alternative to strategic alignment with Moscow. The inability to affect a rapprochement between Yerevan and Ankara is a major barrier to enhanced regional cooperation. Washington has a strong vested interest in using its stature to forward compromise solutions, a potentially thankless task but one that should not and cannot be neglected. The unresolved protracted conflicts are widely regarded as the region’s most pressing traditional security challenge.

Interaction in the Black Sea region will have an important impact on the development of U.S.-Russian relations in the years to come. Russian-American collaboration could contribute much to regional stabilization, but effective cooperation will be difficult to sustain. The momentum of the reset agenda is fragile, and could easily be reversed by changing domestic priorities or unexpected international developments. Issues of domestic governance and human rights during Putin’s third presidential term have already come to weigh more heavily on U.S. perceptions of Russia’s viability as a strategic partner. Cooperation in areas of mutual interest such as arms control should be sustained on some level, but in the Black Sea area competitive posturing remains the rule. Both parties continue to approach access to Caspian Sea resources as a zero-sum game. Joint effort in the area of missile defense seems unlikely. A principled commitment to democratic transformation in Georgia places broad based rapprochement with Russia in the Caucasus out of reach. Washington and Moscow have contrasting visions of the Black Sea area’s future, and as the U.S. steps back from commitments in the region Russia will step forward. Ceding control should not be an acceptable outcome. Sharpened competition and attempts to reassert U.S. prerogatives will be a likely result.
In this context the U.S.-Turkey connection is a wild card. Both parties express regret over the extent to which relations have disintegrated over the past decade. Some analysts have interpreted Ankara’s decision to join NATO’s missile defense project in September 2011 as an “about face” and expression of a desire to “re-embrace the West,” but this exaggerates the implications of what was almost certainly a pragmatic choice motivated first of all by the threat posed by neighboring Iran. Turkey’s ambitions and determination, shared with the Russian Federation, to prioritize the role of regional actors in promoting Black Sea security, place limits on the extent to which it can become a cooperative partner. The frustratingly slow pace of Turkey’s EU candidacy makes the option of “embracing” the West look suspiciously like a mission impossible. The Obama administration seems to have taken note that the “with us or against us” dichotomy of the cold war era is now a thing of the past, and has sought, with some success, to create a pragmatic working relationship without insisting on accord on every issue of substance. Turkey’s foreign priorities will also be affected by complicated domestic circumstances, with the unprecedented electoral and policy success of the Justice and Development party ironically paralleled by increasing political, social, and economic contestation.

The enduring threat posed by Islamic extremism and terrorism will be a strategic priority for the U.S. for the foreseeable future. In the wider Black Sea area this threat is most clearly manifest in the Northern Caucasus. After two destructive wars Chechnya appears to have achieved at least a transient stability under the iron fist of Ramzan Kadyrov, but political violence has spilled beyond the boundaries of Chechnya into the wider region, the most impoverished Russian Federal District with a large and often frustrated Muslim population. Dokka Imarov’s Caucasian Emirate organization now aspires to lead this unrest, in the Northern Caucasus and in Russia as a whole, on the basis of a radical Islamist ideology. It is difficult to arrive at a reliable estimate of the organization’s real weight – Russian sources tend to downplay its importance. But the threat of Islamist violence and terrorism emanating from the Northern Caucasus is a real concern, to the U.S. and many regional actors as well.

Substantial difficulties stand in the way of regional initiatives aimed at creating cooperative mechanisms for addressing common problems. The region is diverse linguistically, culturally, and politically and lacks a cohesive sense of shared identity. Though there are a plethora of multilateral forums, Black Sea regionalism remains underdeveloped. The most evolved regional organization, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, created on Turkish initiative in 1992, is essentially a loose customs union with limited prerogatives. The transnational security challenges of the age of globalization (criminality, terrorism, population transfers, environmental degradation, cyber threats) demand institutionalized cooperation if they are to be addressed effectively, but movement in this direction is just beginning. The U.S. can and should play a useful role in this regard; mobilizing experience, expertise, and soft power assets to help local actors address new threats and reinforce mutual security.

CONCLUSION

The U.S. retreat from the wider Black Sea area that seems to be underway is a small part of larger process of retrenchment. Economic decline, widening social differentiation, and costly international over extension have combined to create an attitude of declining prospects and limited possibilities, something unprecedented in the American national experience. Though theories that interpret the problem as a manifestation of hegemonic decline may overstate, they have an objective foundation. In the future the United States will likely not be able to sustain the kind of unparalleled global presence, and dominance, to which it has grown accustomed. A thoughtful redefinition of interests and priorities that brings aspirations within the range of the possible is urgently needed. That will require a more modest vision of national purpose, less willful unilateralism, more work within multilateral frameworks, and the ability to compromise on issues that do not involve matters of principle or are of less than vital concern. It means reanimating the tradition of statecraft as the basis of the U.S. world role – a salutary process after all.

Retrenchment need not mean weakness or withdrawal, but should impose a more intelligent and calibrated approach to the pursuit of national inter-
ests. The wider Black Sea area is an excellent case in point. U.S. interests in the region are substantial, and America has the means to pursue them effectively. The goal should not be to dominate or control, an unrealistic aspiration in a context of robust multipolarity, but rather to shape and manage regional dynamics in ways that are congenial to the national purpose. U.S. military assets can play an important role as guarantors of stability, in the promotion of military modernization professionalism, and as a driving force for expanding security cooperation. But soft power assets will become ever more important as shaping tools.

Urging a more ambitious and coordinated U.S. regional strategy in 2006, Ariel Cohen and Conway Irwin write:

The only way for the U.S. to maintain and strengthen its footholds in the Black Sea is to develop cooperation across a broad spectrum of issues of common interest and mutual concern. The U.S. needs to learn to tread lightly, offering support where possible and backing off when necessary – The U.S. does not have free rein in the Black Sea region, and that is unlikely to change in the near future. However, the region is critical to current U.S. foreign policy objectives, and the U.S. should make the effort to maintain its legitimate presence in the Black Sea.50

This is still good advice. Despite the rigors of austerity the U.S. cannot and will not fail to defend its vital national interests in important world regions. Though there is still some debate about what the strategic pivot toward Asia really means, it clearly does not imply a policy of disengagement and neglect elsewhere. The keys will be balancing ends and identifying the most appropriate and cost effective means through which to pursue them. In the wider Black Sea area this could mean re-engagement with Turkey, muted competition with Russia, an ongoing effort to broaden access to Caspian basin hydrocarbon reserves, the commitment of diplomatic capital to the search for resolutions to intractable local conflicts, an attempt to isolate and contain a hostile Iran, functional engagement designed to aid in addressing new transnational threats, and a more gradual approach to democratic enlargement that avoids antagonizing but maintains allegiance to the principles of respect for sovereignty, national prerogative in choosing international associations, and an open door approach to accession to European and Euro-Atlantic institutions. While not necessarily a comprehensive policy, such initiatives could represent a practical approach to positive, effective, and sustainable regional engagement.

ENDNOTES

4. The Community of Democratic Choice (CDC) grew out of the GUUAM forum (Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Moldova) chartered in 2001 (Azerbaijan has since left the forum, which continues to function as GUAM.) The CDC was launched by the Borjomi Declaration issued by Georgian president Mikheil Saakashvili and Ukrainian president Viktor Iushchenko in August 2005 in the wake of the Georgian and Ukrainian Colored Revolutions. Current membership includes Estonia, Georgia, Lithuania, Latvia, Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Slovenia and Ukraine. Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, the U.S., and the EU are observers. Michael Emerson, “What Should the Community of Democratic Choice Do?” CEPS Policy Brief no. 98, March 2006.
5. Commission of the European Communities, Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: Black Sea Synergy – A New Regional Cooperation Initiative,
The EU Communication is the first document to refer formally to a "wider" Black Sea region that "extends beyond the strictly defined littoral territories to adjacent area that are culturally, politically, or economically linked to it."


18. "Ukraine is Becoming Dependent on Russian Loans," EASTWEEK, 4 April 2012.


27. William Wan, "Panetta, In Speech in Singapore, Seeks to Lend Heft to U.S. Pivot to Asia," The Washington Post, 1 June 2012 and James Kitfield, "Is Obama’s 'Pivot to Asia' Really a Hedge Against China?" The Atlantic, 8 June 2012.


41. Russia’s offer to restore diplomatic relations in February 2012 was rejected peremptorily by Tbilisi. An offer to restore relations while occupying 20 percent of Georgian territory was described by one Georgian official as “confusing.” Michael Schwirtz, “Russia Offers Resumption of Relations With Georgia,” The New York Times, 2 March 2012.
47. “Radikalnii Izlam ne imeet perspektiv v Abkhazii, uvereny eksverty,” Kavkazskii Uzel, 13 June 2012.
The Black Sea Region’s Regionalism and Democratization Deficit

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MAIN POINTS:

- The process of regionalism in the Black Sea Region finds itself on the back burner as key stakeholders prefer to maintain a status quo and control over the course of developments in the region or are increasingly uninterested in the region per se. There is a growing condominium between Russia and Turkey on the need to maintain the status quo coupled with the growing detachment of the European Union and the general disinterest of the United States.
- There is evidence of a growing democratic deficit in the region which is compounded by the European Union’s inability to project its values and norms towards the Eastern Neighborhood albeit its transformative powers and the fact that democracy and integration is itself being discredited and challenged from within EU member states.
- The militarization of parts of the region is a cause for concern as it might have a negative impact on some of the protracted conflicts. This is especially relevant in the context of Armenia and Azerbaijan both of which get most of their conventional weapons from Russia, one of the world’s key weapons suppliers.

Home to a number of a number of parallel processes of integration, regional cooperation, or lack thereof, and political alignment taking place simultaneously coupled with the existence and development of a number of competing narratives, the Black Sea Region increasingly finds itself without a singular point of reference. The Black Sea Region is in flux with no clear trend as to the direction it is going towards today. There is to this date no common assessment as to which countries encompass the region and what expresses it geopolitically (bridge, buffer, pivot, etc.). Except for a narrow definition of the region on the basis of its six littoral states, all other interpretations have transregional dimensions (for example, Southeastern Europe and the Middle East) and/or sub regional ones (the South Caucasus) within them thereby reflecting the multiple geographic identities of the region’s state actors. The same applies to political identities given the membership of some regional states to the European Union and/or NATO or the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), inter alia.

One could also make the case that it is not a region at all as it might have in the recent past;
therefore, its value as a unit of analysis can be doubted or questioned. Consequently, the aforementioned parallel processes are left up to interpretation by the various stakeholders as to which processes are actually on track and which ones are not. It could also be argued that the course of regional integration finds itself in a period of inactivity as there is a lack of interest among the stakeholders to promote it.

All of the above reflect a number of paradoxes in that the Black Sea Region is a point of reference or an area of study and analysis today but not necessarily because it is being assessed as a holistic region or concept; rather the mention refers to either some of its geographic components or to some of the issues (energy, frozen conflicts, environmental concerns, militarization, democratization, etc.) at play in parts of the region or within and/between some of the countries that encompass it.

REGIONALISM REVISITED

In the immediate post-Gold War era, the Black Sea Region was one marked by regionalism; which over time has come to be severely tested in the region. On the one hand, the one institutionalized form of regionalism in place in the region since June 1992 (the Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation – BSEC) has not necessarily been able to reach its full potential; on the other hand, the relationship between the key stakeholders has also evolved to one which makes cooperation more complex.

As regionalism in the Black Sea Region has had to struggle with the need to manage public goods effectively, security considerations such as the unresolved secessionist conflicts have undermined it by obstructing collective action and institutions. As a result, the very countries that took the lead in shaping the region’s regionalism – Turkey and Russia – are only playing lip service to it today; their aim is to ensure that they control the process which has been unable to escape its rather rigid top-down structural construct. The anticlimactic 20th anniversary of the BSEC in late June 2012 and the failure to generate any serious interest or momentum in enhancing Black Sea regionalism is emblematic of the failure of institutional regionalism in the region. In fact, other attempts at institutional regionalism either at the subregional level such as GUAM or with wider membership such as the Community of Democratic Choice (CDC) have also failed to deliver on their promise.

THE GROWING DETACHMENT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The EU was not initially instrumental in shaping the process of Black Sea regionalism as it evolved in the immediate post-Cold War period. After timidly acknowledging that a Black Sea

BIOGRAPHY

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Region as such exists in a November 1997 European Commission Communication, the EU finally embraced a Black Sea Regional policy with the adoption of the Black Sea Synergy in 2007/2008. Yet regionalism was quickly dropped in favor of the Eastern Partnership in 2008/2009 with is value-laden imperatives aimed at the further integration of its targeted eastern neighbors to the detriment both of regionalism and finding a modus vivendi with Russia, in particular, in terms of how to better manage the common neighborhoods. This has been particularly reflected in the tense relationship between the EU and the BSEC to which the former holds the status of observer. Confounding the Union's ability to influence the Black Sea Region significantly has been the impact of the economic/financial/sovereign debt crisis since 2008 which has led to a fundamental debate about the limits of further integration, the virtues of a common currency, as well as the slow take off of the new foreign policy apparatus in the guise of the European External Action Service (EEAS) and other such innovations as per the Lisbon Treaty. Consequently, while at the technocratic level (EC officials) the EU implements its relevant policies and programs, there has been a discernible lack EU-centered political guidance with regard to the Union's neighborhoods policy. This has meant a noticeable loss of the EU's soft power and the emergence of pro-active foreign policy actors among EU member states (such as Poland and Sweden in the case of the Eastern Partnership) influencing the Union's foreign policy process and agenda through the extension of their own national interests while that role had traditionally been reversed for the Union's Big 3 (Germany, France, and the United Kingdom) in the past. Also relevant is the fact that the EU's attempts at regionalism have suffered the same fate in the Mediterranean South as well with the Union for the Mediterranean which was launched in 2008 having been a victim of the Arab Awakenings. Hence, the Union has seen an almost parallel failure of its initiatives across its Eastern and Mediterranean neighborhoods.

Another important element is the impact of the evolving security agenda with issues such as energy having a fundamental effect on the limits of projecting the Union’s soft power in the Black Sea Region. As a result, ‘securitization’ is taking precedence over the process of ‘Europeanization’ with geopolitics and geo-economics gaining ground as the motivation behind the policies of the key stakeholders in the region. In other words, the loss of steam in the EU’s activities in the region impacts the future of regionalism, the security context, and the maturing and evolution of both institutions and human resources in the countries of the region.

The problem of the EU is that, as long as it lacks a strategic blueprint and does not become more assertive in pursuing its own interests, it leaves the region open to geopolitical rivalry between Russia, Turkey, China, and probably others. Consequently, the EU is perceived as being unable to achieve what it is trying to promote: its values and norms, its soft power, good governance, etc. As a result many of 'soft power’ cooperative approaches cannot be supported or are difficult to implement.

**THE INTERESTS OF RUSSIA AND TURKEY**

In this context, the Russian Federation and Turkey (both among the most prominent initiators of Black Sea regionalism) by virtue of their size, economies, and potential are considered to prefer the status quo in the region. At times, this condominium between Russia and Turkey seems to clash with the interests of their respective partners and allies. As a consequence, NATO has no Black Sea policy to speak of even though three of the six littoral states of the Black Sea are NATO member states (Bulgaria, Romania, and Turkey). Also, the poor state of relations among the six littoral states complicates the emergence of a viable maritime security framework necessary to meet common challenges such as combating organized crime and nuclear smuggling.

While bilateral trade between the two countries amounted to some 30 billion USD in 2011, it is set to reach some 100 billion USD within the next ten years. Russia's recent membership to the World Trade Organization also contributes to the growth in bilateral economic relations as it makes it more receptive to Turkish investments among others. The mutual elimination of visa requirements for stays of fewer than 30 days by both countries has led to record numbers of Russian tourists to Turkey with the number expected to top 4 million in 2012. Questions though remain as to whether growing economic
Turkey’s institutions also find themselves in a period of flux with increasing examples of the curbing of the right of expression, even the rights of university students to protest publicly. While it is unclear whether a ‘Black Sea Spring’ is an eventual possibility, the Arab Awakenings may over time impact the region’s states and their governments as they have demonstrated the potential of ‘people power’ albeit their mixed post-revolution settings. The European Union’s perceived absence could imply that should the process of political transformation begin to take shape in Russia and elsewhere in the region, it could become chaotic if not properly channeled. The assessment by Ivan Krastev that the current regime in Moscow is a “weak state weakly connected to a weak civil society” could also hold true for many of the other states of the region. Yet there is also another dimension to the democratization debate which is more troubling. This has to do with the fact that democracy is itself being discredited and challenged from within EU member states as the economic crisis has questioned the prolonged viability of the elite-guided democracies of Western Europe. As a result, the evident ascent of populism East-Central Europe over the last few years has now become a worrisome phenomenon in EU member states themselves where the notion of integration is being challenged at an alarming rate.

The democratic deficit implies lack of accountability and the common interest of regional states to have top-down structures and decision-making processes in place that limit the influence of civil society and non-regional actors in the affairs of the region. The continued inability to find viable solutions to the many protracted conflicts in the region and the implications of inaction such as the growing militarization of countries like Armenia and Azerbaijan are a cause of growing concern. According to a recent report by SIPRI, Azerbaijan’s imports of conventional weapons increased by 164% between 2002–2006 and 2007–11, making it the 38th largest recipient of weapons. Although Armenia dropped from the 71st to the 84th place between 2007–11 and 2002–2006, the Armenian Government has declared that it will acquire arms in response to Azerbaijan’s weapons purchases. Also Russia is the main supplier of arms to both states by providing 55% of Azerbaijan’s arms imports and 96% of Armenia’s arms imports in 2007–11.
LIVING WITH UNCERTAINTY

The uncertainty regarding the future direction of the Black Sea Region is a cause for concern. The disappointment with regionalism or at least in its inability to redefine itself; the failing attraction of the European Union albeit its transformative powers; the prevalent status quo preferences of some of the region’s key stakeholders in spite of the prospect of divergent foreign policy agendas; the evolving nature of politics of energy; the gridlock in the negotiations of the protracted conflicts and its linkage to the further militarization of some of the interested parties; and the region’s growing democratic deficit are all factors that define and reflect the current state of affairs. One could argue that although the region lacks a security community, there is nevertheless the possibility for it to develop over the longer term predicated upon a system of ‘balanced multipolarity’ and the willingness of the stakeholders to ensure regional peace and stability, in order to avoid a return to Realpolitik. In the current state of European security with the European Union having put on hold its ambitions and responsibilities and the United States becoming increasingly a Pacific power, the ‘balanced multipolarity’ model might make sense given that this is the best material the region’s stakeholders have to work with. On the other hand, the increasingly unpredictability of the energy security dimension with the inability to have a credible external energy policy among the EU member states; the volatility of the democratization processes in the region in part because of the lack of a common referent point (which the EU could provide but finds itself increasingly challenged from within); and the precariousness of the protracted conflicts imply there is a fundamental need to ensure that the various centrifugal forces at play in the Black Sea Region do not tear it apart due to the inertia of the process of regionalism.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the aforementioned assessment, proposing viable recommendations is a difficult enterprise. As one of the main drafters of the Report by the Commission of the Black Sea and its recommendations in 2010, I believe that most of them are still pertinent today. I therefore present them with certain revisions in order to reflect the region’s realities today:

Encourage a 2020 /2025 Vision for a Black Sea dimension with the aim of enhancing the profile of Black Sea regionalism. The setting of consensus targets for the region is important. The aim of this would be to promote regional cooperation while anticipating changes in the neighborhood. If the BSEC fails to live up to its potential as the representative example of institutional regionalism in the Black Sea Region, a real dialogue about a new institutional framework is necessary.

Address the protracted conflicts and other outstanding security issues by establishing a high level consultative group in order to assess the issues and search for solutions. The group should eventually suggest ways to provide international guarantees for the implementation of any peace agreements. There is a need for the region’s stakeholders to contribute to the ongoing debate about a new security architecture for Europe, as this discussion has immediate ramifications for the Black Sea which could be described as the shared neighborhood of both the EU and Russia.

Focus on the promotion of the principles of sustainable development as the guiding philosophy of regional cooperation in the Black Sea area. The idea is to seek to restore and preserve a rational and enduring equilibrium between economic development and the integrity of the natural environment in ways that society can understand and accept. Rational responses to the consequences of climate change and the responsible use of natural, human and societal resources are essential components of such a development model, which should be translated into coherent policies at national and regional level. Human and knowledge capital should be considered an integral part of a sustainable development model.

Promote and coordinate regional cooperation schemes at all levels – both top down and bottom up. Any examination of work done on the region shows that numerous schemes, programs and initiatives, whether government or non-governmental, not-for profit, EU-led or with a thematic focus, have been actively promoting regional cooperation for years. However, the need to make this work more visible...
Efforts should be made to encourage cooperation between civil society organizations in Black Sea countries including the conflict regions.

REFERENCES

The Western Balkans and Black Sea region are playing a big role in the pan-European debate on Europe’s future. For the last twenty years we have seen Western leaders make great progress in bringing security and stability to countries of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. However, two regions – the Western Balkans and that of the Black Sea are still not a fully integrated part of a secure and prosperous Europe. Both regions play a significant role due to their geopolitical position, and, both lay at the cross roads between Central Asia and the Middle East. Some countries in both of these regions are already members of NATO and the European Union. However, the destinies of the others are still unclear due to either internal interests, pressure from external actors and/or EU/NATO recent policies.

According to a paper published by the Center for Applied Policy Research, the Balkans and Black Sea region are characterized by a number of common risks and challenges:

- Fragile statehood (autocratic governance; weak democratic institutions; corruption; poor economic performance; inability to maintain territorial integrity);
- Questions of regional identity (Balkans vs. Southeast Europe; littoral Black Sea vs. Wider Black Sea region including Caucasus and Moldova);
- Historical legacy of ethnic-religious conflicts (Bosnia, Kosovo and frozen conflicts – Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Transdniestria);
- The role of external players – EU and NATO enlargement, United States and Russia;
- New global factors that affect both region: a pause in NATO expansion, EU economic crisis, and;
- Energy security – competition between EU and Russia over energy supply from Caspian and Central Asia to Europe; use of energy as a soft power tool by Russia.

This paper gives a short description of cooperation efforts in the Black Sea region with a focus on security dimension.

For many centuries the Black Sea was a sea of contest between Russia and Turkey. However unlike the Baltic Sea, for example, there has never been a common name for the whole region. In the 19th century, the Black Sea was named differently in the languages of each group of peoples living in the region. During the Cold War the Black Sea was not only a natural barrier between East and West, it was also a political and military border between NATO and the Warsaw pact. After the fall of the Berlin Wall twenty years ago, considerable changes took place in the ideological, political, military and economic spheres. Black Sea countries which used
to be divided by the Black Sea became a part of a new international reality.

The role of the United States in region started to be more visible especially after September 11. The enlargement of both NATO and European Union significantly influenced the countries' behavior in their relations with each other and international actors. The rise of prices for energy gave Russia new tools to shape its strategy in the international arena; specifically in Black Sea region which Russia continues to consider its “zone of responsibility”. Moscow attempts to control former Soviet republics and resist the attempts mainly of the United States to bring those states in the Euro-Atlantic security and economic structures.

In a word, the Black sea is a region where we could see many forms of cooperation. However, the potential is not fully exploited. There are many reasons for this ranging from the different approaches to regional security and stability of the 6 littoral states to the historical legacy and difficult process of reform towards democracy and market economy. In addition, the states are faced with a form of cooperation that tends to frustrate the efforts to enhance security cooperation. The same is true in economic cooperation especially in energy field. The Black Sea area is on its way to becoming a region, a recognizable part of Europe as Baltic states, Balkans or Mediterranean.

The Wider Black Sea is a region with several sub-regions. It is more a heterogeneous region. It could even be described as a multifaceted ‘network’. It is comprised of the littoral states (Turkey, Russia, Bulgaria Romania, Ukraine, Georgia) as well as adjacent states such as Greece, Moldova, Azerbaijan and Armenia. All these countries belong to other regions as well – such as Southeast Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia, and Mediterranean. The Wider Black Sea region also illustrates structural heterogeneity due to the diverse links of each country with the EU and other international organizations that bear significant impact on domestic and foreign economic policies such as NATO or the EU.

Before talking about Black Sea region I would like to give several examples of sub-regional cooperation and European integration. In his article “Sub-regional cooperation and the expanding EU”, Svetlozar Andreev\(^2\) correctly notes that – historically – sub-regional cooperation has always been part of the European political landscape. The Benelux (Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg) was the first, truly regional, post-Second World War organization. Its members created a Customs Union already in 1947. Later on, the three Benelux countries were at the heart of the European integration process and became cofounders of the European Coal and Steel Community (1951). They were also among the ‘original six’ who signed the Treaty of Rome (1957) which gave birth to the European Economic Community (EEC). In a similar vein, the Nordic Council has been a long-standing example of an enhanced interstate cooperation in the northern part of Europe. This organization has been active in numerous policy spheres throughout its existence, primarily, it has been responsible for promoting multilateralism among the Scandinavian and other North European countries. During the last 15 years, the Nordic Council has been involved in three important projects: assisting the post-communist transformation of the Baltic states, helping the majority of its members join the EU (in 1995 and 2004) and most recently, in promoting the ‘Northern Dimension’ in an enlarged EU.

A fairly high number of regional and sub-regional cooperation organizations were established following the demise of the communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe. Many of these arrangements were organized as ‘clubs’, based on the exclusionary sub-regional identity of part of the CEE countries. They were dependant on the progress made by individual applicant states towards EU accession, i.e. the Visegrad and the Baltic-3 regional groupings. The same is also true of the Central European Free Trade Area (CEFTA) before it gradually opened-up to other accession countries like Slovenia (1996), Romania (1997), Bulgaria (1999) and Croatia (2003). Part of the sub-regional initiatives in Central and Eastern Europe were deliberately promoted by individual West European countries. This was done, mainly, to facilitate the transition of post-communist countries into democracy, the market economy, as well as to encourage trans-border cooperation and good neighborhood relations. For instance, Italy and Austria launched the Central European Initiative (CEI) during the early 1990s, while, further north, the Cooperation Council of the Baltic States was predominantly sponsored by Germany and the Scandinavian countries. In the Balkans, Greek diplomacy was very active in creating the first broad-based regional organization, the South East European Cooperation Process (SEECP). Commencing in the mid-1980s and revived in 1996, this initiative has explicitly prioritized multilateralism and regional ownership.

The Black Sea lays on a crossroads. The countries part of this region used to belong to different civilizations. Fifteen years ago nobody was talking about cooperation because the region was not in existence. The CIS countries were still struggling trying to restore the broken economic ties. Romania and Bulgaria were busy working on Euro-Atlantic integration. Cooperation – in a broad sense of this
EXPERT OPINION

The German Marshall Fund was very active in promoting a regional approach to Black Sea region. Together with Transitional Democracies, they used high exposure events and publications before three previous NATO Summits: in Istanbul, Riga and Bucharest. With their help – and with support of US Government – a new organization was established, The Black Sea Trust with 20 million dollars to support Black Sea regional cooperation (mostly East to East projects). This Trust is located in Bucharest and is also supported by the Romanian government. This initiative is a replication of successful Balkan Trust for Democracy (BTD), a $30-million fund which has given out millions in grant money toward promoting regional cooperation and reconciliation, civil society development, democracy-building ideas and institutions throughout the Balkans.

The EU is already a Black Sea actor and at the same time the region has also become a natural new Eastern neighborhood. EU aspirations reflect the same objectives of the transitions in Central, Eastern, and South Eastern Europe – to extend the European space of peace, stability and prosperity based on democracy, human rights and rule of law. This vision is an integral part of the European Security Strategy which was adopted already before the EU reached the shores of Black Sea. However the interaction with the Black Sea region is much more challenging for the EU than its recent experience with Central, Eastern, and South Eastern Europe.

Since 2006, the EU has its European Neighborhood Policy (the so-called “ENP plus”) which provides the EU with more leverage on its neighboring countries. Within the “ENP plus” is a new initiative crafted to find a new model of cooperation with the region – Black Sea Synergy. It is named synergy rather than strategy because the EU already has different strategies with individual countries in this region. The use of this term indicates that the EU will try to pull together different inputs, lessons and bilateral initiatives within this new regional framework rather than create a whole new policy.

What are the main obstacles facing this policy? The EU’s new Neighborhood Policy puts together an extremely heterogeneous group of countries and offers them all (roughly) the same deal.

The other obvious stumbling block is Europe’s very awkward partnership with Russia. The EU and Russia speak of their relations as a ‘strategic partnership’ however, in reality, it does not exist. Russia quite clearly does not seem to take EU institutions very seriously and prefers to discuss matters with individual member states. This approach gives Moscow an ability to divide and rule. Moreover, Russia is trying to have separate deals with individual European

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The interests of certain organizations at times differ with other visions of Black Sea region. As a result, they are unequal and differently focused. Community of Democratic Choice (CDC) and Black Sea Forum for Dialogue and Partnership serve as a good example. We shall consider them later in more detail.

c) Strong lobby from private Western organizations.

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countries mostly for energy supply. This further complicates the process for Brussels to come up with a comprehensive strategy supported by all EU members.

The last reason as to why the EU decided to move into the Black Sea region is because of a number of homegrown regional initiatives, the most important being the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) initiative. Due to its structure as a forum for dialogue and competition among its member states, the operational impact of BSEC has been limited. BSEC, which remains a product of a joint Greek-Turkish initiative, has caused other countries around the Black Sea to launch parallel initiatives. Among the most important of these parallel initiatives is the Community of Democratic Choice (CDC), which was launched by Ukraine and Georgia, and the new Organization for Democracy and Economic Development GUAM. The aim of these organizations is to spread democracy and freedom from the Black to Baltic Sea regions. Yet, they have not been successful due to their lack of resources and political will. The problem with these parallel initiatives is that countries involved in them often overlap and promote several organizations in the same regional area.

What models could the European Union use to foster regional cooperation in the Black Sea region?

The EU is not new to launching regional initiatives in its neighborhood. In his article “A Synergy for Black Sea Regional Cooperation” Dr. Fabrizio Tassinari mentions three regional initiatives.

The first EU regional initiative is the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership with the Mediterranean countries in the south (a.k.a. The Barcelona Process). It has had an enormous advantage of sponsoring dialogue and confidence around the region. The EU has been successful in promoting social and cultural initiatives to link the northern and southern regions of the Mediterranean. It has also tried to provide a holistic approach to regional security interdependence. However, these strengths have also been a liability, as they have hampered the role of the EU on the political and security side. The policy has been ineffective because the geographical area it works in is heterogeneous and substantial political consensus has been rarely forthcoming. This regional context is, in some respects, comparable to the one in the Black Sea region, with a huge, heterogeneous area where some bilateral relations remain tense and others are ‘frozen’ by ongoing conflicts.

The second model which has been more successful than the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership is the Stability Pact for South-East Europe. The success of the Stability Pact is due to its ability to coordinate international actors and donors in the Western Balkans. It has had the advantage of sending a very strong signal to the region and to Europe that it cares about the Balkans, and, that it was going to pull together all of its resources and efforts to make it succeed.

The third model is the Northern Dimension Initiative. This model is important for two reasons. The first reason is that the initiative is the result of a bottom-up process. There has been a plethora of regional initiatives in the Baltic Sea area before the EU got involved. Therefore, when the EU launched the Northern Dimension it could complement what was already going on there. The other major asset of this initiative is that it includes Russia. This perhaps constitutes the only reason for keeping the Northern Dimension alive since the other members are now members of the EU and NATO.

In May 2009, the European Commission launched a new initiative in Black Sea Region titled “Eastern Partnership” (EaP). It offers both bilateral and multilateral measures for enhanced cooperation and it goes beyond the ENP with the view to putting at least some of the partners on the path to EU membership. This, by itself, is the strongest incentive given to the states. It has increased funding. Indeed, there is a substantial increase from €450 million in 2008 to €785 million in 2013 that amounts to a supplementary envelope of €350 million in addition to the planned resources for 2010-2013.

EaP main initiatives are: i) Integrated Border Management Program; Small and Medium sized Enterprise Facilities; iii) Regional electricity markets and energy efficiency; iv) Southern energy corridor; v) Prevention of, preparedness for, and response to natural and man-made disasters.

Regional cooperation can be fostered by initiatives of the member countries of any given region or might be inspired by external actors such as NATO and EU. At times, countries of the Black Sea put themselves in different regional dimensions: Eastern Europe, Caucasus, South Eastern Europe, Caspian Region and CIS. They feel different and keep their different approaches. Even if they aspire to join the transatlantic framework in many occasions they still regard regionalism only as a way to serve the national interests.

So what is “regional strategic cooperation” and does it exist in Black Sea region?

A regional security partnership is a regional security arrangement that originates from inter-governmental consensus to cooperate on dealing with security threats and the enhancement of regional stability and peace through the use of various types of instruments including formal security treaties, international organizations, joint action agreements, trade and other economic agreements, multi-

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lateral dialogue processes, peace and stability pacts including confidence-building measures, measures of preventive diplomacy, and measures dealing with the domestic environment. Briefly, the security arrangement of the region is an arrangement of co-management, and all the countries contribute as partners within a composite framework of institutions and practices. As long as a security partnership develops, the security cultures and policies of the countries of the region will come closer to one another, and a security community can emerge. Does that apply for Russia and Georgia or Armenia and Azerbaijan, or Moldova and Romania? Probably, it does not. That proves that the region doesn’t have enough regional strength.

One of the reasons for that is that many Black Sea countries use regional cooperation (mostly) as a jumping board to premium clubs NATO and EU. However, now that NATO and the EU took a “time out”, the Black Sea countries should be more practical in sense of regional approach.

The so-called frozen conflicts in the Black Sea (Transdnistria in Moldova, Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia and Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan) constitute another serious obstacle in the path to stronger cooperation. Russia plays a decisive role in finding peaceful solutions to these conflicts. However, the August 2008 war in Georgia clearly illustrates that military action still represents the quickest way.

Despite negative trends, there are many positive examples of regional organizations. One of the most successful is Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC). It was established by and initiative of Turkey and Greece in 1992. It is supposed to be a model of multilateral political and economic initiative aimed at fostering interaction and harmony among the Member States, as well as to ensure peace, stability and prosperity encouraging friendly and good-neighborly relations in the Black Sea region. This is the only full-fledged organization that includes all littoral countries including Russia. This is the only full-fledged organization that includes all littoral countries including Russian Federation. However this membership has not been restricted to countries which have access to the Black Sea: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Greece, Moldova, and Serbia do not have a coastline on the Black Sea. BSEC has its financial institution. The Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB) was formed in 1997 to support economic development and regional cooperation by providing trade and project financing, guarantees, and equity for development projects supporting both public and private enterprises in its member countries. Objectives of the bank include: promoting regional trade links, cross country projects, foreign direct investment, and, supporting activities that contribute to sustainable development, with an emphasis on the generation of employment in the member countries, ensuring that each operation is economically and financially sound and contributes to the development of a market orientation.

Another example of regional cooperation is Black Sea Naval Co-operation Task Group (BLACKSEAFOR). It was created in early 2001 under the leadership of Turkey with the participation of all other Black Sea littoral states.

The original purpose of BLACKSEAFOR was to promote security and stability in the Black Sea maritime area and beyond, strengthen friendship and good neighborly relations among the regional States, and increase interoperability among those states’ naval forces. Soft security efforts and military activities, in addition to political dialogue, are being pursued in this framework. Search and rescue operations, environmental protection, and mine-clearing were among the initial activities of BLACKSEAFOR. After the terrorist attacks in the USA on 11 September, 2001, BLACKSEAFOR’s area of responsibility was expanded to include the fight against terrorism. Littoral countries are still working on BLACKSEAFOR’s transformation process, in order to better adapt the force to the new security environment.

There are some examples of regional cooperation which were initiated and supported by the United States. Noteworthy is the fact that the interest of the United States in the Black Sea actually goes back a very long way. One of the founders of the United States Navy, John Paul Jones, served on the Black Sea as an admiral in the fleet of the Russian Empress Catherine the Great. This was perhaps the first example of naval cooperation between a Black Sea nation (in this case Russia) and the United States. It’s an early illustration of how the US and Russian histories and interests have been connected.

One of the initiatives supported by US State Department is Southeast European Cooperative Initiative for Combating Trans-border Crime (SECI Center). It is a unique operational organization which facilitates the rapid exchange of information between law enforcement agencies from different countries regarding trans-border criminal cases. The worlds facilitates the rapid exchange of information are in bold and that is exactly what we try to achieve here. The SECI Center’s network is composed of the Liaison Officers of Police and Customs Authorities from the member countries, supported by twelve National Focal Points established in each member state. The NFP representatives stay in permanent contact with the liaison officers in the headquarters and keep close relationships with the police and customs authority in the host country. Unfortunately not all Black Sea countries participate in this organization –
Among them Russia and Ukraine. That leaves a large part of Black sea coastal line without control.

Another organization also provides information about illegal activities in the Black Sea – Black Sea Border Coordination and Information Center (BSBCIC). It was established in 2003 and is based in Bourgas, Bulgaria. Its main mission is to develop cooperation and interaction between the border/coast guards of the Black Sea countries for countering trans-border criminality and terrorism as a guaranty for security and stability development in the Black Sea region. For some reason it’s not linked to SECI Center despite the fact that they have the common goal in providing border security. Also both organizations don’t focus on terrorism or non-proliferation in the region.

Another US supported initiative is Black Sea Strategy of Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA). In the initial stage it foresees a series of conferences in the region to bring together representatives from Black Sea counties who work on non-proliferation issues. The goal of the workshops is to promote discussion among regional partners regarding the need to improve information exchange, and ways to bring about improvements in the process of threat assessment.

There is another program that is funded by the US Department of Defense. It is called Black Sea Civil Military Emergency Preparedness program. The purpose of this program is to promote inter-ministerial and international cooperation in mitigation and emergency planning in the Black Sea littoral nations.

The major problem is that the US Government doesn’t have a comprehensive policy toward the region – even if some of its agencies try to have a regional approach. Another drawback of those US-led initiatives is that Russia views them as anti-Russian and does not participate in any of their activities. One example serves as a good illustration. In 2006, when the Romanian Government launched The Black Sea Forum for Partnership and Cooperation, Russia refused to participate. Only the Russian Ambassador attended the opening session.

In the conclusion let us highlight some of the major points that characterize the current situation with the cooperation in the Black Sea region.

At present, regional cooperation and synergies in the Black Sea region clearly lack effective leadership which is necessary to bridge the obvious lack of converging interests of the countries, a stronger institutionalized coordination mechanism would be helpful. A strong commitment by the EU and its member countries, in particular EU Black Sea states, accompanied by visible regional projects and programs is essential. Considering Russia’s undeniable role as a regional power (albeit lacking a regional strategy of its own), and the recent reinvigoration of Turkey’s regional role, proper engagement of both countries is equally essential.

The complementarities, overlap and division of labor among the key formats for regional cooperation – EaP, BSS, Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), etc. – require further attention, clarification and elaboration. The EU and other organizations should focus on flagship projects with regional ownership, and a bottom-up approach responsive to the region’s shared objectives. This would increase the potential for synergy, rather than a top-down grand strategy of overly ambitious agenda’s that eventually fails to produce the much-needed tangible results for the Black Sea countries. Sectoral partnerships around areas such as transport, energy, and environment seem to be most promising.

As external actors are eventually caught by the existing conflicts in the region, conflict resolution should be integrated into every regional approach. While new approaches to some of the conflicts experienced over the last year are quickly caught up by realities, negligence cannot be afforded either. In this context, Russia’s role as a “hybrid actor” poses particular challenges.

In closing, it is necessary to note that although a plethora of initiatives and programs have been created, most do not include all of the regional states. This is troubling as many issues such as environmental security, pandemics, transport, migration and organized crime can only be dealt successfully in an inclusive regional format. The lessons of the cooperation efforts especially in the area of security, successful stories as well as failed attempts could be useful for Southeast Europe and vice versa in their pursuit of peace, security, stability, democratization and economic prosperity. Time and good governance are necessary for the Black Sea region to become a regional cooperation success story. Unfortunately, and perhaps only for the time being, the Black Sea region remains a region in the making.

**SOURCES**

Security Challenges in the Wider Black Sea Area

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When we talk in Romania, at least at the military level, about the Black Sea area we call it Wider Black Sea Area or Wider Black Sea Region. We talk not only about the Black Sea itself and the littoral states, the Caucasus states, the Caspian Sea and the littoral states, we tend to integrate this geographical area in a wider area: from Central Asia to the Balkans, from Moscow to the Middle East because they are all interconnected. You cannot separate these areas. What happens in Afghanistan, for example, affects all the areas, including Romania, even further to the West. When we analyze this area and security challenges, we notice that there is no threat, risk or vulnerability that is known or present in this area, or that passes across this area. Therefore, many of those risks, threats and vulnerabilities are connected and, as a consequence, they are important from a military perspective.

The Wider Black Sea Area can be considered at least as one of the key regions for the stability and security of the Eurasian region in the beginning of the 21st century. From this point of view, the assessment of security developments in the area cannot be accomplished without a proper understanding of the international security trends.

First of all, it is commonly agreed that the 21st century is marked by a high level of strategic fluidity and by the reconfiguration of the balance of power within the international system, trends that are both uncertain and discontinuous.

At the same time, the idea that we are witnessing the movement of the world geopolitical center to the East is more and more accepted. This fact is an impulse to move towards a multi-polar (or non-polar) system where there are several great powers and numerous regional centers of power.

According to some experts, even at the European level, we could face the emergence of a multi-polar power structure in the area, where the most important roles are going to be granted to three actors: the European Union, Russia and Turkey.

Historically, by connecting Europe to Central Asia and Middle East, the Black Sea represented both a convergence and a controversy region of the great powers interests. Nowadays, the Wider Black Sea Area (“a region between regions”) is connected
to a broader area, including the Balkans, Caucasus – Caspian Sea, Central Asia and the Middle East.

Today, the region is of a strategic interest for a number of regional and global actors (especially the EU, NATO, USA and Russia), considering the following characteristics:

• it is a major transit area for the main transport routes of energy resources from Central Asia and Caspian Sea to Europe;
• it is characterized by political and cultural heterogeneity, by contradictions and conflicts and by the involvement of some international institutions and security mechanisms managed by OSCE, EU, NATO and CIS;
• some former Soviet states are targeted by the European Neighborhood Policy and NATO partnerships; other states still have unclear status;
• the high economic potential of the region triggers the great powers interests in the security of the area, mainly to counter the terrorism and organized crime and limit the expansion of Islamic fundamentalism;
• moreover, from the military point of view, the region can be a platform for surveillance and early warning in order to protect the strategic military interests of both regional and Western powers.

Today, it can be asserted that the security situation of the area is influenced by the following policies of the main actors involved in this region:

• the policy of resetting the relations with Russia, promoted by USA, NATO (including the invitation addressed to Russia to collaborate with NATO in missile defense system project) and the EU;
• the development of some strategic bilateral partnerships between the main EU states and Russia;
• developing projects within the CIS (creating the Customs Union, the single economic space) and CSTO (the possibility to conduct missions and against an internal threat);
• Moscow’s opposition to any NATO or EU’s initiative that does not include Russia;
• re-tightening the relations between some countries in the region and Russia;
• the strong desire of some countries in the area to be perceived as regional powers.

At the same time, we can make some assertions about the importance WBSA has to the states with interests in the region. For example, the US has geopolitical and energy interests, but some experts estimate that the current Administration grants less importance to the region compared to the former one; the EU wants to ensure the access of Member States to energy resources (especially natural gas and oil), secure the borders, solve frozen conflicts and design a stable and prosperous neighborhood. Those interests were specifically expressed through initiatives such as the European Neighborhood Policy, Black Sea Synergy (2007) and the Eastern Partnership (2009); the EU littoral states of the Black Sea try to increase EU’s role in the region, through the Common Security and Defense Policy, since there is no well defined NATO policy for the area; the region is vital for Russia’s geopolitical revive; Moscow considers the region as "its backyard" and tries to promote its interests through hard and soft means, in its attempt to limit other actors’ presence in the region; Turkey is an actor more and more important in the regional power equation, promoting "zero conflicts with the neighbors" and playing a positive and dynamic role.

The dynamics of the area indicates that there are some challenges this region faces. The heterogeneity of the region and of its states security agreements, as a result of the membership to different organizations (OSCE, EU, NATO, CIS, CSTO) is the first challenge. The second one refers to the "hard-security" type problems that are still a fact, although they have been considered as "frozen" for a decade, fact emphasized by the 2008 conflict in the Caucasus;

Furthermore, the insurance of energy security, which means the diversification hydrocarbons’ sources and development of the main oil and gas transport routes from Central Asia to Europe (The Southern Corridor1) becomes a test both for the relations between the producers (Russia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan), transit states (Russia, Georgia, Turkey, Ukraine) and consumers (EU states), as well as for the relations between the actors of each of these groups. Also, the energy security issue represents a test for EU-Russia cooperation in the energy field.

The persistency of the regional tensions feeds the lack of trust among the states and favors the development of asymmetric risks and threats.
The failure to materialize the regional co-operation, as a result of a lack of commitment of some states, is unproductive for all the entities involved. The existence of some fragile states, in terms of identity and institutions, can result in the development of asymmetric risks; a characteristic of asymmetric threats within the region is an ever closer connection between terrorism, organized crime and the Islamic radicalism.

Some developments in the last years can lead to a possible regional arms race; such a tendency might be fed by the modernization program of the Black Sea Russian Fleet (while prolonging dislocation of the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol) and by increasing the defense budgets of some states in the area; the development of Russia’s partnerships with some NATO member states (the agreement with France regarding helicopter carriers) might considerably influence the security balance in Russia’s favor in the Black Sea.

The deployment of a US/NATO missile defense system in the region could have a positive role. It has already been accepted that the threat of the ballistic missiles carrying WMD can become a real threat to the NATO members in the area.

Despite the fact that until 2008, the region had one of the highest economic growth rates in the world, there are big economic development gaps between and within the states of this region.

As for frozen conflicts, we can divide them in two parts: the Transnistrian conflict and the Caucasian conflicts.

The self-proclaimed Republic of Transnistria remains an important leverage used by Moscow to maintain the Russian troops in the region and promote its interests in the area. The Russian forces deployed in Transnistria (approximately 1,400) have a high readiness. The presence of these troops favors the military consolidation of a separatist regime and the preservation of the status-quo of the separatist republic.

On the other hand, we noticed the tendency of including the Transnistrian issue on the priority list of some important EU states (Germany put this topic on the EU-Russia agenda).

As for the Caucasian conflicts, it is clear that Russia has materialized its strategic option for South Caucasus by maintaining and consolidating the control over South Ossetia and Abkhazia, following the 2008 conflict. Both by its military presence and by developing the infrastructure and the strategically important assets, Moscow seems to promote a well known strategy meant to keep these conflicts unsettled.

To make the matter worse, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is still far from being solved. It is obvious that a more coherent involvement of NATO, EU and USA for the settlement of these conflicts is needed.

Finally, some conclusions: the region might be perceived as a regional security issue. The geographic factor might persuade the states in the region into making common efforts as to solve many of the problems that affect their security and economic welfare. As compared to the Western states, the energy security is much more important for the states in the area, as long as it is a source of income and there is no other alternative source. Russia has the biggest military potential in the area, having forces deployed on the territory of other states in the region. By its military presence, Moscow can easily influence the security in the area. In the future, the EU policy in the area will be mostly influenced by the relations the Union will have with the most important actors in the region: Russia and Turkey. The increased involvement of NATO and the EU should lead to the improvement of the co-operation between the littoral states that are members of the two organizations. Cooperation between NATO and the EU also involves an increasing role of the EU in energy security and the improvement of the strategic partnership between NATO and the EU. Definitely a more significant involvement of US is needed. As a general conclusion, the security issue of the area is a very complex and dynamic one and it affects both regional states and Western countries. Of course, it asks for Western involvement as well.

**SOURCES**

1. The Southern Corridor includes: the Nabucco gas pipeline, ITGI (Turkey-Greece-Italy gas pipeline composed of TURKEY-GREECE Interconnector and POSEIDON gas pipeline between GREECE and ITALY), Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) and White Stream 1).
Thoughts on the Black Sea

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The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect the view of the US Army, Defense Department or the Government

Since the fall of the Soviet Union the Black Sea and its immediate neighborhood have remained an area of constant and intense geopolitical contention. These conflicts have assumed both military and non-military forms and are generally ongoing and unresolved. At the same time these conflicts draw much of their staying power from diverse and deep-rooted, security challenges that continue to defy both solution and often understanding. Their roots are in fact deeply tangled. They are generally the product of imperial legacies, institutional deficits, including deficits in local democratization processes, unresolved ethno-religious tensions, poor control over instruments of force, great power rivalries, etc.

Moreover, these conflicts have assumed highly diverse forms, power grabs by Russian chauvinists aiming to hold power and wealth in Moldova, ethno-political conflict in the South Caucasus which was then overlaid by great power rivalry, religious conflict, insurgency, and counterinsurgency, in the North Caucasus, energy boycotts and blockades in Russo-Ukrainian relations, Russia’s employment of the energy weapon in the Balkans and generally throughout Central and Eastern Europe, the recent signs of gunboat diplomacy in Cyprus, and now the threat of preemptive missile and even nuclear strikes in the Balkan and Black Sea area against US/NATO missile defenses. Nevertheless, despite the diversity of conflict forms that occur in this zone the common trait that many of these forms of conflict share is that they are asymmetrical to the type of war in which the U.S. prevails and congruent with the forms of conflict we see in the Middle East, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. In other words the Black Sea neighborhood could serve as a kind of laboratory for the study of the so called “new wars” which are in fact often a reprise of conflicts or modes of assertion of power going back centuries if not even to antiquity.

One reason for our conceptual failures in dealing with these conflicts is the fact, as a generation of scholarship has made clear, that most, if not all, definitions of this region, are political ones conceived of for utilitarian or even explicitly political purposes rather than absolute or objective definitions. Therefore those definitions are widely believed to represent political or other projects that serve someone or some government’s a priori interests and cannot serve as objective points of reference or have any particular legitimacy or privilege. Rather, in Foucauldian perspective, these efforts to delineate, demarcate, and categorize the area around the Black Sea are intrinsically or intrinsically partake of a power project.

Because the assertion of one or more definition of the region implicitly (and perhaps sometimes
explicitly) conceals a particular political objective any one definition immediately encounters a counter definition that has an equal if opposing political project and this opposition of concepts stymies the search for solutions. If parties to conflicts cannot agree on the definition of the conflict or of the region in question then failure to agree on the means of resolving the issue or issues under dispute is highly likely. But it is equally arguable that no solutions have occurred because for the West the effort to find a solution to many of these problems is often too difficult whereas for Russia blocking solutions is an all-important element of its own asymmetrical strategy. This is, of course, another way of saying that East-West rivalry has come to overlay and thus aggravate many, if not all of these issues. Certainly we saw this pattern in regard to Georgia's ethno-political conflicts since 1992 with Abkhazia and South Ossetia and it continues until today. Indeed, as long as the West tends to shy away from the heavy lifting necessary to deal with security challenges around the Black Sea Russia's asymmetric and multi-dimensional operations or strategy to achieve its objectives will be largely unchallenged and the region's problems will continue to fester.

In order to come to terms with the region's complexities we therefore must confront the conceptual issues of defining both the region and Moscow's "asymmetrical strategy" among other issues head on. When we invoke the concept of the Black Sea littoral (or littoral for short) we mean literally those countries that directly abut the Black Sea, Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, Turkey, Bulgaria, and Romania, confining the discussion to an objective topography or cartography. However, an examination of the vital issues that comprise the true agenda or agendas of security in this region must also comprise Armenia, Azerbaijan, Moldova, Cyprus and Greece. Accordingly we will frequently refer to the neighborhood rather than to the littoral to include those countries and the issues they bring into regional agendas.

Moreover, this paper focuses on the neighborhood rather than the littoral because the littoral's agendas are all included in the neighborhood's agendas. In other words, we cannot confine the security agenda to the littoral because many of the problems there originate in the neighborhood and spread into the littoral or vice versa. Arguably in fact there is no such thing as a Black Sea region other than in strictly cartographic or purely colloquial senses. Certainly the members of the littoral states do not believe that they are part of any such unified region. Rather this area's intrinsic interest or even fascination is that it lies at the juncture or intersection of three overlapping and acknowledged regions, Europe, the former Soviet Union, and the Middle East. Consequently security challenges along with people, goods, and ideas migrate from region to region and interpenetrate with each other leading to a series of innately complex and difficult challenges to security and an absence of effective regional mechanisms for security cooperation. Therefore we cannot confront these security challenges either conceptually or practically by imposing an arbitrary inevitably politicized definition of the region.

Four immediate sets or categories of issues should grab our attention. In no particular order these are issues of energy security and transit from Central Asia, the Caspian Sea, Russia, the Middle East and North Africa to Europe, e.g. Ukraine, Turkey, Greece, and the Balkans in general; domestic governance issues, albeit of widely varying nature, from Cyprus and Greece to Azerbaijan and including all the littoral states who all suffer in one way or another and to varying degrees from severe deficits of institutional capacity as well as democratic deficits; conflict resolution, including Cyprus, Moldova, and the conflicts in both the North and South Caucasus; and lastly great power rivalry between Russia on the one hand and the US, NATO,

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*HARVARD BLACK SEA SECURITY PROGRAM-2011*
and the EU on the other with members of the neighborhood often being the object of that rivalry. Within that last framework of great power rivalry we would also include Turkey who clearly is aiming “for a place in the sun” particularly as regards its immediate neighborhood in the Balkans, Caucasus, Eastern Mediterranean, and especially the Middle East. And in Russia’s case we can arguably discern a comprehensive asymmetric strategy utilizing energy, armed force and all the other instruments available to Moscow to achieve the following objectives:

- Preserving the ruling system of Russia on the only basis that it can comprehend, namely a neo-imperial domination of its neighbors in the CIS and the export of corruption, its main export (according to Mikhail Khodorkovskii), to them.
- Obtaining a lasting position of energy domination and of economic-political leverage in European economies with the extent of that leverage and domination varying from country to country.
- Blocking the expansion of NATO, EU, and the values they incarnate to the CIS and thus preserving not only a sphere of influence but also its own neo-Tsarist political and economic system throughout Russia and spreading it to the CIS.
- Frustrating the integration of Europe around democratic values.
- Corrupting European public institutions.

This internal hollowing out of European security structures is directly tied to the leverage provided by the fourfold linkage of Russian energy firms who seek to obtain upstream and downstream properties in Europe rather than develop Russia’s infrastructure, organized crime, the intelligence services, and the government. European diplomats and intelligence officers have acknowledged in private that these Russian goals remain operative and even call Russia a Mafia state based on the pervasive corruption that links the government, security services, energy and other businesses, and organized crime though their governments remain afraid to say this in public. In Ukraine and throughout all of Eastern Europe, including the Black Sea neighborhood it is obvious that Russia uses its energy instrument and the wealth it accrues thereby in tandem with its organized crime, intelligence services, businesses, and diplomats to subvert European politicians, parties, businesses, and political institutions to gain enduring points of leverage within their domestic policy processes. And the objective is simple: the subversion of European public institutions. Indeed, the evidence to support this argument is overwhelming.

In a recent article Moises Naim (not unjustly either) openly called Bulgaria, Ukraine, and Russia Mafia states and numerous diplomats have done so as Wikileaks and the author’s personal experience confirm. This criminalization of these states certainly affects not only their domestic governance but also their mutual relationships. Moreover, this criminalization also played and still plays some role in the still unresolved Russo-Georgian crises. However one understands Naim’s categorization of these states, this term certainly points to deeply rooted structural pathologies of domestic governance in all of these states whose importance transcends their boundaries.

Indeed, if we were to look at the uses of the energy instrument and the revenues that have accrued to Russia thereby with respect to all four categories of issue it soon becomes clear that for Moscow energy is like a Swiss army knife that cuts in many directions at the same time. Moreover, it also arguably is the key instrument in what might be called an asymmetric strategy to fracture European unity and integration, obstruct the expansion of the West to the CIS, corrupt European democracies and public institutions, and undo the post-1989 geopolitical status quo, including the full sovereignty in real (not nominal) terms of the former Soviet republics and Warsaw Pact states.

Concurrently, throughout the neighborhood domestic failures in governance have long been known to contribute not just to criminalization of the state but also to the entrenchment of unresolved conflicts and to the incitements of conflicts growing out of the unresolved wars in the Caucasus. Similarly the failure to overcome corruption and in Russia’s case the Transcaucasus’ case democratize civilian control over the instruments of armed forces has made the North and South Caucasus theaters of conflicts that are either hot and long-term structural crises or so called frozen conflicts that nevertheless remain unresolved and could become quite hot quite quickly. In many ways they stay unresolved because of the opportunities for rents that this state of irresolution offers to men who can use force to acquire those riches. In Russia’s case (if not elsewhere) the demilitarization of the state and the transformation to democratic civil-military relations are fundamental aspects of any process of building democratic states.
and without such actions such projects remain incomplete while regional security is further undermined. And, of course, those conflicts are critical issues in the great and middle power rivalry for influence throughout the Black Sea neighborhood.

Because of this interpenetration of each category of problem within the other ones no analysis of the diverse security challenges throughout the neighborhood can be truly sustainable if it does not constantly invoke the “intermestic” or “glocal” (global-local) nature of these problems. This factor also requires us to transcend the littoral to the neighborhood level in our analyses. Energy issues and conflict resolution cannot be understood without bringing in both Azerbaijan and Armenia and more recently Cyprus. Greece too cannot be left out of that discussion because of the key role it plays as a transit point for both Russian and Western-inspired energy programs. At the same time Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, and even Cyprus and Turkey now figure, albeit in varying ways, in what might be called the general crisis of the European integration process.12

Similarly, insofar as both Moscow and Ankara see themselves as major energy powers (the latter as hub the former as producer and supplier) and energy is the fundamental foreign policy instrument of Russian foreign policy, we cannot leave both the Caucasus countries and the Eastern Mediterranean countries of Greece and Cyprus (the recent source of a huge energy find that is already a source of regional contestation) out of that equation. Therefore, no analysis of the neighborhood or regional security agenda or the agenda of major players can overlook the crises of domestic governance in many of these states. And those manifestations of democratic deficit also include, as noted above, civil-military relations. At the same time no effort at comprehensive analysis of the neighborhood as well as the littoral without taking into account the multi-dimensional nature of ongoing security processes and challenges.

Thus this region is characterized by multiple and mutually reinforcing, unresolved, deeply entrenched, political, economic, and military conflicts and cleavages even as they cut across each other and preclude advances either to good governance or to genuinely functioning regional security structures and a true security community. If one overlays (i.e. conceptually speaking) the rivalry between East and West onto this picture the resulting complexity under-scores the difficulty in making progress towards either comprehending the reign in some kind of holistic fashion or to actually devising a program of action capable of achieving genuine amelioration of its problems not to mention lasting progress. And that overlay itself, as we mentioned, greatly complicates all the issues in the neighborhood making their resolution even more difficult.

Moreover, this interstate rivalry (for it is not only Russia and the US and the European security structures who are contending here but also each state is struggling to pursue its own national interest) complicates the existing situation in at least two ways, first that both the Russian and Western projects aim at reshaping domestic politics in targeted countries and second, because this competition occurs within an overarching revolution in international affairs that has occurred since 1990 and shows no sign of stopping anytime soon. And this rivalry is not just a contest for geopolitical leverage.

Tessmur Basilia, Special Assistant to former Georgian President Edvard Shevarnadze for economic issues, wrote that in many CIS countries, e.g. Georgia and Ukraine, “The acute issue of choosing between alignment with Russia and the West is associated with the choice between two models of social development.”13 Similarly Sabine Fischer recently wrote that, Ukraine’s foreign policy orientation does not only involve a choice between different partners for political and economic cooperation. It is a strategic decision between two models of development, and as such essentially a decision on the identity and future of the country. It forms part of Ukraine’s state and nation-building processes, and its outcome will have a decisive impact on the future of the region, and Europe in general.14

Russian analysts like Dmitry Furman also have acknowledged that, “The Russia-West struggle in the CIS is a struggle between two irreconcilable systems.” Furman even conceded the link to the old regime, saying, “Managed democracies are actually a soft variant of the Soviet system.”

Accordingly it seems clear that Russia is a key player if not the key player here. Consequently its strategies, or alternatively its energy and defense strategies, are critical to grasping the current reality of the neighborhood in many of its multiple dimensions and its prospects for future development.15 As we have argued, there are distinct lines between its domestic governance and its
overall national security policy, not least in this neighborhood. The failure to impose democratic controls and transparency on civil-military relations, already under Boris Yeltsin led the armed forces to act somewhat unilaterally in effectively partitioning Moldova and Georgia in 1992-93 and is a major contributory factor to the exacerbation of the extremely violent insurgency in the North Caucasus. At the same time we have already assessed the objectives of its overall energy strategy as they apply to the CIS and Balkan states in the neighborhood. More recently as part of its campaign against US/NATO missile defenses in Eastern Europe generally and Romania and Turkey in particular Moscow has threatened not only nuclear deployments and new nuclear weapons but now even a preemptive strike against those installations.

Despite the abundant literature on both energy pipelines and missile defenses, generally one cannot find in them an assessment of Russia’s strategy and any one component of its policy is almost always analytically segregated from any consideration of other instruments or regions. Energy issues are generally devoted to a consideration of pipeline routes, mainly the competition between South Stream and Nabucco or alternatives to the latter, not to the strategic or geopolitical relationships and domestic governance ramifications of those issues. Neither is there any systematic analysis of Russian military strategy globally let alone in this neighborhood or belief that Russia has one. Nor is there any truly systematic analytical effort, rather than sensational or popular literature that attempts to trace how Moscow is either inciting or exploiting “democratic deficits” or governance failures in neighboring countries or its own strategic ends (often there is no analysis of what those ends even are). These lacunae in our studies severely hobble our efforts to understand what Moscow is doing, especially as it has had a remarkably consistent set of players directing policy for 12 years now.

Therefore we need systematic analyses of what can be called Moscow’s asymmetrical strategy in this neighborhood, particularly its European zone, Bulgaria, Romania, Greece, Cyprus, Moldova, and Ukraine to present an analysis of this multi-dimensional strategy. There is, no doubt that this strategy employs what the US Army calls the DIME of the instruments of strategy, i.e. diplomatic, informational, military, and economic instruments. But few have bothered to view those instruments as an ensemble and/or think seriously about the goals of this strategy in a systematic and comprehensive way. This assessment would integrate energy strategy with military strategy, e.g. missile defense, the use of the armed forces to threaten states as in Moldova, and the implications of the democratic deficits in civil-military relations for this entire neighborhood.

None of this means that if Russia were to reverse its prior policies that all the security issues in and around the Black Sea would be resolved. That would be far from the truth. But as long as perhaps the strongest actor in the neighborhood is resolutely convinced that it must thwart European integration, the spread of democracy, and the acknowledgement of the genuine sovereignty and integrity of all the states that emerged in the wake of the revolutions of 1989, including those in Eastern Europe that were formally members of the Warsaw pact, then it will be difficult, if not impossible, to bring the blessings of security, prosperity, and democracy to the nations and people who reside in the neighborhood. Russia, twenty years after the fall of Communism, still has nothing to offer its neighbors and its people other than obstruction, corruption, and violence. While these forces can block constructive progress for a time, especially when the West is torn by weakness and confusion, they cannot bring anything positive to the table. As we have observed above the Black Sea neighborhood has served as a kind of laboratory for many of the security challenges of the day. And if this obstruction, violence, and corruption continue unabated that laboratory may yet become the site for still new and greater explosions as the blockage of positive energies and forces implode on the local population and explodes outward to create major new challenges to international security.

SOURCES

8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
15. Dmitri Furman, "A Silent Cold War,” Russia in Global Affairs, IV, no. 2, April-June, 2006, p. 72
16. Ibid, p. 73
When considering the Black Sea Region (BSR) and energy issues, the most important thing is not to separate the BSR from the Caspian Basin, as they are a single geo-economic and strategic entity directly linked to Europe. As a consequence, the territory stretching from Central Asia to Germany, from Turkmenistan to the Baltic Sea can be seen as a central pillar. In terms of energy supplies, the BSR together with the Caspian Basin are a hub for this area. This region plays a vital part in Europe’s energy security, as it is responsible for reducing the continent’s dependence on the Russia’s energy supplies, which the latter tends to use for political purposes. Before focusing on the region itself, we should first review the global background that influenced the energy policy of this region.

The global background impacts this region in terms of supply and demand for hydrocarbon energy sources. There is an assumption in the energy business that planning investments for the development of energy transportation in the Caspian Basin and the Black Sea region depends on the dynamics of demand and supply worldwide and in Europe. This assumption which, based on commercial considerations, links energy supplies from the Caspian Basin to the demand-supply dynamics in the West, is mainly focused on commercial rather than on strategic considerations. This has led to a great deal of confusion, particularly due to the impossibility to adequately forecast demands for oil and, in particular, gas. Future demands and demand projections regarding gas, as well as oil, depend on many unpredictable factors, which cannot become a coherent basis for long-term investment decisions.

For instance, before the economic crisis hit in 2008, the projections for future oil and gas demands depended on a small set of variables: the extent of industrial relocation for West European countries to countries outside Europe; the success/failure of biofuels and renewables, and the dynamics of oil prices, which could impact demand either way. By impacting demand for oil, they also impact demand for gas. Gas price by pipelines is pegged to the oil price; a small number of variables that were difficult to forecast in the first place. But, since 2008, the number of these variables has rapidly increased. First, in 2008 the economic crisis hit. No one could predict when Europe would recover from the crisis and how long the recovery would last. Second, in 2008-09 the shale gas revolution in the United States (which resulted in a global energy boom) redirected LNG from Qatar to Europe. Nobody could have predicted that. Third, it was the failure of biofuels in the US. Fourth, the 2011 nuclear accident in Japan led to an irrational overreaction in Europe. Germany’s reaction was close to mass hysteria. Should its nuclear power plants get approval to be closed, gas demand will massively rise. The events in Libya, which no one could have predicted, have suddenly jeopardized oil and gas supplies to France, Italy and Spain. This is the wide range of unpredictable variables influencing oil and gas prices. It is impossible to correlate all these factors as to make decisions on transportation of oil and gas from the Caspian Basin via the Black Sea Region to Europe.
What conclusions does the EU draw from this? The European Commission (EC), in charge with developing oil and gas transportation from the Caspian Basin to Europe, is one of the few entities to have drawn the correct conclusion: as a result of the unpredictability of all these factors, forecasting future oil and gas demand as a basis for investment decisions cannot be accurate. Thus, decisions have to be based on strategic considerations. Irrespective of all the speculations about future demand and future oil and gas prices, the EC is going ahead – without hesitation – with the Southern Gas Corridor project. The EC took this decision in November 2008, as a somewhat belated reaction to the January 2006 Ukraine-Russia gas crisis. The quality of the 2006-related decision was brilliantly confirmed by the second Ukraine-Russia gas crisis, in January 2009. Now we are at the stage where the EC is planning the Southern Corridor for gas to Europe.

Nabucco is the mainstay of the planned Southern Corridor for gas to Europe. The other two projects within the same concept are TAP (Trans-Adriatic Pipeline) and ITGI (Turkey-Greece-Italy Interconnector). The EU is planning a total value of 60-80 billion cubic meter/year (Bcm/a) for this corridor. The main source of supply is Turkmenistan, the country with the biggest gas reserves. There has recently been an, I would say, almost revolutionary development in Turkmenistan regarding the Southern Corridor. In July 2010, for the first time in public, President Gurbanguly Berdimukhammedov directly linked Turkmenistan with Nabucco. He declared Turkmenistan was ready to supply 30 Bcm/a of gas to Nabucco. Never before has Turkmenistan made such a statement. There were a number of reasons for this. One reason was the fear of Russian retaliation. Another reason was the lack of confidence in the Southern Corridor and Nabucco. And another one was that EU was not enough committed as to support a closer association with Turkmenistan.

Those factors are soon to be removed. The EU is playing a hands-on role with Turkmenistan, actively supporting closer ties with it. At the same time, the EU has made a wise move to delineate internal democracy and energy supply. Previously, such a connection got in the way of developing European access to Turkmen natural gas. Also, for the first time, in the fall of last year, the Turkmen President said that the construction of a Trans-Caspian pipeline from Turkmenistan to Azerbaijan linking to Nabucco does not depend on the delimitation of the Caspian Sea borders between Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan. Previously, the failure to mark that maritime border was an obstacle to the Trans-Caspian pipeline. Azerbaijan has always said this was not a problem and now Turkmenistan is saying the same thing. In January 2011, EC President Manuel Barroso and EU Energy Commissioner Guenther Oettinger paid their first visits ever to Baku and then to Ashgabat. During their visits, they agreed on a plan for Turkmen gas to cross the Caspian Sea to Azerbaijan and then onwards to Europe. They agreed to establish a joint EU-Turkmenistan Committee to look into the commercial and technical issues of this project. So far, Russia and Iran have jointly used ecological arguments to oppose the Trans-Caspian pipeline. Although it previously kept silent on the topic, Turkmenistan has supported the ecological aspects related to the pipeline. Then, in February 2011, it organized and held an international conference on the Caspian Sea ecology. The conference was a historic first during which it was argued that such a pipeline would not damage the ecology of the sea. Also, it has launched the construction of the East-West pipeline across Turkmenistan, linking its prolific gas fields on the East of the country with the Caspian coast, at a capacity of 30 Bcm/a. This matches exactly the capacity of Nabucco. Turkmenistan is building this pipeline on its own budget, without resorting to credits. This means that it values this project as a national strategic interest. The pipeline is slated to reach the Caspian coast by 2015. At that point, if everything goes according to the plan, 30 Bcm of Turkmen gas will hit the Caspian coast and will be available for west-bound transportation by pipeline to Azerbaijan and onward to Nabucco. Turkmenistan used to hold the position of not getting involved in discussions regarding pipelines outside of its own territory. It rather made its gas supplies available at the border to whoever comes up with a pipeline. Now Turkmenistan has changed this position. It says it is in favor of a Trans-Caspian pipeline and would provide the 30 Bcm at the border, but specifically for a Trans-Caspian pipeline. Notwithstanding this, Turkmenistan does not get involved in designing or
financing a Trans-Caspian pipeline. Yet, it does expect West European customers of Turkmen gas to design and finance the pipeline. This is a great opportunity for Europe and it would be a great shame if, by 2015, 30 Bcm of Turkmen gas hit the Caspian coast, available for westward shipment, and the pipeline is not there to transport it to Azerbaijan for Nabucco. Thus, the responsibility lies with the European Union. It has to be said the EC – Barosso and Oettinger personally – is exerting great and unprecedented efforts in that regard.

Azerbaijan lies further to the West. For a number of years, it was regarded, and may still be regarded, as the only source of gas for the Nabucco pipeline. The sources in the Shah Deniz field – phase 2 of development – are due on-stream by 2017. However, this is subject to possible delays for a total production of about 16-20 Bcm/a, of which only 10 Bcm will be available for the Southern Gas Corridor. Unproductive competition has developed between the three projects of the Southern Corridor: Nabucco, TAP, and ITGI for this limited, albeit certain, volume of 10 Bcm/a.

This state of affairs, where the three projects are competing against each other for priority to the reserves of the Shah Deniz field in Azerbaijan, is unhealthy and paradoxical. The three projects are part of the Southern Corridor, but as long as Turkmen gas is not flooding into it, there is only Azerbaijan left. As a result, these three projects, which ought to have cooperated as part of a common project, are actually engaged in a cut-throat commercial competition against each other. This is the result of the long-delayed Western policy regarding Turkmenistan. Both the US and the EU lost many years in terms of developing commercial and political access to Turkmenistan. They are now catching up, but the delay has resulted in this competition over Azerbaijan’s gas.

From Azerbaijan’s perspective, this is a very good situation. Azerbaijan sees three competing projects seeking to take priority over its gas. Thus, it can compare the offers and take the best of them. Azerbaijan is not rushing into a decision. It rather compares the advantages of each. Until about a year ago, Azerbaijan was completely committed to Nabucco, as a strategic project. In the past year or so, it has changed position. It now says that strategic considerations are not as important as commercial considerations to Azerbaijan’s national interests, rather than to European interests. This shift partly reflects Azerbaijan’s political evolution apart from Europe, the US and Turkey. Those who follow the politics of the South Caucasus know that in the last years, a number of issues, not only energy-related issues, have diluted Azerbaijan’s strategic partnership with the United States. For the purposes here, it is not necessary to address them. However, one should be aware that in regard to strategic supply considerations, Azerbaijan is currently less receptive to US or European advice than it used to be. Azerbaijan is considering its own national interest now. However, this may not be its final word: if the strategic partnership of Azerbaijan with Washington and Brussels regains strength, Azerbaijan might revert to strategic considerations. This is not the case.

If developed first, the TAP and ITGI projects could result in killing Nabucco and blocking Europe’s access to Turkmen gas. In my view, both projects are undesirable, as long as they compete with Nabucco rather than supplement it; which is something they could do, subject to a greater availability of Central Asian gas volumes. Both ITGI and TAP are headed to a peripheral location: the extreme South East of Italy. That is not the market that requires diversification away from Russia. On the contrary, Italy is highly diversified in terms of gas supplies. It gets most of its supplies from North Africa, from the Middle East by LNG, and in the third place, from Russia. Thus, it is highly diversified. The markets that need to diversify away from overdependence on Russia are the South Eastern and Central European markets. It is precisely for that very reason they are targeted by Nabucco. The landfall point of ITGI and TAP would be in Southern Italy, far away from Europe’s lucrative markets. For those volumes to reach the heart of Europe, they would have to transit the entire length of the Italian Peninsula. Furthermore, TAP and ITGI are company projects which are only guided by narrow commercial interests. There is no objection to company projects and to narrow company interests – this is the essence of free market. But we can see the contest between these two small-scale projects, designed to serve commercial interests, and the strategic Nabucco which is three times larger in terms of capacity and serves the strategic role of reducing dependence on Russian energy and
demonopolizing the markets of about ten South-Eastern and Central European countries. If either ITGI or TAG goes first, or if they combine to draw on those 10 Bcm of gas from Azerbaijan’s Shah Deniz, Nabucco will be left with no gas until the Turkmen gas becomes available. Thus, as long as Nabucco would not be on-stream, there would be no outlet for Turkmen gas in Europe. Everything would have to be postponed for five to ten years after the completion of TAP or ITGI. Clearly, for these reasons, Nabucco has to go first.

There is another project which turns attention from the Southern Corridor: AGRI. It is primarily driven by Romania in cooperation with Azerbaijan and Georgia. AGRI involves trading small volumes of Azerbaijani gas (1 to 4, maximum 5 Bcm/a), transporting them by pipeline to Georgia, building a liquefaction terminal in Georgia, transporting the LNG by a fleet of tankers to Constanta in Romania, reliquifying the LNG in Romania and using most of the gas in Romania, except for 1 Bcm/a, which would go to Hungary. The EC does not like this project at all. This is insufficiently understood in Romania. The EC refused to support this project. Barosso and Oettinger declined the invitation to attend the launching ceremony in Baku last year, and the EU would not finance a feasibility study. Why? First, because this project would again compete for access to Azerbaijani gas, adding one more competitor against Nabucco besides TAP and ITGI. Another reason is cost effectiveness. For a volume of maximum 5 Bcm, and more likely between one and four Bcm/a, it is clearly not cost effective to build a liquefaction terminal in Georgia, a regasification one in Romania, and pipelines too. Certainly, Romania would be the main market for this gas, although a narrow market, plus one Bcm to Hungary. The Hungarian government is interested in that volume more for the sake of a closer relationship with Romania. The two governments have close relations, but the national Hungarian oil and gas company, MOL, has declined to be part of this project for the aforementioned reasons and those cited by the EU. Therefore, the Hungarian partner in this project is the national electricity company.

Azerbaijan encourages publicity around the AGRI project. It is interested in having as many commercial claimants as possible, which will increase the range of possible competitors and create the impression of competition, as it will heighten the price of its gas. Moreover, from Azerbaijan’s and Turkey’s viewpoints, transporting Azerbaijani gas in whatever form across the Black Sea would mean that Azerbaijan would not need to depend on Turkey for overland pipeline transit on which Turkey has monopoly. Moreover, in recent years, Turkey has demonstrated that it has taken a page from Gazprom’s textbook in terms of abusing its monopoly of overland transit by setting unacceptable conditions to Azerbaijan. Therefore, Azerbaijan is interested in demonstrating it has alternatives and does not exclusively depend on Turkey to export gas to Europe, but it can transport it through the Black Sea in order to bypass it. This is one political rationale of the AGRI project, but not a commercial or strategic rationale. And finally, an energy market in the Black Sea is unfeasible as such, because it cannot be connected to the global energy markets. LNG makes sense only as part of a global market which allows for total flexibility of transactions and commercial routes, much like the global oil market. However, the Black Sea Region cannot be part of a global energy market because the sea is cut off from the world ocean by the Turkish Straits. Turkey does not allow the passage of LNG tankers through the Black Sea. Turkey sets limits for the passage of oil tankers through the Bosporus because it is in the heart of Istanbul and poses the risk of environmental accidents. As a result, the Turkish government carefully controls the volume of oil transiting the straits, but does not allow LNG tankers through the Bosporus. This is why Romania became interested in AGRI in the first place: originally, it wanted to import LNG from Qatar, to the port of Constanta, but when the Turkish policy became obvious, Romania switched to the AGRI option. As such, the Black Sea Region must be a local energy market of very limited volume, depending only on Azerbaijan. This means Azerbaijan has monopoly in terms of energy, contrary to the essence of the global LNG market, which is diversification.

Now, let us consider the Southern Corridor’s and Nabucco’s rival project: South Stream. South Stream has recently undergone a spectacular development, which entirely changes its essence. To give a brief historical background, I choose to express that I never took South Stream seriously. Since 2009, when Gazprom and the Russian government unveiled the
numbers behind South Stream, I described it many times as a political bluff. It is not a project, but a political bluff. I should explain. In 2007, South Stream was launched in Croatia by the then Russian President Vladimir Putin. Without specifics, it was a grand vision, until Gazprom came up with the numbers in February 2009. Those numbers show this project cannot possibly be serious. Russia promised to deliver 63 Bcm/a through South Stream. This is a staggering amount. Remarkably however, Russia never indicated the source of this volume. The Russian government, the Russian President and Gazprom have had countless discussions with their Western counterparts – governments and companies. During those two years of discussion, Russia never indicated the source of gas for 63 Bcm/a, though it had originally been assumed that Gazprom Turkmenistan would be the source. However, in 2009 Russia lost its previous near monopoly on the Turkmen gas. Turkmenistan switched its export policy towards China and Iran. Since 2009, it has continued to reorient its export policies to destinations other than Russia. Thus, Turkmen gas cannot possibly be the South Stream source. In February 2009, the declared cost of the project was $30 billion. Now it is up to $40 billion. This exceeds any frame of reference. No combination of countries, governments, or agencies would finance a project of this magnitude. It is totally absurd. What are then the rationales behind this political bluff? There were three rationales, and a fourth added up in 2011. The first is to discourage investment in Nabucco by creating the impression among Western investors and the financial community that a Russian project would come and, drawing on Russia’s immense gas resources, would make Nabucco redundant. This rationale is based on historical precedents which worked before. For instance, in 2002, the Blue Stream pipeline, which runs underneath the Black Sea from Russia to Turkey, reached the Turkish market ahead of the Turkmen gas, thereby freezing the Trans-Caspian pipeline project. The Russians want to repeat this with Europe. But they declared themselves that the lack of their own gas and the exorbitant costs of the project would make the repetition of such a precedent impossible. Thus, the first reason was to create publicity hype and occupy the place, so to speak, at least at the level of discussions, so as to discourage and slow down investments in Nabucco.

The second reason is to force Turkmenistan to, at one point, revise its export policy in Russia’s favor. If Turkmenistan finds for any reason that Nabucco was unable to materialize, then it would have to switch some export volumes back to Russia. If the aforementioned 30 Bcm of Turkmen gas hit the Caspian coast by 2015-16 lacking a Trans-Caspian outlet, Russia would want to absorb that volume. It has already proposed a new pipeline to take those 30 Bcm along the Caspian Sea littoral from Turkmenistan via Kazakhstan to Russia. Thus, the second rationale of South Stream is to restore Russian access to Turkmen gas by cutting Turkmenistan off from Nabucco.

The third rationale is to put pressure on Ukraine. Russia is threatening to either entirely bypass Ukraine’s gas transit system or dramatically reduce the flow of gas to Europe via Ukraine by redirecting those volumes through South Stream on the bottom of Black Sea. Russia embarked on this policy around 2009. The Ukrainian President, Viktor Yanukovich, and his government are unwisely advertising their fears of South Stream. They began doing this during the presidential election campaign of 2010. They argued Ukraine must somehow accommodate Russia in order to avoid the threat of being bypassed. It is amazing that the Ukrainian leadership was so naïve as to take South Stream at face value. Or on the contrary, that it used the threat of South Stream as an internal political argument to justify the concessions it has made to Russia at the expense of Ukraine’s gas transit system. This question has not yet been resolved in my mind. Prime Minister Putin has recently been in Kiev. They discussed this issue in detail, and I shall look into these discussions. Russia has no resources of gas or funding to bypass Ukraine through a new pipeline. That is crystal clear, and the Ukrainians should understand this better.

In 2011, a fourth reason has emerged for Russia to promote South Stream: to stop the European Commission and the Third Energy Market Legislation Package of the European Union. This Package was released in 2009 and went into legal effect in March 2011. The heart of this legislation package is a demonopolization law. It prohibits companies from being gas suppliers and pipeline operators at the same time. Combining the roles of gas supplier and pipeline operator creates a vertically integrated monopoly. This is Gazprom’s business model.
Whereas it has this business model in Russia, it is unable to have it in Ukraine, because there the pipeline system is state-owned. However, Gazprom has installed this model in several Eastern European countries, including the Baltic states as well as parts of Germany. There, Gazprom is both a pipelines co-owner and a monopolist gas supplier. This is also the case in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. It is partly the case with the Yamal pipeline of the Polish territory, and in certain parts of Germany, where Gazprom shares pipelines ownership with Wintershall. The new European legislation wants to break up these vertically integrated monopolies. It would require Gazprom to divest itself of its pipeline ownership on EU territory – including the Baltics and Germany. Gazprom is making great efforts in terms of lobby to avoid this. South Stream would extend this business monopoly in those European countries that would participate in it. In each one of those states the respective pipeline section would be jointly owned; usually at 50% by Gazprom and 50% by the host country. As a result, Gazprom would extend the business model the EC wants to break up into the European territory. The EU member states Gazprom has enlisted, at least on paper, in South Stream include Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Hungary, Austria, and Slovenia. Gazprom wants to extend the vertically integrated monopoly into those countries. It is a counteroffensive against the EU legislation.

In the last few months, Gazprom and the Russian government have greatly intensified their political lobbying in Western Europe and in Brussels. They have enlisted expensive lobbying firms, and certain European gas executives have rallied in favor of Gazprom. They are in the EC promoting South Stream as a project which serves the interests of Europe. In theory, this would qualify South Stream EU subvention eligibility. Nobody realistically expects the EU to subsidize South Stream. This is entirely out of question. But, on paper, granting it the status of a project of European interest would implicitly legitimize the very integrated business model that the EU wants to abolish.

Last month, the South Stream concept underwent a transformation: the LNG-ization of South Stream. The Russian company Novatek, politically close to Putin, drafted a memorandum of understanding to develop gas deposits in North Western Siberia, in the Yamal Peninsula (at untold costs and timeframes), with the French company Total. On March 11, 2011, Prime Minister Putin and Energy Minister Sergei Shmatko announced a plan to supply South Stream with gas from the Yamal Peninsula. The idea is to use Gazprom’s pipelines in Europe to transport Yamal gas to the Black Sea, to build there a liquefaction terminal, to transport the LNG to Bulgaria by a fleet of Russian tankers, regasify it in Bulgaria and then feed the gas into multiple South Stream sections. The absurdity of this project is difficult to describe. It cannot be taken seriously. There is neither time nor a cost-frame for the development of Yamal gas. The cost effectiveness would probably be prohibitive compared to the cost of LNG from the Middle East and the United States. Moreover, the cost of liquefying the gas at the Black Sea, transporting it a short distance to Bulgaria, and regasifying it there, combined with the cost of building all the various other sections of the pipeline, would add up to untold amounts.

Publically, Gazprom’s own South Stream company has not adopted Putin’s and Shmatko’s plan. At the lobbying and public presentation sessions, Gazprom continues to stick to the old plan, the old bluff, while Putin and Shmatko propose a new one.

As to conclude, it is worthwhile to sketch a very cautious forecast. It has to be cautious because of the rapidly changing variables mentioned in the beginning. First, the gas demand in Europe will grow. This is the only certainty. It is impossible to say how much and how rapidly. Second, the demand for Caspian gas in Europe is uneven. Most of it is in Southern Germany and in Central and South Eastern Europe. That is what Nabucco targets. Therefore, Nabucco is the only truly strategic project. Third, outlook on public financing for Nabucco has improved since the letter of intent by three lending institutions (i.e. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, The European Investment Bank and The International Finance Corporation). They are willing to provide up to EUR 4.5 billion to finance Nabucco. And, fourth, there is unprecedented activity by the EC in terms of commitment to the Southern Corridor in general and Nabucco in particular. Due to the political nature of the EC, it cannot afford to take sides on Nabucco, ITGI and TAP. Beyond the public level, the EC clearly favors Nabucco over the two other competitors. Given the aforementioned developments in Turkmenistan, the outlook for Nabucco is unprecedentedly good.
This article defines Turkey’s energy vision with regard to its foreign policy. It elaborates how the shift in Turkish foreign policy can be related to energy issues. The paper points to contradictions which would emerge from a mere political perspective that undermines the role played by energy. Turkey wants to take advantage of its geographic location, and is launching an energy agenda that requires new pipelines, regional relations and massive investments. As the article shows, the interaction between state strategy, regional cooperation and private sector involvement in the energy sector strongly affects the shift in Turkish foreign policy.
(Btu) in 2007 to 590 quadrillion Btu in 2020 and 739 quadrillion Btu in 2035. This is a tremendous growth which entails exclusive features when compared to previous eras. Energy demand in non-OECD countries will increase 84 percent, in contrast with a lower increase of 14 percent in OECD countries. The competition among net energy importers is likely to increase. Energy exporters are expected to boost their revenues, and consolidate their political power. Which countries will benefit from the energy transitions in the 21st century, and how? Those who control resources, who successfully manage environmental challenges, who benefit from energy trade, and those who have a good energy mix, advanced technology, as well as means to improve efficiency, savings and intensity.

WHERE IS TURKEY IN THIS PICTURE?

Turkey's primary energy consumption and production were respectively 108 million Ton Equivalent Petroleum (TEP) and 29 million TEP in 2008. Turkey's energy demand is expected to grow 5.9 percent annually until 2025. Turkey needs to take timely measures in order to cope with growing energy consumption. This is not an easy task. First of all, Turkey, as shown in Table 1, does not have the appropriate reserves to cope with its increasing energy demand.

Table 1: Domestic energy resources in Turkey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Potential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Methane from gas hydrates</td>
<td>14,000.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lignite (million tons)</td>
<td>10,400.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard coal (million tons)</td>
<td>1,300.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asphaltite (million tons)</td>
<td>82.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil (million tons)</td>
<td>38.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural gas (million cubic meters)</td>
<td>21,900.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thorium (million tons)</td>
<td>380.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uranium (million tons)</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Another flaw stems from Turkey’s current energy mix which is extensively based on fossil fuels, and excludes alternatives such as renewable and nuclear energy. Turkey depends heavily on imports of oil (93 percent) and gas (97 percent). Turkey uses 55 percent of imported gas for electricity generation which is a very expensive way when compared to other alternatives including renewable and nuclear. It is not, however, very easy for Turkey to decrease the share of natural gas. Turkey barely coped with energy security challenges in the 1970s and 1980s, despite efforts to translate shared Muslim identity into energy cooperation with Middle Eastern oil exporters. The rapid growth of Turkish energy demand in the 1990s forced policymakers to benefit from the availability of Russian natural gas, rather than confronting the financial burden of massive investments in alternative energy.

Accordingly, Turkey signed long-term agreements with Russia, Iran and Azerbaijan; the first one being, the major supplier. Currently Turkey is very much concerned with shifting its energy mix, attributing shares to renewable and nuclear alongside carbon fuels. The strategy is not to decrease the volume of natural gas, but rather to increase electricity generation from alternative energy while channeling gas for cooking, heating and transport.

Turkey, in the meantime, presents itself as an emerging energy hub which is situated between the supply (Russian Federation, Caspian and the Middle East) and the demand (the European Union countries and world markets via Mediterranean). Turkey’s geographic location is advantageous as 72 percent of world hydrocarbons are reported to be located in its neighborhood. Energy transit projects and investment opportunities in Turkey can create a strategic synergy. Energy, in fact, plays a significant role in shaping Turkey’s regional initiatives to develop relations with countries in its neighborhood.

Turkey’s foreign policy sometimes stands at odds with its conventional allies, (mainly the EU, the U.S. and Israel), and leads to a rapprochement with non-Western countries such as Russia, Iran and Syria. Many authors have been trying to understand the underlying reasons driving the shift in Turkish foreign policy by looking at some domestic and international political issues. They do this without incorporating the role of energy in the cases they examine.

On the one hand, Turkey’s current foreign policy has something to do with domestic political struggles, as indicated by Stephen J. Flanagan and Samuel J. Brannen. Many varied directions Turkey may take in the future (polarized Turkey, neo-nationalist Turkey, Islamist Turkey) may emerge from this perspective. Regarding the international aspect, it may seem as if Turkey is developing relations with Russia and Middle Eastern countries (mainly Syria, Lebanon and Iran).
because of the double standards it is subject to in the EU accession process, or due to recent problems with Israel and disagreements with the U.S. government on thorny issues concerning the Kurds, Armenians and Israelis. Eric Walberg depicts the current state of Turkish foreign policy, much more from this perspective, and states:

“For all intents and purposes, Turkey has given up on the European Union, recognizing it as a bastion of Islamophobia and captive to US diktat. As Switzerland bans minarets and France moves to outlaw the niqab, the popular Islamist government in Istanbul moves in the opposite direction – supporting the freedom to wear headscarves, boldly criticizing Israel and building bridges with Syria. This is nothing less than a fundamental realignment of Turkish politics towards Turkey’s natural allies – the Arabs and the Russians.”

These approaches are relevant to a certain extent, yet fall short of explaining the tangible rationale which lies behind Turkey’s comprehensive foreign policy. There is a myriad of issues which cannot be fully understood from this perspective. Is this the only reason for Turkey to try to help Syria and Lebanon normalize relations? Can Turkey’s attempt to upgrade Iran’s international status and to come up with a solution on its enriched uranium only be approached by this perspective? How can we explain, then, Turkey’s good trade relations with the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) while there is a reported increase in attacks against the Turkish army from the terrorists based in this region?

There are three oil pipelines which are shown in Table 2. Baku Tbilisi Ceyhan (BTC) has a capacity of one million barrels per day. Kirkuk Yumurtalık Twin Pipelines, with a total capacity of 1.65 million barrels per day, are frequently being sabotaged by insurgencies in the KRG. Turkey and Russia are planning to construct another oil pipeline from Samsun to Ceyhan to transport Russian and Kazakh oil from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean.

Table 2: Turkey’s Oil Pipelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country Names</th>
<th>Pipeline Name</th>
<th>Capacity (million bbl/d)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AZERBAIJAN–GEORGIA–TURKEY</td>
<td>Baku Tbilisi Ceyhan (BTC) Pipeline</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRAQ–TURKEY</td>
<td>Kirkuk Yumurtalık Twin Pipelines</td>
<td>1.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUSSIA–TURKEY</td>
<td>Samsun-Ceyhan Pipeline (planned)</td>
<td>1-1.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EU MOE, 2009.

Turkey’s encounter with energy geopolitics is more complicated when it comes to natural gas, which dominates its energy mix. Electricity generation from natural gas is an extravagant track that Turkey has followed for over one decade. It is true that Turkey has been developing relations with many countries outside of the so-called Western world. This does not only arise from political problems with its conventional allies – the EU, the U.S. and Israel. Nor does this shift aim at redefining Turkey’s relations with them. Turkey has strong interest and advantages in continuing its strategic partnership with the West. However, it cannot undermine its propitious geographic location especially when it comes to energy. This shift can be related to three issues from the energy perspective:

- Foreign affairs, which is highly related to Turkey’s strategy to use energy as a leverage to foster regional economic cooperation;
- Turkey’s energy industry, which is related to the inability or unwillingness of its conventional allies to compensate for Turkey’s energy mix flaws or the opportunity cost Turkey would incur if it does not develop relations as much as it could with partners such Russia, Azerbaijan, Iran and Iraq;
- Geopolitical aspect, as Turkey would not want to miss a chance to build an energy transport system which would lead to cooperation among its neighbors including Russia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt.
Table 3: Turkey’s Gas Pipelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country Names</th>
<th>Pipeline Name</th>
<th>Capacity (bcm/year)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Azerbaycan-Georgia-Turkey</td>
<td>South Caucasus Pipeline</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Russia) Bulgaria-Turkey</td>
<td>Bulgaria – Turkey</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran-Turkey</td>
<td>Tabriz – Dogubayazt</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia-Turkey</td>
<td>Blue Stream</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia-Turkey</td>
<td>Blue Stream (Loop Line)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey-Greece</td>
<td>Karacabey – Komotini</td>
<td>7.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syria-Turkey</td>
<td>Aleppo – Kilis (planned)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey-Armenia</td>
<td>Armenia – Turkey pipeline (planned)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey-Bulgaria-Romania-Hungary-Austria</td>
<td>Nabucco (planned)</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey-Syria-Libanon-Israel</td>
<td>Ceyhan – Haifa (planned)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EIA, 2010, p. 11.

The Blue Stream pipeline (with a capacity of 20 bcm/year) passes through the Black Sea and connects Izobilnoe (in Russia) with Samsun (in Turkey).

The Western pipeline (22 bcm) enters Turkey from Bulgaria and then is interconnected with the domestic grid.

The South Caucasus Pipeline (16 bcm) transports Azeri gas from Baku to Erzurum via Tbilisi in Georgia.

The Tabriz-Erzurum pipeline (20 bcm) transports Iranian gas.

Turkey’s gas contracts with Russia (30 bcm), Azerbaijan (6.6 bcm) and Iran (ten bcm) are above Turkey’s annual consumption. Turkey’s LNG contracts with Algeria (four bcm) and Nigeria (1.2 bcm) are also quite noteworthy.

As for transit from Turkey to EU countries, the pipeline from Turkey to Greece (seven bcm) is critical. The capacity of this pipeline may be increased to ten bcm once the Greece-Italy interconnector is completed. The Nabucco project, in the meantime, is very significant for Turkey to become an energy transit country. This does not only arise from the great capacity of the Nabucco pipeline (30-33 bcm) but also stems from the necessity of making additional contracts with countries such as Turkmenistan, Iran and Iraq. In other words, the Nabucco pipeline may help Turkey channel new means of regional cooperation at the supply side, while improving energy relations with European counterparts. Furthermore, in regards to supply side cooperation, Turkey and its counterparts are considering additional pipelines such as the extension of the Arab Gas Pipeline, which currently creates energy connections between Egypt and Jordan, to Syria and Turkey. Furthermore, the Turkish and Iraqi governments are considering another pipeline project from Iraq to Turkey. Finally, Turkey and Iran intend to increase gas trade, not only from Iran’s rapidly developing South Pars fields, but also concerning Turkmenistan gas which can be transported to Turkey via Iran.

It is now important to indicate and highlight the role played by energy in Turkey’s relations with particular countries.

Russia appears to be a strategic partner in energy. Trade relations between Turkey and Russia reached a historical peak in 2008, climbing to 36 billion dollars – most of which was constituted by oil and gas sales to Turkey. Turkey is Russia’s second major gas recipient after Germany. However while Russian gas constitutes 36 percent of German domestic gas consumption, it constitutes 64 percent of Turkish gas consumption. Turkey is thus much more dependent on Russian gas exports. Furthermore, Russia is the strongest candidate for massive investments such as the agreed nuclear power plant in Akkuyu and natural gas storage facilities in Salt Lake [Tuz Golu]. Russian firms are looking for acquisitions and shares from Turkey’s domestic energy sector, including gas distribution and electricity generation. The two countries are also negotiating new oil and gas pipelines. Turkey’s extreme dependence on Russia is a significant challenge of its energy security. This is why Turkey’s energy relations with other major suppliers such as Azerbaijan, Iran, Turkmenistan, Iraq and Egypt have a special place in foreign policy.

Turkey’s energy relations with Azerbaijan developed rapidly by the help of BTC oil and BTE gas pipelines. Turkey and Azerbaijan agreed to develop this relationship further by engaging in new contracts on Shah Deniz gas. Turkey’s gas trade with Iran is likely to increase as Iran has been developing not only the South Pars field but also its domestic gas grid. Iran has a unique geopolitical meaning for Turkey. Iran, as a Caspian country, can allow Turkmenistan’s inclusion within the European energy grid without the necessity to resolve the Caspian’s legal status. And in fact, existing pipelines from Turkmenistan to Iran, and from Iran to Turkey, already allow this. Companies from these countries are also aware of the distinctive neighborhood that these countries share. For example, Som Petrol (a Turkish energy company) has been attempting to get involved in a 1.3 billion dollar deal between Turkey and Iran, which involves building 660 kilometers of a second gas pipeline in addition to the existing one. The company, which has been operating in Turkmenistan for a while, is aware of the emerging opportu-
nities which can unite Turkmenistan, Iran and Turkey. In essence, Turkey does not want to forsake any energy opportunities offered by Iran. Otherwise it may become more dependent on Russia, as Iran's exclusion will also impede Turkmenistan's inclusion within the Western energy grid.

Turkey has been pursuing good relations with other countries in the region not only to contribute to regional economic cooperation, but also to diversify routes and suppliers. Turkey's improving relations with Syria (and its attempts to bring Lebanon into this mix) are highly related to the Arab Gas Pipeline which can include Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria within the same gas transport system. There is an aspect of this foreign policy pertaining to improving the private sector, as well. Austria's OMV and Hungary's MOL, which are both partners in Nabucco, are part of a consortium led by Crescent Petroleum and Dana Gas of Sharjah of United Arab Emirates. This consortium has plans to extract Akkas gas and transport either directly to Turkey or by getting combined with Arab Gas Pipeline with an extension from Akkas region in Iraq to Syria. So, Turkey's foreign relations, especially with its neighbors, involve improving several different levels in the energy playing field.

Turkey's relations with Iraq and Kurds in Iraq can also be explained from an energy perspective with direct references to private sector involvement. Turkish company assets in the region controlled by the KRG are reported to have reached a volume of 621 million dollars in July 2010. A Turkish company (Genel Energy) has been exploring and producing oil in six sectors (including Tak Tak and Tavke) in the KRG. Another agreement between the KRG and Iraqi government will lead to 67 billion dollars of oil revenues being extracted from this region. Six billion dollars of this amount will be paid to Genel Energy and its Norwegian partner, DNO. Annual oil revenue is expected to reach 27 billion dollars in 2015 which will guarantee an annual payment of 1.5 billion dollars to Genel Energy and DNO.

These cases indicate the link between foreign policy on the one hand, the state investments and private sector involvement on the other. It is therefore possible to conclude that Turkey's so-called shift in foreign policy has a sound basis with tangible characteristics from the energy perspective. However, Turkey's ambition to become an energy hub seems vulnerable for at least upstream investments and energy transport projects would make less sense if the country's energy mix remains unimproved. How can this confrontation be eased by Turkey?

As mentioned at the very beginning, Turkey's problems are serious particularly in terms of the energy sector – there are remarkable flaws regarding energy efficiency, savings, external dependency and intensity. What's more, when compared to those European countries that extensively benefit from nuclear energy and renewable to counter balance their dependence on carbon fuels, Turkey is quite behind on energy diversification and utility.

But the question that then arises is if Turkey has a coherent energy strategy which can facilitate regional integration by improving the domestic energy sector simultaneously? The answer to this question is of utmost significance, for it can at least explain the extent to which Turkey can overcome domestic problems in order to benefit more effectively from energy relations in its neighborhood. If it has such a plan, then it may be possible to conclude that Turkey's actual foreign policy is not only linked to state investments and private sector involvement but also supported by the energy sector's evolution.

Turkey's 2010-2014 energy strategy, as published by Minister Taner Yıldız on 15 April 2010, gives some clues that may point to an answer. Turkey's 2010-2014 energy strategy considers oil and gas transportation as one of the main pillars within its five strategic themes: energy supply security, Turkey's regional and global efficiency in energy, environment, natural resources, and corporate development. The strategic channels and priorities are well defined, have been put in timetables and also budgeted. Do these themes, and the strategies built upon them, reflect a consistent energy policy which is responsive to world energy dynamics, domestic restraints and regional priorities? The energy plan acknowledges the significance of a balanced energy mix, environmental challenges and Turkey's transit role, aiming to transform these pillars into strategic gains. However it does not define the conditions in which Turkey will become a transit country, a strategic hub, or an energy satellite.

A recent study clusters the minimum conditions for Turkey in terms of it being an energy transit country, strategic hub, or an energy center. Accordingly:

"Turkey as an energy transit corridor implies a variety of oil and gas pipelines, and other sorts of transportation, originating from Russia, Caspian and the Middle East not only for Turkish market, but also for Europe and other markets via Mediterranean. Turkey, in this scene, receives certain transit fees; however fails to put priority on domestic needs; is satisfied with average transit terms and conditions; and can not re-export considerable amount of oil and gas passing through its lands. Turkey as an energy hub indicates Turkey's extensive influence on a web of oil and gas pipelines as well as LNG trade not only in terms of its ability to influence transit terms and conditions, but also to re-export some of hydrocar-
bonds passing through this system. Compatibility between international agreements and domestic energy mix is of utmost significance to avoid negative impact of one on other and describes the level of success if Turkey appears as an energy hub. Turkey as an energy center refers to a situation in which Turkey’s energy hub features have been supported by massive investments such as nuclear power plants, renewable energy program and a comprehensive infrastructure composed of additional refineries, natural gas storage facilities, LNG trains, vessels, marine terminals and ports. Turkey as an energy center also requires her achievement of sufficient energy intensity and a sustainable energy mix.23

Turkey’s energy strategy and its link to foreign policy initiatives entails a “high risk, high gain” position. If domestic flaws take place with extreme dependence on Russia, this may turn Turkey into Russia’s energy satellite. This is exactly what Turkey is trying to avoid by establishing energy trade with countries in the Caspian and the Middle East. Turkey will take most of the advantage at the supply and transport sides by including additional oil and gas from the Caspian and the Middle East at beneficiary terms. In fact, Turkey’s growing relations with countries such as Azerbaijan, Iran, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon make sense from this energy outlook.

Which scenario is more likely? This is not an easy question to answer. Other global and regional actors, such as the EU, the U.S. and Israel are concerned with the possible consequences of Turkey’s initiatives rather than looking at the motives. And it is not very clear to see to what extent Turkey can compel, convince or compensate them. It is however possible to conclude the minimum conditions for Turkey’s achievement of its goals. Turkey will be able to minimize the risks, keep good relations with its neighbors, and benefit even more effectively from its use of energy as strategic leverage so far as the link between state strategy, regional cooperation, and private sector involvement continues to function properly. In this case, the worst case scenario – in which motives are obscured because of the consequences expected by third parties – can be avoided.

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Dear Chairman and Colleagues!

In my presentation, the concept of “reset” that is currently undergoing political debate is considered within a more specific context, namely the effort to innovate Armenian strategic thinking in the field of national defense and security, as well as on the peaceful settlement of the Karabakh conflict. The resetting of content and development of academic-educational technologies for new-generation strategic executives are seen as efficient “smart power” resources, particularly, at the Olympus of the South Caucasus. States are ready for the elaboration of new cooperation strategies to achieve a durable peace there.

In terms of Armenia’s engagement in the integration of its national security policy into the global security system, strategic executive educational reform in Armenia in the field of national, regional and international security is of particular relevance. My recent two-month fellowship at the Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS), NDU (assigned by the Supreme Commander in Chief and Minister of Defense of the Republic of Armenia and the Pentagon), was aimed at acquiring the most advanced academic and educational US technologies directly from the “horse’s mouth”.

For the Armenian MOD, balancing cooperation with the leading Russian and US academic and educational institutions, as well as the CSTO and NATO states in the process of reforming the strategic defense and security education, is a high-priority. It is important to keep the new-generation of Armenian defense security leaders from lagging behind global achievements in this area. The fact that the first CSTO visiting international conference on the issues of elaborating a new strategic concept of collective security was organized by the INSS, the MOD of Armenia in cooperation with the CSTO Secretariat and the leading experts from the Organization’s member states is symptomatic in this respect. This conference was particularly important as OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs’ countries were invited. It should also be noted that the initiative to organize the Conference was presented by the Armenian INSS and the
project was developed at the INSS, US, NDU in 2003-2004. In revised form, the academic and educational cooperation between the US, Armenia, and the CSTO reflects the constructive idea of the “reset” between of the strategic relationship between Russia and the US.

Armenia is continuing cooperation with Russia in the field of traditional military education. It is also is intensively pursuing more effective academic and education technologies in the framework of bilateral defense and security cooperation with the US. In the multilateral framework, it cooperates with NATO and European partners within the scope of programs enhancing defense education. Taking into account that leadership innovation in the fields of applied defense and security studies and strategic learning are in the hands of the US, the Ministry of Defense of Armenia launched direct collaboration through the Armenian INSS with the US National Defense University.

Today a new paradigm of effective international cooperation is emerging in the s of security, US political science, and, national security policy. “Smart power” as formulated by Harvard Professor Joseph Nye is, a knowledge application skill where optimal strategic security decision making refers to the use of both soft and hard power. The US experience in the fields of innovation of defense and security education shows the great advantages of “smart power” particularly through the introduction of innovative methods for the education of a new generation of strategic level executives.

My recent fellowships at the Center for Technology and National Security Policy, Center for Applied Strategic Learning, War College, Industrial College of the Armed Forces, College of International Security Affairs, and Information Resources Management College provided the opportunity to develop a model for transforming the Armenian Institute for National Strategic Studies into National Defense Research University (NDRU), MOD, Armenia. This model envisages a 5-year process of phased establishment of new centers for strategic analysis within the Armenian INSS. Their research personnel will then be invited to teach at educational institutions of the National Defense Research University. The learning process is to be mainly built on the basis of the latest research products that have passed a review at the Innovation Center for Technology and National Security Policy, as well as at the National Center for Strategic Gaming. This approach adopted from our American colleagues excludes outdated teaching materials which are so common for the traditional lectured learning process in post-Soviet universities.

The introduction of the US “best practices” for synthesizing research in the field of applied strategic studies, and, the development of innovations in the policy of national security will provide a new level of strategic education for a new generation of decision-makers. It is important to note that while developing the components for the future of the Armenian National Defense Research University the creative bridging of methodological assistance provided by Harvard University and the US NDU to the Armenian INSS were of great value. In our view, the process of research and education development of the Armenian National Defense Research University – in accordance with the most progressive achievements in the field of strategic executive education – may become a fruitful direction for Armenia’s international cooperation. Through the establishment of Armenian National Defense Research University, the capstone of Armenia’s military education reform and a basis for modernization would be to “reset” the intellectual potential of the national security and defense system in conformity with the most effective academic technologies of the world’s leading think tanks. In Armenia, the creative implementation of this model in the defense security education system can become one of the decisive factors for ensuring not only our national security and defense but also security in the South Caucasus.

Relying on the US interpretation of the “smart power”, I’d like to consider the problem of a balanced resolution of the Karabakh conflict. According to certain US and Russian analysts I encountered during my fellowship, its resolution is invariably considered as one of the crucial factors for establishing a lasting peace in the South Caucasus.

A comparative analysis of the Karabakh and Kosovo conflicts shows that the differences are mainly historical and cultural. Yet, within the tools of modern political studies of conflicts, in political and legal terms, similarities do exist. Both conflicts are characterized by the struggle for national liberation (through the exercise of the right to free self-determination) against the threat of colonial suppression of the preservation of national-ethnic identity of Albanian and Armenian populations of Kosovo and Nagorno Karabakh respectively. Professional comparative analyses of the dynamics and structures of the Kosovo and Karabakh conflicts reveal the comparison configuration of the parties. With all due respect to our fraternal-Christian Serbs, academic standards demand the principal “Plato is my friend, but the truth is of more value” be followed. In this dimension, the following are structural pairs of similarity: Serbia – Azerbaijan as the colonial oppressors, Kosovo – Nagorno Karabakh as the fighters for national liberation and free self-determination, and Albania is compared with Armenia in terms of supporting the national liberation struggle of compatriots.
In the political-legal sense, the Nagorno Karabakh Republic was established as a result of a legitimate referendum based on the USSR Law from the Perestroika period entitled: “On Procedures for the Regulation of Issues Related to Secession of the Union Republics from the USSR”. Its period of effectiveness lasted up to the signing of the Alma-Ata Declaration on the official dissolution of the USSR.

Another feature of the Karabakh referendum is that the Azeri minority – in accordance with the aforementioned USSR Law – was involved in the process of preparing the referendum, though the Baku authorities boycotted it. This is evidenced by the extant papers of the referendum Commission.

An important political and legal feature of the Karabakh conflict is the uninterrupted functioning (20 years since the establishment of the NKR) of the democratically formed legislative and executive authorities. Under the NKR Constitution adopted by the national referendum, they effectively administer economic, social, political and defense commitments of the democratic state towards their electorate and the general population. In terms of controlling the stability of the environment in the South Caucasus, the democratically elected authorities of the NKR are still not recognized but are one of the efficiently functioning factors of maintaining regional security.

Highlighting the importance of the OSCE Minsk Group (co-chaired by Russia, the US and France) in containing the situation in Karabakh preventing a new war, we should call all the stakeholders’ attention to the resetting of their “smart power”. This could lead to a lasting peace between Armenia, Azerbaijan and Nagorno Karabakh. It runs through the recognition by Azerbaijan the legitimacy of the 1991 referendum and the NKR established by its results. The participants of the confidential negotiations on the outcome of the 1992-1994 Karabakh war indicate that former Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev also was inclined to the possibility of such an efficient resolution to the conflict together with his Armenian counterparts.

Preparation by the respective authorities of the population of Azerbaijan, Nagorno Karabakh and Armenia for the recognition of the NKR and parallel negotiations on the status of the territories constituting the NKR security zone; the subsequent return of the Armenian and Azerbaijani refugees to the places of their former residence; and; guaranteeing human security and sustainable development of all the three independent states, may be the factors to achieve a lasting peace and security in the South Caucasus and its eventual integration into the international community.

The key to successfully applying “smart power” to resolve the Karabakh conflict – first and foremost – can be the “resetting” of the Azerbaijani leadership’s position regarding the arms race; territorial claims to Nagorno Karabakh and Armenia based on a falsified history of the peoples indigenous to the South Caucasus; and; manipulative juggling of separate norms of international law, to a realistic compromise in a comprehensive resolution of the conflict in the interests of building up a lasting peace between Armenian and Azerbaijani peoples. The success of such a “reset” will be largely predetermined by boosting security cooperation between Russia, the US and France; and, between them and the three parties of the Karabakh conflict i.e. the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Nagorno Karabakh Republic. It is necessary for them to be responsible to their peoples, the international community for security, and, sustainable democratic development of the South Caucasus.

Much of the success of this reset will be determined by the level of “smart power” developed for and by the new-generation of leaders in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Nagorno Karabakh. They must be ready for a sober assessment of the strategic advantages of cooperation between states and peoples instead of the choice of a new destructive war in the region that extends far beyond the geographical boundaries of the South Caucasus.

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In the case of Kosovo since 1999 the Kosovo Albanians for a long time have not been able to independently control the former Kosso region of Serbia and for this reason Kosovo before electing the parliament in 2004 was under the UN administration. After the recognition of independence in 2008 Kosovo continues to be under the patronage of the UN Security Council and the NATO coalition military forces (Resolution 1244 (1999). Adopted by the Security Council at its 4011th meeting, on 10 June 1999, United Nations, S/RES/1244 (1999), Official website of the UN: (http://www.unmikonline.org/Documents/Res1244ENG.pdf); 10 June 1999, NATO's role in Kosovo. NATO Basic Documents: (http://www.nato.int/kosovo/docu/u990610a.htm).


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The Shah Deniz End-Game

Shah Deniz is Azerbaijan's main natural gas field, offshore in the Caspian Sea. It was discovered in 1999 and has estimated reserves of up to 1.2 trillion cubic meters. The field has been developed by a consortium composed of British Petroleum (25.5%), Norway's Statoil (25.5%), Azerbaijan's SOCAR (10%), France's Total (10%), LukAgip (a joint venture of Russia's Lukoil and Italy's Eni, with 10% overall), Iran's NIOC (10%), and Turkey's TPAO (9%). BP is the field's technical operator and Statoil is the commercial one. Production from Shah Deniz started in 2006. The gas has been delivered through the South Caucasus Pipeline, which runs from Baku to Tbilisi and further to Erzurum, in eastern Turkey. The current first stage of the field's development – so-called Shah Deniz 1 – has been reaching about 9 billion cubic meters per year (bcm), mostly sold to Turkey (6 bcm) and Georgia, but also serving Azerbaijan's domestic market.

Now, Shah Deniz's full development – labeled Shah Deniz 2 – which will require in excess of $10 billion in investments, is expected to bring on-stream another 16 bcm a of gas. This future output has truly acquired an international political dimension, as it is expected to feed into one of the several long-debated projects meant to ship Caspian gas to the European markets through a route not under Russia's control.

And indeed, by October 1, 2011, the familiar contenders for the Shah Deniz 2 production made their bids; the Nabucco, ITGI (Turkey-Greece-Italy Interconnector) and TAP (Trans-Adriatic Pipeline) consortia aim, all of them, at shipping Azerbaijani gas to the European markets. Also, they all belong to the so-called Southern Gas Corridor, devised by the European Commission (EC) in 2008. As noted in the Oil & Gas Journal (Jan. 3, 2011), "the strategic objective of the Southern Corridor is to achieve a supply route to the EU of 10-20% of EU gas demand by 2020, equivalent roughly to 45-90 bcm of gas." A decision by the Shah Deniz shareholders is expected by the end of March 2012.

There has been a lot of speculation about the prospects of those "usual suspects." While Nabucco is a grand-scale strategic project supported by the Black Sea Region states and the EC, its size (31 bcm) also makes it expensive to build and inefficient to run only by shipping the Shah Deniz 2 gas volumes. On the other hand, the two 'interconnectors,' ITGI and TAP, have planned capacities of 10 bcm each (expandable to 20 bcm), are more cost effective since they rely on the existent Turkish gas grid, and shorter in their planned routes to south Italy. Moreover, one of TAP's main stakeholders is Norway's Statoil (42.5%), which is also a Shah Deniz's main stakeholder (25.5%).

Against this background, since the fall of 2011 Nabucco's prospects have started to look less and less convincing, in spite of its strategic value and

1 This paper is a substantially transformed and updated version of R. Dudau and E. Gusilov (2011), "The Competition for the Caspian Gas: Recent Dynamics," Petroleum Industry Review, Nov. 16, pp. 70-75
increasingly assertive support from the EC. In January 2011, the EC President, Jose Manuel Durao Barroso, together with the Energy Commissioner, Günther Oettinger, made a visit to Baku and Ashgabat in support of the Southern Corridor, which many understood as undergirding Nabucco. But it was too little and too late. With doubts about the consortium’s ability to secure the needed finances, and also due to increasingly fierce competition for the Shah Deniz 2 expected output (which would have been anyway under its projected capacity), Nabucco seems to have lost the competitive edge it had over its Southern Corridor competitors. Those have multiplied and morphed into more flexible and less costly designs that took most of the arguments away from Nabucco.

A reason why Nabucco’s prospects have lingered for almost 10 years now, with sporadic ups and downs, has been the behavior of its own member countries, which have one by one bandwagoned with South Stream, the project that Gazprom contrived in 2007 for the Black Sea Region – basically a Nabucco blocker and a political leverage against Ukraine’s ability to halt the transit of most of Russia’s gas exports to Europe.

Several alternative solutions were put up in the last couple of years, such as AGRI (Azerbaijan-Georgia-Romania Interconnector). AGRI’s as yet raw concept is to liquefy a few bcm of Azerbaijani gas (between 2 and 8, pending on a specific configuration) at Kulevi, on the Georgian Black Sea coast, and to ship them on LNG tankers to Constanta (Romania). But AGRI is yet another competitor for the same limited gas volumes of Shah Deniz 2, thus lining up with ITGI and TAP to grapple for those 10 bcm without which Nabucco cannot take off the ground. Thus, by trying not to keep all eggs in one basket, Bucharest – and Budapest too, as a formal partner to AGRI – ended up by adding further fissures to Nabucco’s credibility, in spite of Romania’s longstanding loyalty to it.

All in all, the dynamics of the “pipelines game” in the Caspian and Black Sea basins have become more complex and volatile. Several general factors can be singled out:

(1) As mentioned above, the EC finally seems to have launched a substantive energy diplomacy campaign, marked through a couple of distinctive steps. First, on September 6, 2011 the EC released a ground-breaking Communication called "On security of energy supply and international cooperation – The EU energy policy: engaging with partners beyond our borders" (COM 2011, 537 final). For the first time, the EC presented an integrated concept of collective diplomacy to deal with EU’s main energy providers. To appreciate its importance, it suffices to recollect the lament about the disconnected responses of various member states to the Russo-Ukrainian “gas crises” of 2006 and 2009. Talk about the deals that major West European energy companies made with Gazprom, with the support of their governments, has been a tenor of energy-policy analysis and political rhetoric, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). As a practical follow-up to the Communication, on September 12 the EC mandated the facilitation of negotiations between Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan to speed up the construction of a trans-Caspian gas pipeline, crucial to the viability of the Southern Gas Corridor. In response, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, claiming a Russian veto on any trans-Caspian pipeline project – based on the still unsettled juridical status of the Caspian Sea, which Russia and Iran define as a condominium – expressed its regret about EC’s decision, saying it ignored the “international, legal and geopolitical situation of the Caspian Sea.”

Second, on October 19 the EC’s President announced a major infrastructure investment plan called “Connecting Europe,” which envisages the allocation of €50 billion from the EU 2014-2020 budget for transport, energy, and communications infrastructure. Out of that amount, €9.1 billion is to be invested in energy transport infrastructure and climate protection measures. The strategic proposal is to define and approve “projects of common interest,” speed up their approval procedures and secure the necessary funding. For the latter purpose, the "Connecting Europe" plan will be backed by the "Project Bond Initiative," designed to act "as a catalyst to re-open the debt capital market (currently largely unexploited for infrastructure investments following the financial crisis) as a significant source of financing in the infrastructure sector” (EC press release, Oct. 19, 2011). EU budget funds, combined with European Investment Bank financing, are expected to "reduce the risk for third party investors" (and thus mobilize additional "long-term private sector debt financing"). The €9.1 billion
amount, although just a small part of the estimated €210 billion needed for Europe’s energy infrastructure until 2020, is nonetheless several orders of magnitude higher than the amounts previously available through the Trans-European Networks-Energy (TEN-E) program. Notably, the Southern Gas Corridor is one of the ‘Energy Infrastructure Priorities’ of that strategic plan. This is bound to influence the ongoing decision-making process in Baku regarding the sale of the Shah Deniz 2 production.

(2) Recent discoveries of massive gas resources both in Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan may well end speculation about the availability of sufficient Caspian supply for the Southern Gas Corridor. France’s Total announced in September 2011 that Azerbaijan’s Absheron offshore field holds reserves of around 350 bcm of gas and 45 million metric tons of gas condensate (Wall Street Journal, Sept. 12, 2011). According to SOCAR representatives, production from Absheron could start as early as 2016-2018, if a dedicated onshore platform is built. But the really big news came from over the Caspian, when the British auditors Gaffney, Cline and Associates reported on October 13, 2011 that Turkmenistan’s South Yolotan and Osman gas fields could together contain anything between 16.4 and 21.2 trillion cubic meters of gas (Tcm), with a most likely estimate of 16.4 Tcm. This is actually an upwards revision of an earlier, 2008 estimate of 4 to 14 Tcm, which was back then criticized and ridiculed. Today’s new data turn south-eastern Turkmenistan into the world’s second largest gas reservoir, after Iran and Qatar’s South/North Pars field.

These figures come as a confirmation of the U.S. Geological Survey’s assessment at the end of 2010, that the Caspian Area contained volumes of "technically recoverable, conventional, undiscovered petroleum resources [of] 19.6 billion bbl of crude oil, 243 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, and 9.3 billion bbl of natural gas liquids." (Oil & Gas Journal, Jan. 3, 2011). Assuming a good deal of the EU authorities’ recent activism about the Southern Corridor has to do with these data. But it is also obvious that a trans-Caspian gas pipeline, to connect Turkmenistan’s South Yolotan and Osman gas fields could (at least) contain anything between 16.4 and 21.2 trillion cubic meters of gas (Tcm), with a most likely estimate of 16.4 Tcm.

(3) Making the Shah Deniz end-game all the more intricate, two late contenders emerged with good winning chances.

First, BP made its own bid for Shah Deniz’s gas – a field it also operates and owns 25.5 percent: a pipeline project called the South East Europe Pipeline (SEEP). From the little that is known about it, SEEP will use an upgraded Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum pipeline (from the current 8.8 bcm to the full projected 20 bcm, just enough to accommodate the extra 10 bcm at stake) and then build a line from eastern Anatolia to Baumgarten an der March, near Vienna, more or less following Nabucco’s track in a smaller and cheaper version. SEEP’s distribution scheme will also differ from Nabucco’s; most significantly, the countries along the way are to have an option of buying gas themselves. Now, like ITGI and TAP, SEEP is “nonstrategic,” having mainly a narrowly commercial rationale. Such projects cannot make a sizeable contribution to EU’s energy security, for the market forces are unlikely by themselves to overcome the resistance against a trans-Caspian line, particularly in such a (geo)politically loaded region. But again, there may be more to it than meets the eye. Here is a telling quote from Mathew Huibert (European Energy Review, Oct. 6, 2011): “In tabling the SEE Pipeline, BP may have decided to have a bilateral discussion with Moscow. BP knows how important South Stream is to Moscow’s structural designs over European gas – just as much as Moscow knows how crucial an upstream Arctic stake is for BP. So business can be done.” Although speculative, this appears to make sense, as it is aligned with a general reticence among the Western energy companies to upset Moscow’s clear interest in not having a natural gas major shipping competitor in the Black Sea Region.

As to South Stream, there is barely a problem compounding the Southern Corridor projects that does not also affect itself. By the South Stream consortium’s own estimate, the cost of the pipeline would be €25 billion, making it one of the most expensive energy projects in the world. Then, given its huge scale (63 bcm) the problem of gas supplies is at least as bad as Nabucco’s – if one takes into account Gazprom’s struggle to keep up with its current delivery commitments (World Bank, Outlook for Energy in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union, 2010). Moreover, the opening in September 2011 of Nord Stream, the Russo-German pipeline running under-
neath the Baltic Sea, constrains Gazprom's order of priorities. Also, its access to the Caspian Basin gas resources is limited – it currently gets 10 bcma from Turkmenistan and 8 bcma from Kazakhstan – states that increasingly shift energy exports toward China – and 2 bcma from Azerbaijan. Nor does the South Stream project look any better than Nabucco on the downstream, since the two have the same purported terminus point, near Vienna. Besides, the current gas glut on the European markets, which works as an inhibitor investments in large scale international natural gas pipelines, affects indiscriminately all the projects on the table, South Stream included. This, however, works for Russia's interests, since Gazprom stands to gain from a no-new-pipeline option. By the same logic, a smaller scale project is more tolerable to Moscow than a large scale one that would cost Gazprom a sizeable European market share and a much higher volume of Caspian gas supplies.

Second, long after the October 1 bid deadline, a new project came on the table: a joint Azerbaijani-Turkish proposal made in December 2011, capitalizing on the two governments' key role in the Shah Deniz end-game. Known as TANAP in Turkey and TAGP (Turkey-Azerbaijan Gas Pipeline), the new pipeline project plans to ship up to 30 bcma from eastern to western Turkey, with the prospect of being continued from the Turkish-Bulgarian border up to Central and Eastern Europe. The estimated end of construction is 2017, at a cost of $5 to 6 billion. Baku will cover 80 percent of these costs, and Ankara the rest of them.

Unlike the other projects, TANAP is projected to be scalable till almost the capacity of Nabucco, has secure financial resources, and has Azerbaijan and Turkey as main shareholders, thus being sure to rest on a legal and financial framework much more attentive to the interests of these two states than any of the competitors.

It is in fact ironic that the two latecomers, SEEP and TANAP, have quickly turned into frontrunners. Yet this is the case not only due to the common shareholders the two projects and Shah Deniz have, but also because these proposals, for all their incipient elaboration, seem to have combined the qualities of the older contenders – Nabucco, TAP, and ITGI. SEEP would be a smaller, more affordable, and scalable version of Nabucco, designed to use the existent Turkish gas grid. TANAP will also be scalable – and actually more easily so than SEEP, which will largely consist of a patchwork of pipelines of various standards and diameters, – it will have a larger maximum capacity and will also make possible an EU-bound continuation very similar to Nabucco's design.

In January 2012, Germany's RWE, a pivotal Nabucco shareholder, expressed its willingness to collaborate with TANAP in order to secure "access to Caspian gas resources for Europe in the most economic way" (Reuters, Jan. 19, 2012). This certainly dealt another blow to Nabucco. Besides, ITGI and TAP have also made overtures to TANAP, and even Nabucco showed openness for "cooperation with other projects." (Natural Gas Europe, Jan. 25, 2012).

Thus, on balance, it is likely that the winner of this competition will be one of the two latecomers, which propose optimizations of the former three contenders. Be it as it may, the process has to get moving as soon as possible; as observed by Friedbert Pflueger, "the Shah Deniz field is being developed pursuant to a production sharing agreement (PSA) signed in 1999, subject to a finite term in 2036. Even with the recent five-year extension, the consortium will only have two decades to recover its costs and make a profit assuming that full production from Phase II of Shah Deniz is delivered to Turkey and the EU by 2017-18. The Shah Deniz shareholders are therefore under a serious 'time crunch' to accelerate the selection of gas buyers and transportation pipelines." (European Energy Review, Jan. 12, 2012). What is at stake is, apart from selecting buyers and pipeline projects, the upgrading of the South Caucasus Pipeline, the juridical and technical framework for the extension of the Turkish gas grid, plus all the necessary downstream investing, authorizing, and coordinating in the European consuming countries.
Turkey’s Role in Creating a Euro-Atlantic Security Community: Past and Present

The Ottoman security concept for the Region was largely based on the establishment and protection of security outposts in the Northern Black Sea. For example, the Strait of Kerch connecting the Azov Sea with the Black Sea was controlled by an Ottoman fortress checking passage of the Russian navy to the Black Sea. Numerous other fortresses situated practically every few hundred kilometers along a line running parallel to the Northern Black Sea coastline served as military bases securing this outer defence line as well as the east-west flow of trade. Some of these famous fortresses located in today’s Ukraine are Hotin, Bender, Küçükistanbul (“Small Istanbul” in Kamanets Podilski), Ismail and Akkerman. This entire system gradually collapsed through a series of defeats the Ottoman forces suffered, and eventually, the 1774 Treaty of Kuchuk Kainarji practically brought an end to it. However, the 1854-56 Crimean War was a manifestation of the continuing conflicts in the Region amongst the two major Black Sea powers, Russia and the Ottoman Empire, also involving other major European powers such as Great Britain, France and Sardinia. This Ottoman security doctrine of defending the economic, military and political stakes of the Empire at an outer-most periphery was considered at the time as a working system promoting economic activity in the Region as well as...
preserving peace and stability. Needless to say, this strategy also invited the development of counter-strategies in an urge to balance and eventually replace this imperial power, hence the growth of Russian influence...

**COLD WAR AND POST-COLD WAR YEARS: EMERGENCE OF A NEW POLITICAL ARCHITECTURE IN THE BLACK SEA REGION AND DEVELOPMENTS IN TURKEY’S FOCUS**

Upon a superficial look, one may conclude that not much of this basic texture has changed over time. Indeed, regardless of the birth of new independent states after the collapse of the Ottoman and the Russian Empires and the Soviet Union, the nature of the conflicts and basic elements of security strategy, as well as the large ground covering immense common interests, have more or less remained intact. However, at the same time there has been a profound transformation of the political architecture of the Region: the Euro-Atlantic area was significantly enlarged during the post-Cold War with the inclusion of Eastern Europe and most of the Balkan countries, other Northern Black Sea and Caucasus countries also entering into close partnership relations with it. Other characteristics defining this new terrain were skyrocketing economic stakes in oil and gas, new forms of security threats in the form of terrorism and non-conventional warfare, and perhaps most importantly, new elements such as democratic values, human rights and rule of law started to be included in the modern definition of security. Thus, the new scope and political architecture of this enlarged area truly represented a historic transformation. Religious and ethnic controversies have always been part of this frame.

Turkey’s central role continues to be a major component of the new political architecture in today’s multi-faceted and challenging reality. This central role has become more pronounced in the broadened definition of the boundaries of the Euro-Atlantic interests and the consequent engagements encompassing the Caucasus and the Central Asian Turkic states, with a gradual build-up of implications for the Near and the Middle East as well. Fuelled by the expectations and aspirations to “play the role-model”, Turkey’s involvement and responsibilities hugely enhanced in the Region. Uniquely situated as a country belonging to the same language group and the same cultural and racial background defining this new vast and relatively unchartered area, but also identified with the Euro-Atlantic institutions, Turkey found itself in a much more broadened regional world than in the Cold War – its role and responsibilities probably exceeding those in the Ottoman times. Interestingly enough, this new domain did not develop as a consequence of imperial interests or conquests, but in the form of new tasks Turkey was now expected to carry out as a result of those profound regional developments. Indeed, Turkey’s longest past in democratic experience in the Region, together with its secular regime, constituted a unique potential which might serve as a rich source of inspiration for the future aspirations of various countries that were overwhelmed by the urgency of “removing” their Sovietic past.

Turkey adapted well and fast to the emerging needs of the Region both during and after the Cold War, always bridging the Euro-Atlantic values and interests with the regional ones. In this connection, it is important to remember not only Turkey’s membership in the NATO, Council of Europe, OECD or the OSCE from the very inception of these organizations as well as its long-lasting relationship and customs union with the European Union, but also in the former organizations of the CENTO (Central Treaty Organization) and its economic version the RCD (Regional Cooperation and Development Organization) in co-membership with Iran, Pakistan, Great Britain and the U.S. These organizations were dissolved in 1979 as a consequence of the Iranian revolution but the RCD was replaced in 1985 by the ECO (Economic Cooperation Organization, seated in Tehran), this time leaving the Great Britain and the U.S. out.

Immediately following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Turkey took the initiative of establishing in 1992 the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC) headquartered in Istanbul, inviting all Black Sea countries including Armenia with whom Turkey had no diplomatic relations. It was really at this time that Turkey’s regional activities started intensifying in the north (Black Sea and the Caucasus) and in the east (central Asian CIS countries), clearly a shift from its previous focus in the south (Middle and Near East). Turkey was among the very first countries establishing diplomatic relations with the new CIS countries, as well as engaging in ambitious political, economic and cultural relations with them.

Turkey’s bilateral trade with its immediate Black Sea neighbours rapidly expanded and it launched impressive investment and construction activities in the region.
Turkish President Süleyman Demirel played a leading role in the conclusion of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline agreement (“Agreement of the Century”) signed by Turkey, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Kazakhstan in November 1999 at the OSCE Summit in Istanbul. This Agreement brought an entirely fresh dimension to Turkey’s diplomatic and economic perspectives defining this country as one of the major candidates for the enormous new prospects for providing the east-west route for the flow of energy resources, thus a significant new role in its “bridging” missions and in energy security. In 2003 the Turkish national pipeline company BOTAŞ launched another initiative for a transit gas pipeline NABUCCO which would transport Caspian and Middle East gas to Europe. The NABUCCO agreements were eventually signed in Istanbul by Turkey, Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania in July 2009. In the political plane, institutionalization of regular meetings of Turkish speaking countries’ heads of states, establishment of the TURKPA Parliamentary Assembly of the same regional countries based in Baku, as well as of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) headquartered in Almatı, all served as other important initiatives promoting a security community in the region.

The Turkish Navy’s initiation of collective maritime security measures in the Black Sea will be discussed later in this article in more detail.

Turkey’s systematic efforts in creating an environment for dialogue and security in this totally new world constituted a singularly important input serving the interests of regional security, with extensive implications for Black Sea security. Therefore, when the second wave of dramatic developments took place in Afghanistan and in Iraq at the outset of the century, Turkey had already gone a long way in demonstrating its leadership promoting the creation of a security community in the Black Sea Region. All these new independent states having acceded to the OSCE and to the community in the Black Sea Region. All these new independent states having acceded to the OSCE and to the Community in the Black Sea Region. This new phenomenon therefore brings to mind a crucial regional role Turkey can potentially play in Euro-Atlantic security: a more determined approach towards a gradual achievement of security and stability in the Region through the promotion of democratic norms and values. These norms and values are already binding references for the OSCE and CoE members of the Region and Turkey can certainly inspire not only the Black Sea or Central Asian CIS countries but also its neighbouring Arab nations. It is worth noting that most of the new independent states of the Caucasus and Central Asia look to Kemal Atatürk’s progressive and secular Turkey as their main source of inspiration for consolidating their status as the young, modern and proud members of the international community. This inspiration might have seriously influenced these countries’ choice of affiliation with the Euro-Atlantic

NEW PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES BROUGHT BY THE 21ST CENTURY AS TURKEY’S FOCUS-shifts to the Middle East

The extent to which Turkey can sustain this role in the interest of Black Sea regional security depends much on domestic and external challenges and strategies. Obviously, it also requires political wisdom, vision and consistency at the domestic and international leadership levels, as well as the preservation of the high quality of the Turkish diplomatic machinery. A brief assessment of the recent developments will follow in terms of some selected topics. However, it should immediately be noted that the intensity of Turkey’s focus on Black Sea security matters seems to have lasted for slightly longer than a decade and shifted towards the Southern Middle East Arab region since last mid-decade following the NATO and Allied interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Prospects: Can Turkey Play New Roles?

Democratization: Turkey’s post-Second World War role in the military security of the Region came into being by its NATO membership in 1952 as the easternmost flank of the Euro-Atlantic defence system against potential military threats during the Cold War. Turkey’s current role during the post-Cold War period has probably become even more important with NATO’s new definition of threats also including non-military challenges – para-military and terrorist threats, threats against democratic stability, and threats against the rule of law and human rights, all of which constitute outstanding concerns in the Black Sea Region. This new phenomenon therefore brings to mind a crucial regional role Turkey can potentially play in Euro-Atlantic security: a more determined approach towards a gradual achievement of security and stability in the Region through the promotion of democratic norms and values.

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institutions. As for the Arab nations, it is no secret that the developments of the Arab Spring have unveiled similar aspirations and the Turkish Government immediately responded by publicly supporting these aspirations. Indeed, Turkey is closely watched (in the very literal sense of Turkish TV broadcasts enjoying highest ratings in these countries) by those peoples as a "relative in the family" who has succeeded adopting the universally recognized norms of democracy and rule of law. Turkey's contributions as a "role-model in the family" building on this momentum at this point in time, might serve in the long run as an invaluable instrument mutually for the Euro-Atlantic security as well as for the progress, stability and prosperity of Arab peoples.

Energy Security: Another significant area of Euro-Atlantic focus in the Region concerns energy security, a new element of the post-Cold War regional economic and political architecture which entails securing alternative, secure and stable transport routes for oil and natural gas to European markets from eastern resources. Turkey has been involved proactively in this process from the very beginning of negotiations of the Baku-Tblisi-Ceyhan Oil Pipeline Agreement of November 1999 (Istanbul) and the gas Pipeline NABUCCO agreements of July 2009 (Istanbul). Turkey, as a politically stable member of both Euro-Atlantic and Black Sea institutions and geographically situated at the crossroads between Europe and the Caucasus, must continue to be a major player in the search for the safest, economically most feasible and politically most reliable transport routes.

Protracted Conflicts: Still another Black Sea security issue which closely concerns Turkey involves the "protracted conflicts" of the Caucasus.

Immediately in the aftermath of the outburst of the military conflict in August 2008 between Georgia and Russia on the issues of Abkhazia and Southern Ossetia, Turkey offered the initiation of a Platform of Stability and Cooperation. Although the idea has not yet been transformed into action, the proposal is still on the table and it may always be reactivated at a more opportune moment.

Moreover, the long-lasting conflict of Nogorna-Karabagh is an issue in which Turkey has been even more systematically engaged, in efforts to negotiate a settlement. Apart from its involvement as a member of the OSCE Minsk Group dealing with the conflict, the courageous initiative the Turkish Government took in 2009 in signing the Geneva Protocols of Normalization of Bilateral Relations with Armenia raised new hopes for a breakthrough towards the settlement of this crisis. This unique opportunity should not be allowed to stop at a dead end. Indeed, prospects for Turkey's normalization of its relations with Armenia carry an indisputably interesting incentive for this economically and geographically isolated country. Therefore Turkey's leverage in the Region particularly as a democratically stable neighbour and a singularly important economic partner should be well estimated by the parties of the conflict and by the international community in the search for a settlement. However, it would be politically unrealistic to anticipate, as it was the case immediately after the signing of the Protocols, that Turkey could agree to proceed further in the process in the absence of any progress towards the liberation of 20 per cent of Azerbaijani territory currently under Armenian occupation.

CHALLENGES

Having reviewed Turkey's past and present role as well as possible new prospects in creating a Euro-Atlantic security community, this analysis would not be complete without considering certain challenges facing Turkey in pursuing such missions and new roles.

External Challenges: In order that those missions could achieve their objectives, it would be fair to anticipate that they are also recognized and supported by the leading Euro-Atlantic powers, a sine qua non which would also require the re-examination of some aspects of the Euro-Atlantic perceptions about Turkey.

EU: Obviously, a significant challenge involving the European Union is linked to the strategic decision the EU must eventually make about having a large Muslim population as a member of its Community. This may also very likely be the key to the definition of the EU's vision about its own future role in world politics.

US: The United States, too, should reconsider its recent perception of Turkey as a "model moderate Islamic country". In the opinion of practically all Turks and all Turkish political parties, this definition is both utterly wrong and counter-productive because although the overwhelming majority of the Turkish population is Muslim and they had never thought they were "moderate" or otherwise Muslim (nobody knows what "moderately Muslim" really means), the country is constitutionally secular, therefore it is neither "Islamic" nor "moderate Islamic", nor could it constitute a "model" on that basis. It is widely believed in Turkey that labeling Turkey as a "model moderate Islamic country" in complete ignorance of all its hard-won assets as a secular country would almost imply undoing all the legendary secular reforms achieved under...
Kemal Atatürk’s leadership and it might also send entirely wrong messages to the international community: For the EU, the issue of a country in accession being highlighted for its “different” religious and “therefore cultural” background would only add to the already existing problems of popularly accepting this candidate country as “one of them”; for the Caucasus and Central Asian countries, it would take away all the reasons of inspiration felt by those nations for the Turkish Republic’s 88 year-old secular and modern background; and for the Muslim Arab peoples, the introduction of the concept of “moderate” Islam would bring a chilling, confusing and alienating effect in their feelings for their Turkish brothers in Islam, former holders of the Office of the Caliph.

Needless to say, preservation of the foregoing attitudes in the Euro-Atlantic Community would only end up being counter-productive for Turkey in the pursuance of its possible democratic leadership missions in the Region.

The Montreux Regime and Black Sea Security: Turkey has been a central actor in the major regional security arrangements of the post First World War. One very important landmark is the Montreux Convention of 1936 regulating passage between the Black Sea and the Aegean through the Turkish straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus. In essence, this Convention provides free passage for non-military maritime activity but limits military passage, tasking Turkey with the execution of its provisions. The idea is to restrict non-littoral navy presence in the Black Sea and also check the passage of Black Sea navies through the Turkish straits down to the Aegean Sea and beyond. This Convention has served as an ingenious international instrument for the security of the Black Sea as well as for the Aegean, by way of preventing the escalation of a military competition, even though the major naval forces were sometimes unhappy about Turkey’s role executing its provisions.

In that sense, Turkey has been occasionally challenged by both littoral and non-littoral states. From Turkey’s point of view, however, preservation and enforcement of those restrictions have been considered a vital national and regional security safeguard and any challenges raised against those provisions would be responded to in the most determined manner. This vital regional and national security issue from Turkey’s point of view was once defined in the following words in 1947 by General Kazım Karabekir, then Speaker of the Parliament and the former commander of Turkey’s eastern front against occupying Russian forces in the 1920s: “Turkish Straits are the throat of this Country, just as the eastern frontline provinces of Kars and Ardahan constitute the backbone of its body”. This was a historically popular reaction to the Russian threat those days against Turkey’s determined attitude in executing the restrictive provisions of the Convention in the face of Moscow’s pressure to make a more favourable use of passage for its navy through the Straits. In time, with the huge increase in the number of free passage of commercial vessels and the emerging phenomenon of the transportation of enormous quantities of gas and oil, Turkey’s concerns regarding the safety of the Straits were multiplied many-fold in view of new navigation and environment problems.

Meantime, pressure for flexing the restrictive rules regarding the passage of military vessels continued on and off. Most recently, similar concerns were raised by the United States supported by some Black Sea governments early this century. The justification was to strengthen the fight against escalating terrorist threat and to upgrade the capabilities of the NATO naval forces in the Black Sea. The Russian Federation strongly opposed this idea and Turkey, although a NATO member, also had strong reservations on the grounds that accommodating such requests would amount to a violation of the Montreux Convention and furthermore, the safety of the Black Sea against terrorist threats was actually secured within the framework of the Convention, the Turkish Navy for one being actively engaged in operations such as the Blackseafor and Black Sea Harmony.

The Blackseafor (Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Force), initiated by the Turkish Navy in 2001 and joined by the Russian, Ukrainian, Georgian and Romanian Navies, was the first such joint cooperation mechanism for maritime security in the Black Sea. The Blackseafor was followed by another initiative by the Turkish Navy in 2004, namely Operation Black Sea Harmony, which was launched as a twinning operation of the Mediterranean Active Endeavour and was joined by the Russian, Ukrainian and Romanian Navies although all Black Sea littoral navies are still invited to join. The accession of Romania and Bulgaria to the NATO in the meantime also raised NATO presence in the Black Sea and parties eventually felt that many of their concerns were being addressed.

The issue, however, may still be revived in the future, which is a standing concern for Turkey who has consistently defended the word and the spirit of the Montreux Convention successfully, although not always fully satisfying all parties concerned. It should be noted that during the harshest times of the Cold War the Black Sea remained peaceful, the situation is much better now; and
Turkey will always be more than appreciative of the understanding and support from the international community for its efforts.

Internal Challenges: Apart from those external issues, the following problems facing Turkey in this domain are self-rooted.

Prioritization of Democratization Objectives in Turkish Foreign Policy: The Turkish administrations, its political parties, civil society and mass media have not yet fully recognized the crucial leadership mission Turkey can play in promoting the Euro-Atlantic democratic values in the Region. This “mission” has yet to acquire due strategic foreign policy priority, just as it was recently declared in connection with the developments of the “Arab Spring”. This last one, personally voiced and followed up by Prime Minister Erdoğan, was almost the first such example of a foreign policy move given top priority but it remains to be seen if this move will not constitute an isolated case. Indeed, although Turkey always set the example of a country representing the Euro-Atlantic values in its relations within the Region and always adopted a guiding role for the new independent states of the Region in the process of their accession and adaptation to the Euro-Atlantic institutions, it almost never went so far as to actively and systematically engage in promoting the institutional values of the Euro-Atlantic. Some exceptions have been the Government’s seconded international officers in the OSCE and its contributions particularly to democratic policing and fight against trafficking. It may now be the right time for Turkey to identify and attribute high priority to a foreign policy objective to systematically engage in playing a lead role promoting a wider range of Euro-Atlantic norms and values in the Black Sea Region and in Central Asia just as it has been declared for the Middle East.

In the same vein, if Turkey is to set a foreign policy objective as a role model in this domain, it should review some of its own deficits in complying with the requirements of rule of law and urgently rectify some shortcomings particularly believed to be currently handicapping the judicial system of the country with adverse repercussions on human rights.

PKK Terrorism: Finally, problems inflicted in Turkey by the terrorist organization PKK continue to constitute a grave security threat with trans-boundary implications. It would be plain commonsense to conclude that unless its own main security issue is settled, Turkey will always feel handicapped in sufficiently playing its roles in promoting security in the Region, a situation which would hardly serve the interests of members of the Euro-Atlantic Community.

CONCLUSIONS

Turkey has always been a major actor in European security. Its critical role in serving the Euro-Atlantic security has its roots in the Cold War. Stemming from those roots and developed with the birth of a new political architecture in the wider Euro-Atlantic security zone including the Black-Sea and CIS Countries in the post Cold-War period, Turkey has assumed exceptionally responsible new roles unprecedented in its history. The central role-model mission thus came to be attributed to Turkey is really a product of its Euro-Atlantic identification and its cultural, ethnic and geographical commonality with the new members of the Region. Responding to the needs and anticipations of this unique situation, Turkey has engaged in a series of systematic efforts to extensively promote bilateral and multilateral relations with the new countries of the Region, bridging in the process the basic interests and values of the Euro-Atlantic Community with those of the new members of the Region. The success of those efforts have yet to stand the test of time and will depend upon Turkey’s determination in the continuation of its past policies as well as in its assumption of new leadership roles.

In pursuing these policies Turkey will be faced by external and internal challenges. In view of the historically significant responsibilities and stakes involved, both Turkey and its international partners should spare no efforts in solidarity towards the achievement of their goals in the further development of the Euro-Atlantic Community. It is no secret that there is a long way to go before fully accomplishing the mission but in view of the impressive achievements already recorded, there is every reason to believe that the potential for success and the stakes involved largely outweigh the challenges in the final analysis, making every effort worthwhile.

SOURCES

1) The article is based on a statement delivered by the author at the 10th Black Sea Security Program Regional Workshop organized at the Kadir Has University in Istanbul by the Harvard Kennedy School, 3-5 October 2011.
2) CENTO was established in 1959 and headquartered in Ankara, RCD was established in 1964 and seated in Tebran.
3) The Central Asian Countries did not accede to the CoE.
4) Protocols are pending ratification in both Armenia and Turkey.
Black Sea Region Cooperation Threats and Opportunities: what they mean for Ukraine

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Integration in the European Union’s four sea basins: the Baltic, Mediterranean, Caspian and Black Seas. Our analysis touches on four main themes: the Four Freedoms, security and political issues, energy and transport, plus environmental and marine policy.

Threats to Black Sea Region Cooperation

Regional multilateral initiatives tend to be not very productive, because countries often see more benefit to bilateral formats of cooperation. Still, bilateral agreements by their very nature threaten to isolate countries that are not party to these agreements and increase the risk of mutual distrust.

The expansion of the EU raised new barriers to integration between the new EU members and other countries in the region. The signing of bilateral trade agreements in this region could further complicate trade by leading to a system of uncoordinated, even incompatible rules. Russia and Turkey are more inclined towards bilateral cooperation, which suits the goals of the regional leadership of these countries. This complicates the protection of their own economic interests for countries like Ukraine, who are interested in increasing the penetration of their own products and
services on the markets of as many countries as possible in the region.
The oft-mentioned “fatigue” felt in the EU towards further expansion suggests a lack of capacity to continue the process of regional integration. The instruments available through the Neighborhood Policy are seen in Brussels and the various “neighboring” capitals as largely ineffective.

**THE FOUR FREEDOMS**

The main threat to economic cooperation in the Black Sea region is restrictions on the four freedoms – free movement of people, goods, services and capital. For example, complicated visa procedures reduce the volume of cross-border traffic of migrant labor and trade. They also engender distrust and lack of confidence in the effectiveness of cooperation among partner countries. In the financial sector, dialog mostly takes place among powerful financial centers in developed countries: most countries in this region do not belong to either this group or the European Union.

**ENERGY AND TRANSPORT**

Despite the EU’s considerable economic clout in the Black Sea region, other countries lead in terms of security in this region. This is partly due to the complicated and cumbersome procedure of approving decisions as well as by differences in the way security challenges are perceived among EU member countries. For instance, the EU’s Black Sea Synergy is not a traditional comprehensive political initiative but is aimed at supporting ongoing regional cooperation, especially sector-based: “The Commission does not have in mind to propose an independent Black Sea strategy, insofar as broader EU policy in the region is already formulated in the pre-accession strategy towards Turkey, the European Neighborhood Policy and our strategic partnership with Russia.”

**ENERGY AND TRANSPORT**

Growing demand for oil and gas worldwide is exacerbating conflicts of interests among three groups of countries: producers, transporters and consumers. Given that Black Sea basin countries include all three categories, it is hard for them to come to an agreement about rules for trading in and transporting fuel.

For instance, the EU’s ambition to reduce its energy dependence on Russia by transporting resources directly from the Caspian and avoiding Russian territory has tended to increase mutual distrust and could be counterproductive to strengthening energy security in the region. Indeed, any model of energy security in this region will fail if it does not take Russia’s interests into account.

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

The large number of environmental initiatives in the Black Sea basin have similar goals and instruments, which raises the risk of duplication of efforts. Platforms for cooperation in the region are unstable, because a narrowly sectoral approach does not permit the inclusion of issues like the sustainable development of the marine basin: marine transport, the competitiveness of marine business, employment in the marine sector, or research and environmental protection of marine territory. Moreover, cooperation largely depends on bilateral formats whose effectiveness is often low because national environmental policies are generally not in sync. Finally, the ineffectiveness of so many regional initiatives is also partly the result of insufficient funding.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR REGIONAL INTEGRATION**

The Agreement on a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area between the EU and Ukraine should be seen as an instrument for reforming the country’s state institutions and regulatory environment that could improve the competitiveness of Ukraine’s economy and lead to a greater penetration of Ukrainian goods and services on the markets of other countries in the region as well. The objective of economic integration should also include dropping restrictions and exceptions regarding the trade of “sensitive” commodities that are currently in place with all of Ukraine’s partners in the region. This is why signing an FTA agreement with CIS countries will not only not conflict with economic integration with EU countries, but will actually complement the future agreement with the EU.

For Ukraine to succeed in its foreign policy approach to the Black Sea region, it must not only improve relations with the region’s leaders, Russia and
Turkey, but also establish two-way dialog with Bulgaria and Romania. The EU’s Black Sea Synergy initiative offers opportunities for joint projects to increase energy security and protect the environment. Finally, Ukraine could become a guarantor of stability in regional conflict zones, a role that is suited to its image as an experienced “peace-making country.”

The European Energy Community could be a promising, unifying format for cooperation among countries in the Black Sea region, as it includes a series of working mechanisms for resolving conflicts on energy issues. Implementing the EU Directives listed in the Protocol on accession of Ukraine to the Energy Community Agreement will encourage investment in the country’s energy sector, as regulatory policy becomes more predictable, and greater environmental security.

NGOs and the private sector are an underestimated synergistic element in environmental policy. Nongovernmental organizations are proving highly effective in providing assistance to local governments, who are the weakest link in the chain for undertaking regional projects. For instance, the achievements of the Danube/Black Sea targeted working group in optimizing strategic funding and coordinating financial instruments that operate in the region demonstrate the effectiveness of establishing cooperation between government organizations and the non-government sector. The private sector could also be more actively engaged in funding projects to protect aqueous resources in the Black Sea basin, in tandem with new EU financial assistance instruments.

**SOURCES**

1. These recommendations were prepared by ICPS analysts based on a study posted to the site of the "EU SEAS" project at http://www.eu-seas.eu. The project is funded by the European Commission under its 7th Framework Research Programme (7FP).
3. The weakest links in EU energy security are the countries in the last wave of expansion. Through such sectoral initiatives as the Interstate Oil and Gas Transport to Europe (INO Gates) and the Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia (TRACECA), the EU cooperates with countries in both regions to ensure the reliability of energy infrastructure and to diversify both sources of supplies and transportation routes.
5. This includes the Black Sea Synergy instrument and the Integrated Coastal Zone Management initiative.
6. Ukraine could help improve relations between Georgia and Russia in the context of international security organizations and initiatives where the country is already a member, such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), NATO’s Partnership for Peace Program, and the annual Munich Conference on Security Policy.
8. In addition to the European Neighborhood Policy Instrument (ENPI), the new grant pool created by the Neighborhood Investment Facility (NIF) provides enormous potential for funding initiatives to protect aqueous resources.
My presentation aims to provide, after a short historical foray, an overview of the main risks and challenges identified both on national and European level in relation to the Black Sea. Based on the findings, the core part of my presentation will focus on the solutions that Romanian Ministry of Administration and Interior has identified in order to efficiently respond to these challenges. Our approach in tackling these risks and vulnerabilities is mainly based on four levels: European, regional, bilateral and local.

The Black Sea has a great historical heritage and it is nearly impossible to talk about a subject related to this area without pointing out a few milestones in its vast history.

As you well know, many of the colonial and commercial activities of ancient Greece and Rome, and of the Byzantine Empire, centered on the Black Sea. After 14th century, when the Ottoman Turks conquered Constantinople, the Black Sea was virtually closed to foreign commerce. Nearly 400 years later, in 1856, the Treaty of Paris reopened the sea to the commerce of all nations.

From the Crusades to the recent collapse of the Soviet Union, the Black Sea has witnessed often-tumultuous religious and political change. In the face of countless conquests through the ages, the peoples in the Black Sea region have endured and survived, and today represent a remarkable mixture of cultures and religions.

Nowadays, this ancient sea means many things to the people who live on its shores. Since it still is a regional trading center of paramount importance, with major ports dotted all over its coast, the
Black Sea continues to provide its inhabitants with treasured resources – major commercial fisheries, a diversity of marine life, world-class beaches, and perhaps a more tangible record of our past than previously imagined.

The Black Sea is now surrounded by six countries – Bulgaria and Romania on the west, Ukraine on the north, Russia and Georgia on the east, and Turkey on the south – each of them having a rich history and culture, worthy of exploration.

Placed at the crossroad of three highly important areas – Europe, Middle East and Central Asia – the Black Sea area involves many opportunities, but also challenges. The region is an increasingly developing market, as it is an important link for energy and transportation channels.

However, it is also a region marked by unsolved problems, an important area where asymmetrical risks can be met, with many economic and environment issues, thus having a great potential for cross border crime such as illegal migration and organized crime.

Far from being a limit area or a buffer zone, the Black Sea area is a connection point of the highest strategic importance, linking the European Community, which acts as a security supplier and energy consumer, to the Middle East – the Caspian region – Central Asia which act as energy supplier and security consumer.

For us, as an EU member state and soon to be member of the Schengen area, one of the main risks and future challenges seems to be illegal migration. Low detection figures at the Black Sea do not necessary mean a low risk of illegal migration. This may still take place – even to a large extent – especially, if circumstances provide opportunities for illegal border crossings.

I should also say that, as presented in FRONTEX specialized risk analysis product, Romania is not facing now major issues related to illegal migration directly linked to the Black Sea. For the sake of clarity it should be understood that we do not have a large number of migrants, single or in groups, coming on ships, hidden or not, and trying to enter illegally on our territory.

Considering our strategically geographical position in this area, we are now facing two different situations related to the Black Sea area: first of all, we had cases of illegal migrants from the neighboring countries who tried to illegally cross our land borders, especially with Ukraine, in order to pursue their journey to western countries. Most of them come from countries from around the Black Sea or Africa, and they are usually smuggled by criminal networks.

The second situation is represented by the migrant flow coming from Turkey and crossing via Greece and further to Western Europe. Our analysis, together with our Bulgarian colleagues and FRONTEX, showed that after our accession to the Schengen Area there is a possibility that those migrant flows might change their route via Bulgaria and Romania.

The second risk identified in the Black Sea Region is organized crime. According to EU Organized Crime Threat Assessment Report published by EUROPOL in 2009, the Black Sea with its related waterways, based on its geographical location between Asia and Europe, is defining the so-called South East Criminal Hub and creates opportunities for both illegal trade and organized crime.

Heroin trafficking routes continue to be fed by large scale opium cultivation in Afghanistan. According to the same EUROPOL Report opium products (opiates) reach Europe through the Balkan routes and the Northern Black Sea route across Central Asia and Russia.

Figures are also showing that the Black Sea region, including Turkey and especially the port of Constanta, receives flows of cocaine which are then fed towards Western Europe.

The Black Sea, Caucasus and Central Asian countries (e.g. Georgia and Kyrgyzstan) are considered possible future sources of human beings trafficking, even if there has been no serious threat as yet.

One of the most important issues that should be taken into account in the context of the global increase in organized crime is the risk that the main transport routes in the Black Sea should turn into main transit routes for illegal activities. Suspicious commercial ships will be a main target in combating the organized crime phenomenon. Continuous surveillance of pre-defined areas is regarded as a necessity.

Last but not least, I would like to emphasize that we need to identify the main border crossing points used by organized crime where we should...
Bulgaria, Romania performs joint patrolling in this area and they send their reports to FRONTEX on a monthly base.

The FRONTEX Agency also organized a Joint EPN Operation, called EUXINE 2008, which took place in October 2008 in the operational Hotel area, where 12 EU and third countries participated. It covered the EU external maritime border in Romania and Bulgaria and included the Danube channels Sulina and Chilia.

A large amount of specific and operational objectives were achieved during the operation. I will mention only some of them:

• First, the National Coordination Centre was established. At the same time, the subzone Hotel 1 was extended to the Danube channels and two new Local Operational Centers were established in Tulcea and in Constanta. The two Centers are directly connected to NCC which is located at the Headquarter of the General Inspectorate of the Border Police in Bucharest. This pilot project aims to establish an efficient EPN coordination network in the EU by connecting both national authorities and the EU in one cooperation mechanism.

• Training sessions were organized for national officials and guest officers.

• A Handbook of best practices for the control of maritime traffic at the Danube channels was drafted.

• Last but not least, cooperation and mutual assistance both with the member states and with third countries were improved.

Another important initiative of the European Union and the Romanian Ministry of Administration and Interior for the improvement of the regional cooperation in South Eastern Europe, with a positive impact also on the security of the Wider Black Sea Area is the Project: "Police Cooperation Regional Support to Strengthen the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) Centre/SELEC for Combating Trans-border Crime".

The Project, launched on the 7th of April, is financed by the European Commission in amount of €1,500,000 and has a total duration of 24 months. Romania is project leader and Italy and Austria are project partners. Apart from Romania, where the SECI Centre/SELEC is located, the project activities will be undertaken also in the area of joint patrolling along the entire maritime border of the Black Sea, and even up to the Danube Delta since the autumn of 2008. The area was called Hotel within the EPN mechanism. Together with
Turkey, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and other southeast European countries.

The overall objective of the action is to provide regional assistance in order to upgrade the SECI Centre/SELEC capacities for preventing and combating organized crime in Western Balkans and Turkey, by bringing existent regional mechanisms into compliance with the EU provisions, standards and best practices. The main objectives of the Project are:

• to improve the strategic, organizational and financial development of the SECI Center/SELEC;
• to develop the expertise and capacities of SECI Centre/SELEC to receive strategic and operational analytical support and to use effectively products and tools provided by Europol for producing a threat assessment;
• to enhance Data Protection Standards and Procedures in compliance with European standards; and
• to improve operational support capacities of the SECI Centre/SELEC.

The final beneficiary of this project is not only the SECI Center organizational and financial capacity, but also the national and regional law enforcement agencies and the law enforcement units directly involved in regional police cooperation and common investigations, dealing with the types of crimes specific to the SECI Centre/SELEC task forces. As you perhaps already know, the taskforces within the Center are focused mainly on countering human and drugs trafficking, fraud and smuggling activities, financial and cyber crime and others.

Shifting from the European onto the regional level, one of the most important initiatives of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC) towards the worrying evolution of organized crime in the Black Sea region was the conclusion reached at Kerkira, on the 2nd of October 1998 – the “Agreement Among the Governments of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Participating States on Cooperation in Combating Crime, in Particular in its Organized Forms”. By virtue of Article 6 of this Agreement, the Working Group on combating crime, in particular in its Organized Forms has been set up. Since May 2003 Romania has been coordinator of this Working Group, the present mandate being the fourth one. Taking into account that the activity of the Working Group was constantly appreciated at the level of the Permanent International Secretariat of BSEC and by the representatives of the member states, and that the External Affairs Ministers’ Council referred to Romania’s substantial contribution to the Working Group’s activity, Romania is prepared to take over, through the Ministry of Administration and Interior, the fifth mandate as coordinating country, for June 2011 – July 2013. Among the most important achievements during the Romanian chairmanship of the Working Group, I would like to mention:

• drafting of the first annual report for the year 2009 on the cross-national criminality trend in the Black Sea Area;
• evaluation of the implementing stage for the Regional Plan on Strengthening the Criminal Justice Response to Human Trafficking in the Black Sea Region;
• development of the cooperation between the BSEC and other international organizations such as the United Nation Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM);
• and finally, planning and carrying out ministerial conferences, seminars and meetings on issues such as countering terrorism.

The overall guiding principles for effective cooperation and coordination of the efforts paid by countries in the Black Sea Area were assigned, in 2006, to the Black Sea Cooperation Forum, which was established in order to improve cooperation between border authorities. Its objective is to encourage participating countries to hold meetings, debates, exchange information and experience, as well as to develop the basic ideas and principles of an efficient cooperation mechanism.

Experts meetings are regularly taking place, in order to schedule common actions aiming to counter illegal migration, drugs trafficking, terrorism, smuggling, crisis management or organization of joint exercises and trainings in the above-mentioned areas, as well as search and rescue missions, data and intelligence related to the monitoring of suspect vessels, procedures of boarding and control
of suspect vessels. National Contact Points were set up in order to improve the level of coordination and communication. The system allowed, within the technical limits, a careful monitoring of the suspect ships navigating in the Black Sea and rapid intervention in cases of threats.

In the same framework, it was decided to extend regional cooperation from the level of operational and practical data and information exchange to the level of planning and carrying out multinational exercises on sea. Thus, since 2004, annual joint exercises were carried out in the Black Sea, in the field of search and rescue missions, countering illegal migration and illegal exploitation of biological resources and information sharing.

During the 4th Meeting of the Border Police/Coast Guards Leaders in the Black Sea States, which took place in Ukraine, in 2003, it was decided to set up the Black Sea Borders Coordination and Information Center in Burgas/Bulgaria and National Coordination Centers, in each Black Sea state. The operational exchange of data and information on alert lists with suspect ships at the level of all Black Sea states is carried out through the Coordination and Information Center at the Black Sea Burgas – Bulgaria. The Center manages the databases and the operational records of suspect ships (List of Suspect Ships – LOSS) from the entire Black Sea Area. Presently, the data base consists of 156 ships.

Since 2007, after a pilot project and the evaluation process on the information sharing organized by the Romanian Border Police, the Automated Information System AIES application has been implemented. The Russian Federation made it available to all border agencies of the Black Sea states. This application provides exchange of information in a secure way and in real time.

Using this AIES on-line application, the border police institutions of the Black Sea countries can better monitor the suspect ships in the area and are able to interrogate or to on-line implement all the ships declared suspect of a certain illegal activity.

In order to prepare Schengen membership, the Ministry of Administration and Interior has started negotiations with Bulgarian counterparts on a common approach of illegal migration. This will involve common patrols in the border area, increased information exchange between law enforcement agencies and common risk analysis or special radio frequencies for common operations. One major breakthrough is that our police officers can now cross the border during special operations or in pursuit of perpetrators.

On a regular basis, bilateral agreements were enforced with Ukraine and Bulgaria in order to set up common rules for navigation on the Black Sea, as well as on the Danube.

Romania used EU funds to develop a best practice surveillance system for the Black Sea coast, geographically placed under Romanian responsibility, named SCOMAR. It is an operational system based on latest technology, IT devices, radars and video cameras which enables detection, tracking and identification of the ships performing illegal activities in Black Sea Area. The system is also used for search and rescue operations.

The whole construction consists in a network of mobile and fixed communication means which send information in real time to a Command and Control Center. At this point, information is analyzed and processed in order to draft the most appropriate operational decision to deploy air, naval or land mobility means in order to give the most effective solution to the identified threat.

I would conclude by saying that there are many geopolitical factors influencing the development of the crime phenomena in the Black Sea area, especially during this very active historical period. Some of these can be listed as:

- institutional, legal, political and economic developments in relevant third countries including North Africa, Middle East and Wider Mediterranean Area;
- Schengen and the EU enlargement;
- local border traffic agreements at the eastern external borders of the EU;
- global food prices reached historic highs in 2008; and
- last but not least, the regional conflicts.

Exploring, identifying, implementing and developing as many cooperation initiatives as possible guarantee an efficient approach of the criminal phenomena both by the Black Sea countries and also by other organizations such as the European Union.
In this article attention is paid to five selected aspects of the Romanian foreign policy. We chose them as the most topical in the last years and those which both present challenge and opportunity for Bucharest, namely:

- Further integration in the European Union and correspondence with taken obligations, including the problem of the Schengen zone entry;
- AMD deployment on the territory of Romania and cooperation with the USA;
- Desire to occupy the niche of regional leader in the Black Sea – Caspian region;
- Resolution of the Transnistrian conflict;
- Cooperation with the South Caucasian states in the energy sphere.

If some of these are well-discussed in media and academia, others, such as cooperation with the Caucasus states or role in the Transnistrian conflict have not yet caught enough attention of the experts.

COOPERATION WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE SCHENGEN ZONE PROBLEM

Romania’s Schengen zone accession remains one of the biggest problems since it became an EU member. The main opponents for the Romanian quick accession are Italy, France, Germany and the Netherlands. This problem is much wider than just correspondence with the technical conditions (among which remains the question of airports’ readiness). The main political questions which remain are the high level of corruption in Romania, justice system reforming, lack of control and integration of Roma population, as well as possibility to bring pressure on Romania in other issues needed to be improved using decline to access the Schengen zone as leverage. The simultaneous access of Bulgaria and Romania, as well as synchronous open of all borders has long been considered. However, today due to the low level of Bulgarian readiness, experts are discussing the possibility to separate accession of two states. Even more, the propositions of step-by-step accession have been made – first air borders, later sea and land ones.

Several times, states such the Netherlands, tried to set additional conditions for Schengen zone accession.
This has been strongly rejected by Romania, which insists that Schengen zone participation is a purely technical question and not political or one which requires additional reforms in the judicial sphere, fighting with corruption (because both countries already have been under monitoring mechanisms of the EU). At the same time Romania recognizes its problems in these spheres and necessity for the further reforms.

Romania has some support among the so-called “Latin group” – France, Portugal, Spain and Italy, as well as from Belgium. Some experts think that this caused by the certain caution felt towards Poland’s policy in the Eastern direction as well as its Americanization.

**COOPERATION WITH THE USA AND DEPLOYMENT OF THE ANTI-MISSILE DEFENSE SYSTEM (AMD)**

Cooperation between the USA and Romania is mostly in the military-strategic sphere. After the withdrawal of the contingent in Iraq, Romanian soldiers still serve in Afghanistan. Also Romania provides the USA access to its airport “Mihai Kogălniceanu” and sea port Constanța for the needs of the NATO military operation in Afghanistan.

On 3 May, 2011, the decision to deploy a segment of the U.S. AMD system in Europe on Romanian territory was approved by the Supreme Defense Council of Romania. Insisting that system is not directed against Russia, who opposed this project, nevertheless the President of Romania announced that due to the realization of this project, the Romanian state would receive the highest level of security in its history as it would increase strategic regional potential.

Also the USA is planning to use 1/3 of the Deveselu air base to host a U.S. Ballistic Missile Defense System which employs the SM-3 interceptor (also referred to as the “Aegis Ashore System”). The deployment to Romania is anticipated to occur by 2015 within the timeframe of the second phase of the European Phased Adaptive Approach – the U.S. national contribution to NATO missile defense architecture. Up to 500 military can be deployed there in the future.

In Eastern Europe, one can witness a de facto change of U.S. focus from Poland to Romania. Whereas Romania has weaker positions within NATO and the EU, it is more prepared for more unconditional cooperation with the United States than Poland or the Czech Republic. Both of these have, at various times, demonstrated independent policy in the region. Moreover, such cooperation plays into the hands of Romanian aspiration to become a regional leader in the Black Sea region.

**REGIONAL LEADERSHIP**

For the past few years, Romania has been trying – with variable intensity – to take on the role of regional leader in the Black Sea region and Eastern or South-Eastern Europe. Bucharest perceives this process which includes a constant initiating of the new projects of regional cooperation, as a possibility to enhance its role within the EU. However none of these projects can be named as successful or fully implemented, not least because of a lack of confidence in relations with its neighbors, desire of other regional states to take a leadership position, lack of resources and problems of internal politics. As a result, such efforts are active but sporadic. At the same time some elements are rather successful and seen as competing to other regional states.

Romania is also turning its head towards the Danube region, by, for example, promoting EU Strategy for the Danube region. In addition, Bucharest has intensified its role in the activities towards Transnistrian conflict settlement. Romania has become active in the South Caucasian region, which facilitates both regional leadership plans and putting forward interests in the energy sphere.

Romania considers the Eastern Partnership as a competing project to its desire of regional leadership. It has welcomed – with restraint – the initiative of Poland and Sweden, despite the fact that its aims totally coincided with Romanian intentions of the more active role in the Eastern Europe. The cold reaction could be explained as Sweden and Poland did not consult with Romania before initiating, as well as this plan had been seen as a competition to the Black Sea Synergy actively promoted by Bucharest.

**RELATIONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES**

The main priorities of the Romanian foreign policy and the basis of bilateral relations in 2011 have been set by the respective document of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania. The list of countries for consolidation and development of partnership looks interesting, i.e. USA, Germany, United Kingdom, Hungary, Italy, France and South Korea, also partnership with Poland which preside in the EU in 2011 should come to a new
level of the political dialogue. At the same time, separately and specifically, it emphasized relations with Moldova, Ukraine, Serbia and China. With Turkey, separate attention is paid to economic relations, mutual investments, cooperation on the markets of third countries and to the undersea cable project Constanța – Istanbul. Apart stays a big bloc dedicated to the cooperation with the countries of South Caucasus and Central Asia, the core motif of which is energy sphere.

Ethnic border problems remain among its foreign policy priorities, particularly relations with Moldova, Ukraine and Hungary. This is confirmed by the level of official documents, academic and public discussions, as well as the comment made by the Government of Hungary that clashes between Hungarians and Romanians in Transylvania in March 2010 were the “continuation of the Ceaușescu policy of ethnic assimilation”.

According to Romanian experts, the change of border delimitations with Ukraine and the deterioration of relations with Kyiv are not among Romanian top 10 foreign policy priorities. This is because the weakening of Ukraine is perceived as Russia’s strength, which is seen as a much more serious threat to the national interests of Romania. In 2010-2011 period, there was a trend to present Romania as one of the biggest problems of the Ukrainian foreign policy particularly pertaining to questions related to ethnic problems, Danube river disputes, the Island Zmeiiny proceedings at International Court of Justice, competing projects in the Black Sea region, and what was seen as the biggest threat – statements of the President Basescu on the necessity to change borders with Ukraine and Moldova by not accepting Second World War agreements.

Relations between Romania and Russia remain uneasy. Despite the announcement of “reloading” and improvement of relations in 2011, two difficult questions remain on the agenda. One of the main sources of tension is Moldova. Still back in 2009, Russia accused Romania of interfering in Moldovan internal affairs. During the parliamentary elections. In its turn, Romania regularly insists on the withdrawal of Russian military forces from Transnistria. Yet, in November 2010, President Basescu proposed to change the Russian military presence to European force that would include Romanian forces. Moreover, Bucharest has been concerned by the prolongation of the Russian Black Sea Fleet deployment in the Crimea. President Basescu asked why, if Russia was friendly to the Black Sea states, did it need such a big fleet in such a small sea.

**ENERGY SECURITY**

The main priority of the Romanian foreign policy in South Caucasus and Central Asia is the development of projects aimed energy resource diversification. Romania elaborates two parallel projects in gas sphere – Nabucco and AGRI (Azerbaijan – Georgia- Romania Interconnector). It also promotes the oil pipeline Constanța – Trieste. Noteworthy is the official explanation of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs concerning main interests in the cooperation with the Central Asia states i.e. the necessity to deter China’s diplomatic and financial efforts in the Caspian Sea.

In 2010 Romania and Azerbaijan initiated a project of liquid gas transportation from Azerbaijan to Europe – AGRI, considering this project to be one which would change the energy situation in the region. The Memorandum “On Cooperation in the sphere of gas supply” was signed by Azerbaijan, Georgia and Romania in Bucharest in April 2010. A company head-quartered in Bucharest has been established for a feasibility study. The project is expected to transport gas from Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum line to the terminal of the liquid gas at the Black Sea shore of Georgia, then by tankers to the Romanian sea port Constanța, and from there by the Romanian gas infrastructure to European states. Hungary has also expressed its interest in this project.

Together with Nabucco this project will greatly contribute to the Southern corridor of the European energy security since it will guarantee the shortest route for Caspian energy resources supply to the European markets. In this way Romanian interests overlap with those of Turkey, which for a long time has presented itself as the best transit route to the European market for the Caspian energy resources.

Special attention is paid to the signing of the Action Plan for strategic partnership with Azerbaijan, which is seen as a main partner in the region. For only for the past 5 years, 10 official visits on the level of presidents (five from each side) took place, which evidence a highest level of cooperation between two states, which both presidents have identified as strategic. The core of these relations is the energy sphere. Romania pursues a policy of diversification of energy sources and markets. Next to the energy sphere, Romania would like to intensify cooperation in defense and military industries. Undoubtedly, supporting territorial integrity of Azerbaijan in the question of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Romania will get extra points in the relations with Baku.
**ROMANIAN POSITION ON THE TRANSNISTRIAN CONFLICT**

The Transnistrian conflict in its current stage doesn’t allow Romania to fully realize the potential of its relations with Moldova. It jeopardizes regional security and balance of power, and also prevents the realization of several trans-border projects.

For a long time Romania has not been involved as an active actor in the peace settlement of the Transnistrian conflict, not the least because of active Romanization of Moldova which, since the early 1990-s has been a catalyst of the conflict with left bank of the country. This has created a controversial image of Bucharest and negative starting conditions for involvement.

Romania’s position on Transnistrian conflict today is formulated based on relations with four actors who are involved in this process: Moldova, Russia, Ukraine and the European Union.

**Romania-Moldova**

Win of the Alliance for European Integration at the elections in Moldova in 2009 has increased Romanian influence in Moldova. At the same time revenge of the Communist party at the local election in 2011 balanced the possibility of other states to be involved.

Officially Romania totally supports territorial integrity of Moldova as an independent state and its aspiration for a closer association with the European Union. Moreover, official Bucharest emphasizes that reintegration of Moldova in its internationally recognized borders is a necessary condition for security and stability in the European context.

In Transnistria, close historical ties between Bucharest and Chişinău are perceived as a threat and Romania itself is considered an interested and biased side. The possibility of the unification of these two countries, which Transnistria is against, is seen as the biggest threat. Despite the official position on territorial integrity and independence of Moldova, some statements, first of all of the President Basescu, are contradicting it. For example, he stated that Moldova could enter Romania in the next 25 years and the new border of Romania would be on the Dniester River. This was perceived as the unification would take place without Transnistria as a part of Moldova. However, the idea of one Romanian-Moldovan state, despite widespread opinion, is not shared by the population of the right bank. According to the latest polls only 5% of Moldovans supports such an idea. At the same time, apart from the basic interest in conflict settlement as a neighbor country, Romania can always play the card of securing the rights of its citizens due to the great amount of Moldovan citizens who have Romanian citizenship as a second one (only officially this number reaches 120,000).

Yet one question which worries Transnistria is the enhancement military cooperation between NATO’s member – Romania and neutral Moldova.12

**Romania – Russia**

Up to 2010, certain experts were of the opinion that Ukraine should not involve Romania as a co-mediator as this would dismiss Ukraine’s chances for regional leadership. Moreover, disputable issues between the two countries, e.g. Island Zmeiny, Danube Delta and the dispersal of Romanian passports to Ukrainian citizens stood in the way of the creation of appropriate conditions for cooperation regarding the Transnistrian issue. Some changes happened recently, when the question of the conflict settlement was discussed in Bucharest at the ministries of foreign affairs meeting in May 2011.13

**Romania – Ukraine**

On 15 February, 2005 President of Romania T. Basescu – during negotiations in Moscow – raised a question of Bucharest’s involvement in the conflict resolution process in Transnistria. He underlined that if the problem was important for Ukrainian security,14 it was also important for Romanian security. However, at that moment this question was left without attention due to the formal acceptance of so-called “Yushchenko plan” by all interested parties.

The Russian leadership returned to this question in October 2010, when upon the results of the trilateral negotiations between leaders of France, Germany and Russia in Deauville (France), President Medvedev stated that success of the Moldovan-Transnistrian conflict settlement depended not only on Russia, Moldova, Transnistria and the European Union, but also on Romania. This was perceived as an invitation to join the process and to enliven politics of Bucharest in this direction.

Active work of the Russian Federation on Romanian involvement can be seen as a desire to minimize the role of other mediators, including Ukraine. Paradoxically, one of the main tasks for Romania is minimization the role of Russian in the region, especially in Moldova.

Both Romania and Russia strive to expand their influence to Moldova. Some experts noted the use of anti-Romanian and anti-Russian rhetoric in both countries. For example, much more references to the desire of Romania to annex Moldova can be found in Russian media than in Romanian. Moreover, any unwillingness to withdraw military presence and to extricate ammunition is explained by active Romanization of the post-Soviet republic.

In the end of 2010, just before the OSCE Summit in...
Astana, the Moldovan and Romanian leaderships made statements regarding Russia's unwillingness to withdraw its army from Transnistria, despite obligations, which had been taken in 1999 in Istanbul. Acting President of Moldova Ghimpu even cancelled his participation in the OSCE Summit because this question had not been included into agenda. At the same time, President Basescu stated that Romania didn’t feel comfortable because of the Russian military presence in Transnistria, and because of the Russian Navy prolonged stay in Sevastopol (Ukraine) till 2042.

Even though no mention is made of the Russian military in the text, all experts and media has perceived it as directed against Russia. At the same time former head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Transnistria Yastrebchak officially stressed that Romanian statements on Russian military were just an attempt to draw attention away from the USA bases deployment in Romania.

_Romania and EU_

Throughout the years Romania has been balancing between its desire to be an independent mediator and necessity to consider the joint position of the EU. At the same time, rash statements of President Basescu on unification with Moldova (even without Transnistria), unwillingness to sign agreement on borders, which had been delimited according to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, have raised concern in France and Germany. In particular, French Secretary of State Wauquiez said that Romania couldn’t control Eastern borders of the EU on the appropriate level in case it were part of the Schengen zone, because it didn’t recognize borders with Moldova and issued passports to Moldovan citizens.

Despite some independent steps, in November 2010 Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania Baconschi stated that Romania took part in the Moldovan-Transnistrian conflict settlement only as a member of the European Union. Back in 2009, when Moldovan authorities encouraged more active involvement of Romania, Bucharest officially stated that there was an EU Special Representative on Transnistrian conflict, who coordinated propositions of all member-states, so, from Romanian point of view, there was no necessity to take special position, which would be different from that EU had adopted. However, the situation shows, Romania doesn’t hold a separate position, rather, it would like to take a special position of a liaison, messenger between the EU and Moldova.

Romania actively advocates a change of the EU’s status from observer to a full-fledged mediator. Moreover, underlining necessity of current peacekeepers change to the international peace forces under the auspices of the EU, it promised not to be a part of those peacekeepers. This variant can be supported by Ukraine, as EU peacekeepers are more appropriate for its national interests.

_Several variants for situation development_:

1. _Romania proposes independent an peace plan._ This course of events is less likely because it can entail rejection from the Transnistrian side. In addition, Romania doesn’t have much to propose as leverage for conflicting parties.

2. _Joint Plan of Ukraine and Romania._ Mutual interest in the quick settlement of the Transnistrian conflict makes these two states natural partners. Both countries can take responsibility for the security in the region, presenting additional arguments for Russian military withdrawal. This perspective deserves attention as Ukraine and Romania are equal partners, neither has enough authority or possibilities for a leading position in such initiative. Whereas Romania has closer connections with new coalition government in Moldova, Ukraine has good relations with “old” communist, plus possibilities of closer connections with Russia. All together, Russia, as yet one security guarantor, will sooner agree with initiative of such a tandem for minimization of other actors’ involvement.

3. _Joint Russian-Romanian Plan._ This option can be accepted with interest by the international community, as it would demonstrate possibilities of influence to both parties to conflict. However, it will not be a proposition of equal partners. It will be an attempt of two states to use one another to influence the situation. Such a plan, above all will come from own national interests of Russian and Romania rather than consideration of the needs of Moldova and Transnistria.

4. _Romania acts in the framework of the EU initiatives._ This variant of state of affairs development is the most probable. In this situation Romania will be active within the EU, but will not act separately. De facto, Romania will advocate own ideas and interests, but under the curtain of the joint position of all member-states. In this scenario Romania has all the chances to
become the only source of information concerning events development in the region.

Today Romania endeavors to upstage all existing actors in the Transnistrian peace settlement, including the European Union, by trying to present itself as a facilitator between the EU and Moldova, hence, aiming to present itself as the only source of adequate information for Brussels. The task is to enhance own rating within the EU, where there are a lot of questions on expediency of the Romanian membership. On the other hand, Bucharest tries to present itself in the region as a provider of the European ideas and a state which has support of the whole community. Both theses are rather disputable and more desirable than realistic.

Transnistrian representatives carefully consider the possibility of enhancing Romania’s role and they constantly emphasize the main goal of Bucharest is not a final settlement of the conflict but possible unification with Moldova. At it stands, it seems that Romania is more willing to cooperate with Russian Federation than with Ukraine in the peace settlement process. It can be useful to invite Romania to join “5+2” format of negotiations and become a security guarantor – the same status as Ukraine and Russia have.

By considering the current de facto situation, it is possible to conclude that Romania’s foreign policy is proactive, aiming at regional leadership but focused on concrete issues. The majority of the Romanian foreign policy activities are directed towards promoting its own visibility and weight in the European community, establishing its own place in the Eastern Europe and Black Sea region whilst satisfying concrete economic interests.

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The purpose of this program is to make some points regarding Europe nowadays, its future and other related issues that need to be addressed. When discussing about “Europe in Transition”, the main questions should be: where from, where to? These are the questions one should bear in mind. In order to do so, one should consider the past and, to this purpose, there are some main points that are to be presented. In the process of hitting the wave tops, some data will certainly be missed, particularly some issues that may probably be important to Romania or to Turkey. Thus, the purpose here is to provide a general overview starting with the year 2001.

In early 2001, the Bush Administration came in at the end of the decade. The new decade started with the EU making great strides to develop as a strong institution. It started a reform process to make itself more efficient, more accountable to the borders, to envisage its enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe as a real possibility, as well as to figure out how to build its own European security and defense identity.

In 1999, NATO invited three new members into the alliance: Poland, The Czech Republic and Hungary. At the time it had just waged the air campaign in Kosovo. The NATO summit in Washington laid out the new strategic concept after the Cold War era a key part of which is out of area operations. The Alliance was still very much focused on territorial defense and not quite expeditionary. It still had a lot of Soviet era equipment, a lot of heavy equipment, writ large. And, it had just spent a decade in the Balkans, trying to ensure peace and stability there. NATO entered the new decade with a new vision about how it was going to renew itself.

In the US policy towards Europe, the Clinton Administration followed by the Bush Administration, had a policy of promoting Europe as free and peaceful. That became the driving element of policy: a lot of engagement with Europe, a lot of special envoys in the Balkans, NATO enlargement, the Caucasus and other issues.

The US was very supportive of Turkey’s membership into the EU, and overall the relations were very good. Let us now consider the other situations:

Afghanistan: The Taliban were in control, the US and Europe largely walked away. Al Qaida was there with training camps.

Russia: Putin was the president. He was dealing with Chechnya. There were terrorist issues in the North Caucasus and Russia is still recovering from the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union. At the time it was anti-NATO for a variety of reasons. Nonetheless, it was in dialogue with NATO within the 1997 Russia-NATO Founding Act.

The Black Sea was a mix of different activities. Romania and Bulgaria wanted to become part of the Western institutions. Turkey also wanted to be part of the European Union. Ukraine and Georgia were wrestling with what to do and were sort of holding back at this point. It would only be a few years later that they would take off in terms of the Western-oriented agenda. There were frozen conflicts in Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabakh and Transdniester. Those were big factors holding a lot of things back and focusing a lot of the attention of the Europeans and just preventing a more robust engagement. The regional organization BSEC (the Black Sea Economic
Cooperation (NATO-Russia Council) was operating with all of the littoral states, working together. Its agenda was not robust but it was something as a form. And lastly, recognition of human and weapons trafficking as security threats in the Black Sea was growing. In many ways it was an area the US and Western Europe had little situation awareness. Thus, it started to grow in importance.

Five years later, at the end of the Rumsfeld term, there were big changes in Europe. The EU had its first wave of expansion whereby 10 countries came in. However, the efforts to bring NATO and the EU to reform were still stalling. Nonetheless, a great momentum was created by bringing ten countries in. Europe was now thinking of a common foreign and security policy and the Union was feeling much stronger. Yet, the relationships between Europe and the United States were starting to fray. It is worthwhile to consider that NATO expanded from 19 to 26 members. Seven new countries came in and every two years NATO held a summit. There was a lot of dialogue going on and Kosovo was still underway, What Rumsfeld and others were able to do with the New Strategic Concept and the new post-9/11 environment was to go from heavy to more expeditionary, modern equipment. It is equipment that allows the expeditionary operations and forces to move out faster and go where they need.

The US policy toward Europe was very engaged. Rumsfeld visited the region numerous times. His areas of particular focus were the Caucasus, the Balkans, and the CIS. He thought those were strategic areas of importance to the United States. He spent a lot of time going there. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were also engaging the European allies. President Bush added to this the Freedom Agenda, really promoting democracy throughout Europe and the region.

At that point, Afghanistan was crowded on despite the fact that attention had wavered. Collectively, there were approximately 50,000 troops in Afghanistan at the time. There was much focus on Iraq. In 2003 NATO agreed to take over the ISAF mandate. By the time 2006 came along NATO was in control of the whole region. Funding in Afghanistan was still not at a robust level, and many would say Afghanistan was a distraction from the Iraq war. This point will be considered further below.

The relationship with Russia also changed. In 2002 it went from the NATO-Russia Founding Act to the NATO-Russia Council with even more robust opportunities for Russia to engage with NATO. Terrorism inci-
External Action Service, and puts the EU on the map as an even bigger player than it already was. But, all that gets slowed down, albeit not sidetracked, by the global financial crisis. When the global financial crisis hit, it affected a lot of Southern Europe, and Europe altogether. Fractures and fissures started to appear and they are still there today. Greece, Spain and Italy have enormous debts which violate the criteria set out years ago. Whether other European countries will help these states or not has become a big distraction which threatens the European project.

Meanwhile, after the 2008 NATO summit, the newest members i.e. Albania and Croatia joined the alliance. This brought the number of NATO members up to 28. According to the documents, Macedonia was to be invited, but due to the conflict with Greece over the name, it was held out. Georgia and Ukraine also did not succeed in getting a Membership Action Plan. There was enough European resistance to hold Georgia and Ukraine back. However, historic language made it into the communiqué: “Georgia and Ukraine will one day become members of the Alliance.” Also, NATO’s Strategic Concept was reaffirmed just this past fall. NATO reaffirms its commitment in Afghanistan, agrees to reform itself to be more economically efficient, accepts the fact that Missile Defense is a key priority, and agrees to look at the emerging threats.

In respect to US policy towards Europe, Rumsfeld held off on signing the final Missile Defense Initiative plan. In 2007, Gates signed off a document which stipulated that a third site for European Missile Defense would include a radar facility in the Czech Republic and interceptors in Poland, and, moreover, that the US would pay for it. The third part of this system, the radar, will be deployed somewhere within a 1,000 km band from Iran. The project was actively pitched, the story is known but what happened by the time the Obama Administration came in is that relations with Russia were really bad. As a result, in September of 2009 the missile defense plans were revised. It doesn’t look exactly the way it did; there are going to be more mobile and sea assets. Then a few months later, Romania offered to host some of the elements on its territory. Initially, the suggestion met the Russian approval, but now Russia has some concerns about it.

The reality of President Obama’s approach to Europe and Eurasia is that they were not a priority for the president. This is not anti-Obama perspective at all, but the reality is that it has not been a priority. In terms of priorities, when Obama came into office, it was “domestic, domestic, domestic”. Russia probably cracked the top ten, but only probably because it distracted the other nine. So there was a reset policy, which is not going to be addressed here. However, it is slightly embittering that from Bush 41 to Clinton to Bush 43 a significant amount of time was spent on creating, developing and cultivating relationships. It is difficult to see this administration engaging at the same level. By the time Libya conflict started, it really showed that the US did not have the type of dialogue it should have had with the Europeans.

Meanwhile, the mission in Afghanistan has experienced huge growth as well as a number of command changes.

In Munich, in 2007, Putin was rather displeased with the United States. It was the first trip to Europe for US Defense Secretary Gates and he had been on the job for only 45 days. The United States was referred to as a hyperbolic superpower. Reference was made to a number of policies including the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, Kosovo, missile defense, Romanian bases, NATO enlargement and START. It was the root of everyone’s evils in the world. Then attention was turned to the Europeans. It must be recalled here it was February 2007, and everyone in Europe was dissatisfied with Rumsfeld. Iraq was not going well and, suddenly, Putin became displeased about the manner in which the OSCE was treating Russia. This got the attention of the Europeans. Shortly thereafter, Chancellor Merkel expressed concern and invited President Bush to send a delegate to Putin. President Bush sent his Secretary of Defense.

The Russian Federation had been devastated and humiliated by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the loss of the Russian Empire. The goal was to restore Russia’s national pride and make sure its influence was felt in the world. At the time, President Boris Yeltsin had passed away and it became clear that the United States may have underestimated the degree of humiliation experienced by Russia and that it may have approached Russia wrongly. It set the tone for how Gates approached Russia until today. It affected the way in which the United States reached out to Russia in the so-called “2+2” talks, the Reset and everything else.

Until 2008 or so, oil prices went on a huge rise, reaching $140 by the time of the Russia-Georgia war of August 2008. This gave Russia much more flexibility to...
EXPERT OPINION

Whether the EU is willing to take on new member states again. One reason of concern is found in the numbers coming from the CSIS. The gap between GDP and the national debt for some of the countries of Southern Europe is absolutely enormous. Things are going the bad way and the debt is going to continue to rise. That is the cause for caution regarding the acceptance of new members. Maintaining the Euro is of pivotal importance to the EU. These are real numbers, constraining everything the EU will be able to spend and to do. It is going to require real, hard, painful reform, and it is not clear whether there is sufficient political will to do it.

Europe is aging big time. Western Europe is aging faster than Central and Eastern Europe. Pension benefits and health care are going to continue being an enormous source of dread on these economies. Real political leadership and political will are going to be required to force a change that will fix the welfare of these countries. One bail out now could be ten bail outs later. Europe may be taking a thoughtful approach, but it appears to be a slow one. It is going to require leadership.

As Europe ages, there are less people able and willing to enter the military. That is going to have huge ramifications for national security. Seven percent of Spain's national forces are non-Spanish nationals. They have to recruit non-Spanish nationals to fill certain jobs in the armed services. Denmark is also wrestling about what to do on this issue. It is very concerned it too will have to use non-Danish citizens. This matter raises the question of allegiance: if the Danish state comes under attack and has to mobilize non-Danish citizens, it is uncertain whether they would truly protect the country.

NATO is also worthy of consideration. The global financial crisis has certainly taken its toll on European capabilities. A bad trend had already started in the 1990s. The decade started with territorial defense: non-expeditionary capabilities. The transformation is expensive. Better forces cost more money because they are more expensive to train and equip. Platforms go up in price because they are modernized. As a result, countries in Central and Eastern Europe in particular, but also in Western Europe were deciding: “Maybe we don’t need this, and we don’t need that now.” Then in 1999, NATO decided there is no conventional threat to its territory. The US was blowing everyone out of the water when it came to any kind of engagement. The NATO members were convinced that “They got our
back, we have Article 5. So they reduced capabilities. Not all members did that, but as the decade continued less and less capability was visible. There were downward trends everywhere. When the global financial crisis hit, some countries, i.e. Poland, decided not to spend any money on modernization of equipment for two years (2009, 2010). Most of what the European countries spent was on operations only; Poland already had NATO helicopters, ships and air defenses; they decided they were not going to invest in any kind of military modernization. These investments would amount to two years at two billion dollars a year. Netherlands, Spain, and Italy, each within a 24-month period, decided to cut their military spending by 10 percent. Operations became the only thing they continue to fund. Spain had only one major procurement, namely, an 8x8 wheel vehicle, which was now 12 months delayed and would not come out for, at least, another 18 months. These countries are all going down to nothing in terms equipment modernization. However, the needs are going up. If they decide to do nothing, the ramifications for the Alliance's capabilities to project any kind of expeditionary and territorial operations will be big.

In the fall of last year NATO agreed on a new Strategic Concept focused on new emerging threats, due missile defense and the maintenance of Afghanistan stability. This strategic concept was criticized before the process even started. There was a proposal, still in the Bush Administration, to launch the process. Back then, – late 2007 – early 2008 – there were three reasons for not launching a strategic concept: 1) The US had not proven itself yet in Afghanistan, so therefore the future of expeditionary operations as a part of NATO had not yet been validated. 2) The US did not have a dialogue with Russia; a NATO Strategic Concept is not possible without a dialogue with Russia; and it is known where each side wants to take the relationship. 3) What would French reintegration look like? And how would it affect NATO? (this latter was no longer valid at the time). This last point has since been changed but numbers one and two are still valid. The current number three is the financial crisis. If the allies are going to spend less on capabilities, then what kind of alliance will it be? Would it not be better to just wait for the financial crisis to smooth and then do a strategic concept? With everything laid out in the strategic concept, the concern is that the resources are not there to match it.

Returning now to the CSIS study, it is worthy to note that the UK, France and Germany combined equal 80% of all research and development on defense in Europe today. If one were to put all 28 NATO allies together, plus Japan and Australia, it equals 70% of all defense spending in the world. Thus, money is still being spent, but the big bulk is being spent on personnel. As a result, the overall number is a bit misleading.

If one considers the category of defense spending per soldier, one finds that in 2007 it was about $73,000. It is now up to $92,000. That is a good figure because there is better protection from better equipped forces. Yet, because it is going to cost more, there are going to be fewer forces. Furthermore, almost no money is being spent on developing new things. For the US defense industry it is good: it is going to buy off the shelf. The French industry will want to make sure it is directing it all to itself. Thus, when considering Europe in transition, it has been a very interesting decade.

It has been commented that the US spends about $250,000 per soldier and that this creates an interoperability gap. This is, unfortunately, something the US is dealing with every day. This gap concerns everything from HF radios, Blue Force trackers, ability to land in any nation of the Alliance and go to work right away. These are absolutely valid points.

It is fair to say that the US has largely disengaged from Europe, particularly when compared to the previous administration. Europe is not a priority. Domestic policies and finances are the priorities. Libya, for instance, is not a shining moment in our relations.

In Afghanistan, the transition has been in process for some time. The US is handing things over to the Afghans. Yet, the exit date keeps fluctuating. When President Obama gave his West Point speech back in December 2009 the talk was about the surge that would get the US through 2011 and possibly to a drawdown of that. Secretary Cohen remains close to VP Biden and Secretary Clinton. The day following the speech, he happened to be breakfasting with Biden at which time he said: “Why did the President say that drawdown would be in 2011?”, to which Biden responded: “Well, the President meant to say, there will be a drawdown of an additional 30,000, not the drawdown of the base force.” Now the courage coming out of the NATO summit predicts an exit date in 2014, the British say 2015, the Canadians and Dutch are already out in terms of combat power. This exit date will continue to fluctuate. It remains unclear who...
will remain on the ground as of which date. According to General Corelli, and others who have commented on this, the US Army is planning to be there for the next 10 to 20 years.

Unfortunately, the capacity in Afghanistan is not increasing in any measurable way. It is not that their heart is not in the right place, they have such a distant starting point, and, corruption is a major issue. If there is one thing that the Americans are doing badly in addition to understanding foreign languages, it is understanding foreign cultures. Tens of billions of dollars have been spent on trying to address the corruption issue in Afghanistan. Headway is not being made. The key is to have capacity, it is just not clear how to get to that point.

At this time, ISAF is at a force of 132,000. This is an enormous increase since the situation at the end of December 2006. 90,000 of the aforementioned figure comes from the US but there is still a robust portion coming from Europe. Europe is pulling its weight in Afghanistan. It is a pity that the Canadians and Dutch left their combat roles. However, they are still there in training roles. There are real sacrifices and real money backing it all up. Unfortunately, the pace of the progress being made is not comforting.

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It is also necessary to consider Russian military reform. Russian Defense Minister Serdyukov came to Washington last fall to ask Secretary Gates how one pays for and maintains troops of a volunteer army. Serdyukov is very much interested in Russian military reform. A recent Jamestown publication was focused on disagreements between the General Staff College of the Academy and the MoD about what has gone right and gone wrong in the Russian military in the past few years. Also, a report that came out by the General Staff saying that the US missile defense might actually not be a threat to us at all.

Demographic issues are also going to plague Russia. Right now, there are 142 million people in Russia. By 2050 there will be 100 million people there. 70% of the population lives west of the Urals, 70% of the territory is east of the Urals. These are really big issues. At this time, 3 out of 10 conscripts cannot pass the physicals. Thus, the manner in which Russia will protect itself is going to be a real issue for it, although for us, there will be some real opportunities.

As we turn to look at the Black Sea region, 2008 was a game changer. Georgia is still essentially divided. Ukraine is no longer focused on the West. Azerbaijan does not know what to do. The Bush Administration always tried to pull Azerbaijan closer. Turkey's role also continues to be unclear in the region. It is leaning both towards the West and the Middle East. Threats continue to exist. There is trafficking, and, for over five years no progress has been made in the frozen conflicts.

WikiLeaks and the damage that it continues to bring to US foreign policy must also be considered. For instance, in Romania Basescu was being slammed on a couple of TV channels for what was leaked by WikiLeaks with respect to the Romanian bases and other things. WikiLeaks will continue to play a role and will be used on Yushchenko and Tymoshenko, Saakashvili and Putin. It is all out there and it will continue to be a force affecting policy toward the Black Sea region.

In the future, NATO will do less with less. It does not have the political ambitions and the financial capacity to do much more. That is why the New Strategic Concept is a real concern. Europe will have zero interest in doing more in Afghanistan. It is unlikely to have more long-distance, high-risk expeditionary missions. They cost too much politically and financially. Europe will go through some kind of reset when it is all set and done in Afghanistan.

US policy towards Europe is likely to continue being distanced largely because US priorities are different. As the US reduces force posture in Europe, there is less of connectivity between it and Europe. Currently, the US is there for temporary purposes, rotational purposes – cooperation and training. This is very valuable in itself, but it is no longer based on familiar connections which will make it difficult for the US keep troop levels in Europe (approx. current level 47,000). Moreover, there is a demand for a return to an isolationism in foreign policy particularly in light of the Tea Party movements, domestic concerns and the view that America's ventures overseas and to Muslim lands have not gone so well. An isolationist policy would be very bad for the US – Europe relationship, yet, the pressure exists. It will take a majority to educate a majority in the US Congress or anywhere else that Europe matters to the US.

Currently in Afghanistan, there are big disagreements on reconciliation, on whether the government should go condition-free in talking to the Taliban, or whether conditions should be set on how to engage the Taliban in any kind of peace process. The country continues to lack the financial means to be a viable nation-state. The annual revenues for the Afghan
Russia’s as well. Joint interest, and all of them largely coincide with still holds the SACEUR job. There are a lot of areas of mostly sea assets. There are more US assets, and it has a large military presence. As part of the missile still the largest trading partner of the US. The US still wants to be a full part of it.

Engage Russia in different formats. However, Russia will again. There are also opportunities for the West to engage Russia in different formats. However, Russia will need to recognize that will be in its interest and that it wants to be a full part of it.

The outlook is bleak, but all is not lost. Europe is still the largest trading partner of the US. The US still has a large military presence. As part of the missile defense, it is going to put more assets in Europe, mostly sea assets. There are more US assets, and it still holds the SACEUR job. There are a lot of areas of joint interest, and all of them largely coincide with Russia’s as well.

Bottom line: people have complained for decades, that US leadership is bad for the world. However, when the US does not lead, bad things tend to happen. There is a view in Europe – though it is not necessarily a complete macro-view – that the US should return to the game in Europe. These concerns are also shared by the EUCOM commander.

The Black Sea Region is in the middle of everything going on for Afghanistan. This gives the opportunity to engage the Black Sea in a way that has been long-deserved. The interests there are enduring and include everything from energy routes to the combat of illicit trafficking. It is a fact that the region could go unstable again. This depends on how things break with Russia or on whether a country of the region decides to take things into its own hands. It is also a big piece of EU’s partnership policy agenda, as well as NATO’s Partnership for Peace. Thus, there are interests.

The challenge is the continuing lack of cooperation among the littoral states. Russia and Turkey continue to be skeptical of outsiders, i.e. the US. The Montreux Convention holds the US back from being able to proactively do anything in terms of military exercises and such. In fact, it has walked away from the region in many ways. The US went from a policy of Black Sea engagement to essentially a policy of Black Hole-ism. Only a small military segment is still engaged, but it is not an area of importance. It is not spoken of in Congress any more. There is no simple solution to any of the current situations. It requires attention, engagement, action and trust. Right now, none of this exists in any large and sustained way.

At its 20th anniversary BSEC is trying to figure out how it can have more powers and become more of a player. The US is a BSEC observer and it seems to want to do more. The US is very engaged bilaterally. It works a lot with the Georgians to train them to do rotations in Afghanistan. It works with the Azerbajians for their deployments in Afghanistan. Romania has stepped up to host missile defense assets. However, there is little going on with Ukraine, relatively to where it was. The US does not have a lot going on with Russia, also relatively to where it was. The same holds true with Turkey. The US does not have a lot of activity going on. What it needs to do is reengage. The EU and the US need to develop a common approach towards this region, focusing not only on how to address the threats that are there, but also on helping advance the region politically as well as resolving the differences of the past and the frozen conflicts. The EU appears to be in a much better position to do that. The Russians would be likely to the US as a disingenuous partner. Perhaps the EU – using its various mechanisms and the Minsk Group – could actually help to broker that. It is necessary to get the attention and become a priority to Europe. If it is not going to be a priority, there will not be any movement.

Russia needs to understand that it can be a constructive player if it should desire. It is not clear whether Russia accepts that role or if it can even accept it, particularly as oil prices go up. Turkey should certainly play a larger role as well. It all comes down to attention, engagement, action, and trust. There is a lot that can be accomplished, but it is not going to be accomplished in the coming years. Frozen conflicts can be solved, there is no doubt. The annexation in Georgia can be rolled back. Russia can be convinced that having a peaceful, democratic, economically prosperous border with NATO is in its own interest. And, its southern border, which is in the same basket and transitioning towards Europe, can also be a positive force-multiplier for Russia because that will be a part of the world it will not need to focus on. It is uncertain whether the US will have the political bandwidth to push through another Black Sea strategy, or to put forward any kind of robust effort toward solving these problems. But it appears to be a must.
Building partner capacity\textsuperscript{1}  
The Georgia Deployment Program  
by the Marine Corps Training and Advisory Group

"Where possible, U.S. strategy is to employ indirect approaches – primarily through building the capacity of partner governments and their security forces – to prevent festering problems from turning into crises, that require costly and controversial direct military intervention."

\textit{Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates;  
"A Balanced Strategy,"  
Foreign Affairs, 2909}

In the hot, dry hills northwest of Sangin in the Helmand Province of Afghanistan, IstLt Mukhran Shukvani was pushing a small team of Georgian soldiers forward from their dismount point in search of a future patrol base position. The young company commander had earned a strong reputation during predeployment training for his leadership and initiative. His soldiers were accompanied by a liaison team of Marines attached to the 31\textsuperscript{st} Georgian Battalion and known collectively as the Georgian Liaison Team. The broken terrain rose in a series of low ridges to the north, the crests of which ran perpendicular to the Musa Qalab River to the east. The ridges bore the scars of Soviet-era trenches; the bills had been deemed key terrain in the past. As IstLt Shukvani and his team crested one ridge line, they came under small arms fire from well-concealed enemy positions to the northwest, north, and east. Literally moving to the sound of the guns, IstLt Shukvani pressed forward with five other soldiers to the old Soviet trench line. As the company commander rose to determine exactly where the enemy was located, a well-aimed round caught him just above his body armor. This tactical skirmish in September 2010 marked a somber milestone in the strategic context of the Republic of Georgia's participation in NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission. How did IstLt Shukvani and his soldiers come to be in the treacherous hills of Helmand Province? What is the Marine Corps' role in what is now called the Georgian Deployment Program-ISAF (GDP-ISAF)? Most importantly, what lessons can be learned from the program as it matures?

IstLt Shukvani's heroism in the early fall of 2010 can be traced back to the winter of the previous year when the Government of the Republic of Georgia offered ground combat units in support of the ISAF mission in Afghanistan. Georgia agreed to provide four light infantry battalions over a period of 2 years beginning in the spring of 2010. Each battalion would deploy for approximately 7 months to Afghanistan. The Georgian Government also had a small number of "national caveats" that had to be honored if the Republic was to support, the ISAF mission. First, the

\textsuperscript{1} This article was first published by U.S. Marine Corps Gazette (www.mca-marines.org/gazette), September 2011.
The Georgians wanted to fight as battlespace owners. The Georgian Army had provided physical site security for various locations in Iraq during Operation IRAQI FREEDOM and had held limited battlespace owner responsibilities. The Georgians now felt the time had come to do more than just fixed site security. In short, the Georgians wanted to train for, and execute, a counterinsurgency (COIN) mission in a full-spectrum operational environment. The other caveat was that their light infantry battalions had to fight as part of a Marine Corps formation. The Georgians recognized the professionalism of the Marine Corps from prior training programs and operations, and frankly, they wanted to work with the best. This caveat was the genesis of the Marine Corps’ involvement in training and equipping the Georgians for combat operations in Afghanistan.

The Georgian Government’s offer to support the mission in Afghanistan was made directly to the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), NATO’s headquarters in Belgium. SHAPE passed this offer to the United States for development, and as the Republic of Georgia lies within the U.S. European Command (USEuCom) area of responsibility, USEuCom ultimately had the responsibility of organizing the sourcing, equipping, and funding of the GDP-ISAF training effort. USEuCom in turn designated Marine Forces Europe (MarForEur) as the lead component for the development and execution of the training program. Seeking tactical-level expertise to assess Georgian capabilities, in June 2009 MarForEur assembled an assessment team consisting of 13 Marines and sailors from the Marine Corps Training and Advisory Group (MCTAG). On 15 June the MCTAG team deployed to begin the assessment. This was a remarkable achievement given that the Secretary of Defense had only formally accepted the Georgian’s offer on 4 June. Col Scott Cottrell, Director of MCTAG and later the unit’s first commanding officer, led the team through the assessment using the mission essential tasks of a Marine infantry battalion as the basis of its evaluation. The assessment was challenging because the team did not know the exact mission the Georgians would be executing in Afghanistan. Despite this challenge, the team completed the evaluation and generated a systems approach to training based training plan.

The training plan would be coordinated and supervised by a small cadre of Marines from MCTAG, known as the Georgia Training Team (GTT), deployed to Georgia for 90 to 180 days at a time. The GTT was responsible for day-to-day coordination with the Georgian Training Military Education Command (TMEC) and for supporting all trainers deploying to Georgia to train the infantry battalions. MCTAG was also responsible for supervising the final mission rehearsal exercise in Hohenfels, Germany, and subsequently certifying the Georgians as deployment ready. The initial training plan took into consideration three fundamental deficiencies identified during the assessment. The Georgians were very capable in conventional, linear combat operations, but they were deficient in the conduct of distributed operations. Secondly, the Georgian battalion lacked operational reach, both in terms of staff depth and experience, and in the literal sense of logistics, fire support, and command and control capacities. Finally, while the Georgian soldiers demonstrated tremendous pride and desire to execute tactical tasks properly, they were hamstrung by the lack of development of their NCO corps. In an operational environment where patrols are led by SNCOs and NCOs and the strategic corporal makes the difference, the Georgian NCOs presented a significant training opportunity.

Key to the development of the training plan was the early involvement of the Defense Attaché’s office and the Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC) in Tbilisi. The ODC provided vital links to the Georgian Army Land Forces Command and to the TMEC. The Georgian Army identified a base training camp at Kritsanisi Training Area to host the battalion in training, and they provided a live fire training area approximately 20 kilometers distant in the Viziani Training Area. Both areas have now been used with great success for the initial and subsequent battalions. In the course of the assessment, MarForEur and the ODC established an ambitious, overarching goal for the GDP-ISAF program: phasing the conduct of training from Marine instructors to Georgian instructors over the course of four battalion iterations. The initial training package for the 31st Battalion required 285 Marine-led periods of instruction. The current battalion package only requires 154 Marine-led periods of instruction. Georgians actually provide the training in many of these cases with Marines only providing quality control or sharing the latest tactics, techniques, and procedures from Afghanistan. Marines from across the Corps have participated in the training and evaluation of the Georgian battalions. Training and Education Command (TECom) has provided several Marine instructors from the Supporting Establishment who are subject matter experts (SMEs) in specific skills, such as scout/sniper operations and command and control systems training. TECOM has also provided outstanding support through instructors in Afghan culture and language from the Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning. Finally, the Operating Forces have provided critical expertise and real-world experience,
from small unit leadership trainers to battalion commander mentors. The participation of SMEs and experienced Marines from the MEFs has been instrumental to the success of GDP-ISAF.

As successful as the Georgians have been in assuming greater responsibility for their own predeployment training, and also during combat operations in Afghanistan, the program has had its challenges. The most significant issue has been equipping Georgian battalions for full-spectrum distributed COIN operations in a manner commensurate with their tactical tasks. Because the Georgians are battle-space owners, they require the same equipment as a Marine infantry battalion, from mine resistant ambush protected (MRAP) vehicles to the groundbased operational surveillance system. Getting enough of the right equipment to the Georgians in Afghanistan, and a small training set of equipment for training in Georgia, has been very difficult. Access to MRAPs for predeployment training may be the most notable gap in equipping the Georgians. Fortunately, the training professionals at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany, provide MRAP instruction and a limited number of vehicles during the mission rehearsal exercise portion of the Georgian predeployment training. GDP-ISAF has also demonstrated that the foreign military sales process was not designed and is not responsive enough to support operational deployments of foreign units. The equipping issue is also complicated by foreign disclosure requirements that restrict Georgian access to some U.S. systems or capabilities. As increasing numbers of partner nations seek to work with GDP-ISAF, the U.S. Central Command's coalition coordination cell has become more adept at anticipating and resolving issues in equipping partner units fighting alongside U.S. forces.

Related to equipping is the issue of providing “enablers” to the Georgian battalion such that they may conduct full-spectrum operations in their respective area of operations. Attachments and assets that we take for granted in Marine infantry battalions are not found in the typical 750-man Georgian light infantry battalion. The MEF in Afghanistan provides roughly 240 Marines and sailors to provide maintenance, communications, military working dog handlers, embedded training teams for the Afghan Army and police, and other enablers to the Georgian battalion. This requirement is a significant tax placed on the Marine unit employing the Georgian battalion, but the strategic messaging return in terms of enhancing the coalition with the participation of an aggressive and professional coalition partner is worth the investment.

Another challenge associated with GDP-ISAF is common to any coalition fight: accurate and timely translation services. Each Georgian battalion requires a minimum of 50 English speaking Georgian Army interpreters. The Georgian Land Forces command trains an increasing number of soldiers to serve as translators, but the demand far exceeds the supply. The translation situation also impacts the Georgian battalion’s ability to interact with the populace and the Afghan National Security Forces. An engagement opportunity with a tribal elder becomes a translator’s minefield as the conversation goes from Georgian to English to Pashtu and back. Each iteration during the exchange becomes a potential misunderstanding between the Afghan people and authorities and the Georgians. Key leader engagements and interacting with the population are critical in the COIN fight, thus the translator requirement has become a critical requirement. A small number of hand-selected soldiers from each battalion participate in a week-long basic Pashtu course during their predeployment training program, but this effort obviously cannot meet the needs of a battalion spread across one of the largest areas of operation in Regional Command-Southwest. To help close this requirement, Georgia has directed that some Army interpreters remain in Afghanistan to support the next battalion in their rotation.

The Georgian Land Forces command trains an increasing number of soldiers to serve as translators, but the demand far exceeds the supply.

Today, the flags of three nations fly together over Combat Outpost Shukvani, a constant reminder of the commitment and sacrifice not only of a day in September for Georgia, but also of a decade for America as well. The GDP-ISAF mission brought together Georgian soldiers and U.S. Marines in the same manner it brought together their two nations. As a result, the Georgians are successfully conducting COIN operations through full-spectrum distributed operations. Their success is a result of contributions from across the Marine Corps and the joint community and serves as a tangible example of the Corps’ ability to build partner-nation capabilities in support of our national security strategy.

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From Intelligence to Policy – the Role of Strategic Knowledge in the Black Sea Security

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I would like to approach the role of intelligence in shaping strategic knowledge in the Black Sea area starting with a quotation from a Japanese swordsman: “Perception is strong and sight weak. In strategy it is important to see distant things as they were close and to take a distanced view of close things.”

In realistic theories, the Black Sea region was seen as a geopolitical hub, a historical bridge among civilizations or a space of confrontation between old and new rivalries. Constructivist thinking outlined the web of historical connections and common cultural patterns that shaped communities in this area. Neorealist theories spoke about the emergence of a multipolar world where regional balance of power still applies to the study of the Black Sea security. Others again defined the current trends as symptomatic for the emergence of a non-polar world, with multiple security complexes determined by states, individuals, societies alike.

I will propose to you a different approach, perhaps less common, to the Black Sea security debate: how new threats influence the role of intelligence in national security sectors and the overall decision-making process.

Nowadays we are confronted with new threats and vulnerabilities that are different from the ones in the past. We have witnessed the transformation of security structures, as well as the emergence of new types of wars and peace. We live in a profoundly changed world, in which strategic knowledge and the anticipation of the future is the most difficult test for a nation.

Strategic knowledge is the key to successful state policies. But knowledge has become “democratized”: it is no longer an elite business, but a matter of information sharing and cooperation, a result of networking and partnerships with and within societies.

The world of secrets is no longer secret as it used to be during the Cold War – Wikileaks is the most known example that comes to mind. However, the secret information is still an essential tool for deciphering what is public, visible and known.

Strategic knowledge means more than simply informing a politician or a decision-maker with
regard to certain evolutions. It is about building a cooperative relationship by means of which intelligence services can convey the “flow” of knowledge needed to develop security strategies. It is about building a common understanding both on the causes of instability and on political opportunities to promote national interests. Michael Warner rightly remarks “to put this in modern management terms, spies help a sovereign to shift uncertainty into risk, to assess and manage probabilities, and to mitigate hazards.”

From this strategic perspective, the Black Sea is a region of multiple antinomies. It is a region with a threatening past, an uncertain present, an unpredictable future. It is also a region that faces old regional conflicts, but also new global threats. A region where former Cold War rivalries have changed to what Bruce Jackson called „soft wars”, while the vestiges of the past have been altered by the challenges of tomorrow.

It is striking how regional security patterns have changed since 9/11 attacks: Romania and Bulgaria joined NATO and the EU, Georgia and Moldova had "colored revolutions". Georgia faced a war on its soil, Ukraine experienced a gas crisis and Russia was confronted with violent terrorist attacks. On the other hand, it is also striking to notice that, despite this, the regional security „puzzle” remains to a large extent the same: no frozen conflicts have yet been solved, many political transitions remain volatile and many democratization processes still run the risk of U-turns. To translate this into the language of intelligence, this geopolitical puzzle actually turned out to be a knowledge “mystery” in the sense used by Gregory F. Treverton: “Much of the Cold War intelligence was puzzle-solving, looking for additional pieces to fill out a mosaic of understanding whose broad shape was a given. (...) Mysteries are different; no evidence can settle them definitively because they are typically about people, not things. They are contingent; that is, mystery-framing is deductive – the analysis begins where the evidence ends.”

Although old power politics might still influence regionalization processes in the Black Sea, new security trends have contributed to a “globalization” of the Black Sea with respect to the flows of information, people and goods, but also to the spread of transnational threats to security.

When coping with these paradoxes of knowledge in the Black Sea Area, one should think about the transformation of security sectors they bring about. Not only threats have become more elusive today, but also the frontiers between different institutions’ responsibilities, the way each of them has to cope with new roles and new missions.

This leads me to the second kind of paradoxes I would like to share with you. Phillip Bobbitt refers to the antinomies of knowledge produced by the contemporary security patterns. He identifies six opposing concepts that influence the role of intelligence today: the opposition between public and private; between national and international security; intelligence and law enforcement rules; secret and open sources; intelligence gathering and analysis and between intelligence production and consumption.

The distinction between public and private and their different rules of secrecy generate discrepancies in terms of security management – which nowadays is no longer an exclusive “good” or product of the state, but it is equally shared by state and society. Without establishing reliable public-private partnerships, based on “common rules of commitment” and the distribution of tasks, we cannot build a security network capable of protecting our citizens against attacks perpetrated by non-state actors, such as terrorists or hackers. To give you an example: to prevent a cyber attack against the financial networks, or against vital IT systems for electricity provisions, one should extensively share secret information with private Net providers and targeted companies. Nowadays, early warning systems for critical infrastructures need to incorporate the public and the private alike if they seek efficiency.

One organization that has rapidly moved in this direction is NATO where an intelligence fusion center has been created to provide information from civil and military, public and private sources in support of the Alliance operations.

The second distinction between domestic and international affairs became more elusive and more difficult to establish in the 21st century. With the end of the thirty-year war and the following peace that set a boundary between politics and religion, the classical concepts of the imperial times declined. Nowadays, the old Westphalian paradigm of sovereignty and interstate borders has come under constant pressure.
The free movement of goods and persons, the transfer of knowledge and information have no boundaries nowadays. However, states still have traditional delineations of responsibilities as established in the 20th century. One example is the separation between foreign and domestic intelligence services, where the responsibilities of the two types of secret agencies are fixed alongside state-border paradigm, although threats know no frontiers today. This could result in a “bureaucratization of knowledge” and persistent gaps in information sharing among services, both situations that actually are to be blamed for the failure to prevent 9/11 attacks.

To a certain extent, the entire concept of national security is currently shifting towards more complex and intricate paradigms and some authors even proposed the replacement of this traditional approach with a new one, focused not on “national”, but on “human security”.5

In a global world the existing rules and responsibilities might need to be revised in the future. One solution has been the creation of national intelligence communities, but sometimes, as we all know, they still have their own caveats. Another one has been to ensure enhanced cooperation between services, define new principles such as the „need to share” instead of the classical „need to know” or even, in some cases, find formulas for their fusion.

Products of a stable world, the domestic and foreign services or the security and intelligence agencies need a common actionable platform. The modern citizen should be protected against threats that are no longer placed outside our society and represent a hybrid product consisting of external threats and internal vulnerabilities. Looking at the Wider Black Sea Area, such mixed threats are prevailing: transnational criminal organizations use domestic corruption for money laundering and fiscal fraud; terrorism is sponsored through criminal networks; domestic cyber-crime serves sometime as vehicle for foreign espionage. In this region there is barely a single threat that could be placed exclusively in the internal or the external box. So, the question for you is how our countries, in the Black Sea Area, intend to accommodate their security sectors to the complexities of current challenges?

Another antinomy or dichotomy mentioned by Phillip Bobbitt that should come under review is between the role of intelligence services and the one of law enforcement agencies.

A criminal investigation is usually conducted in line with a well-defined set of rules. At the same time, it is targeted at bringing the case before the court and producing the necessary evidence during a judicial trial. An intelligence investigation is used to gather information, and it is clearly targeted to support diplomacy, political and economic standings, war preparatives or prevention of various threats to security. Fighting asymmetric threats raised a number of problems with regard to this distinction. When a terrorist is brought before the court, the intelligence agencies could be required to produce criminal evidence from their secret information which might mean that they could put at risk their sources and methods.

Moreover, intelligence services are usually required to find threats rather than produce evidence of them and factual documentation, like police forces do.

Their role automatically becomes intrusive: what seems acceptable abroad, where intelligence services conduct covert operations, is less tolerate on the domestic scene where strict laws and regulations apply. But how can we find “a lone warrior” who individually affiliates, using the internet, to a terrorist organization in the absence of surveillance operations conducted in an environment apparently safe from a security perspective? It is easier to put under surveillance terrorist activities in a far away location, like remote areas of post-Taliban Afghanistan, rather than to identify a “terrorist-citizen” (to use a personal expression) within national boundaries. How can one establish those limits of surveillance that keep citizens’ liberties intact, while defending their security in the most efficient way possible? It is a question that affects all our countries since the Black Sea is one of the main transit areas for criminal and terrorist networks coming from Asia or the Middle East.

Such dilemmas are also politically sensitive especially since many countries from the Black Sea region face different forms of transitions from authoritarian regimes to democratic governance and improve the intelligence services’ oversight and accountability.

Finally other dichotomies are at the core of the globalization’s effects on intelligence: the distinction between secret and open sources and the way they are used to provide knowledge to decision-makers, the intelligence gathering and analysis and intellig-
gence production and the way it is used and consumed by political leaders.

Strategic knowledge of security trends requires a comprehensive understanding of certain phenomena that cannot be reached through single-source reports, but only through better integration in multi-source analysis of secret information, open sources and technical intelligence (SIGINT). When writing a report, an intelligence analyst is responsible for the “securitization” of certain events or facts – by assessing that they pose a threat to security, he includes different evolutions into the national security “circle”. Intelligence in the Black Sea Area is now confronted with a new type of dilemmas when dealing with the extent of such “securitization” process: what are its limits? Nowadays new risks such as the financial crisis, natural disasters, nuclear dangers as the ones now present in Japan, growing food insecurity, environment pollution or dangers to energy supplies are affecting national security and citizens’ life as much as traditional threats if not even more. How should intelligence communities be prepared to deal with such threats that are difficult, if not impossible, to predict and to prevent? In this respect, strategic knowledge relies on the ability to respond to the question of where national security starts and where it ends in the 21st century.

However, no one should understand that old risks have diminished. On the contrary, in the Wider Black Sea Area, maybe more than in any other place on earth, old risks are still of high concern for the intelligence services: a lot of efforts are spent on dealing with espionage and the protection of classified information. It is the mixture or the combination between old and new threats that raises most difficulties for the intelligence world, as fascinating as it might be for an academic researcher.

As I have mentioned, knowledge is a matter of cooperation and analytical sharing, not the attribute of lone ivory-tower elites. It also relies more and more on international partnerships and information sharing. When faced with new risks such as cybercrime, terrorism, natural disasters or environmental problems we ought to think about the benefits of having a regional mechanism for information sharing among Black Sea countries. To my knowledge, with the exception of cooperation on maritime security in Blackseafor and Black Sea Harmony, there are no multilateral information networks in the region. Analytical exchanges on new security threats would provide valuable inputs into our efforts to strengthen national and regional security.

Intelligence and strategic knowledge have always pointed to an integrated approach of political, cultural, economic and social aspects that, though multidisciplinary and eclectic, can offer a clear vision on future security risks. Without referring to history, ethnicity and civilization, no one could understand the dynamics of the Black Sea region. Here geography and politics are intricately connected and old maps still count. Nevertheless, as I have mentioned before, no one could understand this region without a broader perspective on the globalization of threats and the changing substance of national security. It is a paradox we all have to live with, in our own country homes.

According to Clausewitz, war is merely the continuation of politics by other means. But politics without knowledge is like war without strategy, and knowledge without politics is a strategy without warriors.

**SOURCES**

The Relationship between Decision-Makers and Intelligence Services

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The subject I shall focus on is the relationship between intelligence and decision-makers. I shall start with a quotation; maybe a very optimistic one and I shall show here. So there are two certainties in the intelligence profession: the consequences of being wrong grow every day and, sooner or later, you will be wrong. Starting from this point, I will argue my presentation. A problem for decision-makers is balancing daily pressures of their jobs with finding time to stay informed by trusted, reliable information sources who can offer the best support. Traditionally for decision-makers that source has been the intelligence community. But events in foreign policy today take place in far shorter time cycles than ever before, creating a need for more information, more comprehensive information, and more timely, accurate, and reliable information.

In this environment, generally, the decision-makers have the option of relying mostly on intelligence analysis as they did traditionally, but it is unclear if intelligence community has adapted to the new changes in the environment in which it operates. Consequently, the decision-makers may have concluded today that the intelligence community can no longer support them in the manner they require, and, instead, they now turn to alternative sources of analysis when they need to be informed. In this context, I will present the factors which fortify or decline the influence of intelligence on the decision-making process, by analyzing the relationship between decision-makers and intelligence services.

Decision-makers need intelligence services to help them deal with uncertainty. Thus, they come to respect and rely on analysts and intel managers who appreciate this aspect of the decision-process. Analysts and their analysis are deemed most useful when they: clarify what is known by laying out the evidence and pointing to cause-and-effect patterns; they carefully structure assumptions and argumentation about what is unknown and unknowable; bring expertise necessary for planning and action on important long-shot threats and opportunities.
We can define two approaches of the process of influencing and being influenced between the decision-makers and intelligence services. One is the conservative approach and the other one is the activist approach.

In the case of the conservative approach, in order to maintain the objectivity of the intelligence personnel, the intelligence service normally avoids to interfere with the decision-making process by describing the current situation and giving an assessment of what might be expected to happen in the future – without making recommendations on a preferred policy or course of action.

In the activist approach, intelligence services are looking forward to any possibility of influencing decision-makers, by including their own proposals in intelligence products in order to solve a crisis or situation.

At the state level intelligence products contribute to the decision-making process depending on the type of regime and the gravity of the threat faced by the regime. The intelligence product influences decision-making in foreign affairs to a greater extent rather in democratic than in totalitarian regimes. In the countries whose very existence is threatened, intelligence is the dominant factor influencing strategic decisions.

In order to evaluate the relationship between decision-makers and intelligence services, I will mention the distinction between the factual and estimative elements in a military intelligence assessment. The factual elements are composed of a description of the military and economic capabilities and current political situation of the enemy. For example, the size and quality of the enemy’s armed forces, the position and movements of enemy troops, the prevailing economic conditions, and so forth. The more factual they are, the better it is. Analysts should explain what is known and how it is known and let the judgment flow from the evidence. The estimative elements are dependent on the factual elements. The intelligence personnel develop an assessment of the intentions and objectives of the adversaries, the evaluative part. This part is speculative, because it is an evaluation of the enemy's probable behavior in the future, comprising an assessment of the objectives of the enemy, and also combining predictions. After an analyst has developed a hypothesis about an event (e.g., an Enemy Course of Action - ECOA), confirmation bias leads the individual to seek out only the evidence that confirms his hypothesis, disregarding the evidence that does not confirm the hypothesis and fail to use the lack of information about the hypothesis to develop alternate explanations.

For example, once a military intelligence structure develops an ECOA, the psychological tendency is to look for information or reports that support only that ECOA. Therefore, if reconnaissance and surveillance assets are deployed only along the most likely enemy axis of advance, this is likely to be a confirmation bias. Similarly, humans will naturally tend to either forget or mentally ignore information that disconfirms the ECOA.

In order to define the relationship, two factors are also important: the character of specific decision-makers and the characteristics of the intelligence provider. With respect to the character of the decision-maker, there are two types of individuals: those who tend to be willing to listen to new information, which is not necessarily consistent with their agenda, and those who tend to reject such information. If the decision-maker is ready and willing to listen to different opinions, intelligence has the greatest chance of influencing the decision-making process. If the decision-makers exhibit cognitive closure, the influence of the intelligence product is generally limited. The intelligence product can have significant influence only when it coincides with the decision-maker's agenda, or when the decision-maker's agenda is not fully formed yet. Therefore, from this perspective, we can divide decision-makers into two categories, based on the extent of their cognitive closure: closed decision-makers and open decision-makers.

The characteristics of the intelligence provider are influenced by his/her objectives. When processing intelligence to produce the report, he/she tries to assess the situation from a professional and objective point of view, while suppressing more subjective elements, such as ideology and personal or organizational interests. Professional intelligence producers will attempt to integrate their independent professional opinion with reinforcing the decision-makers' self-confidence and may provide intelligence products that are not agreeable to the decision-makers' agenda, but the products will always expose the professional opinion of the intelligence organization which he/she leads. In other situations they try to exploit the intelligence pro-
ducer position to advance one’s ideological agenda or one’s personal organizational interests. An interested intelligence producer is motivated by a personal, organizational or ideological agenda, so the intelligence product will be formulated so as to comply with the decision-maker’s agenda, thereby promoting the intelligence producer’s personal advancement. An interested/flattering intelligence advisor will always offer an opinion that supports the agenda of the decision-maker. So, combining the character of decision-makers and the characteristics of intelligence providers, we can face one of the four situations in which the intelligence product has an impact on the decision-making process.

**Great influence.** We can face this situation only when decision-makers can be characterized as intellectually receptive and, in this situation, it would be possible for the intelligence product to enjoy great influence. The decision-maker accepts both the factual portion of the intelligence product, the analysis of these facts and the full range of feasible options provided by intelligence.

The second condition for the intelligence product to have extensive influence on decision-making is the presence of a professional intelligence producer. An important factor, also, which, although neither necessary nor sufficient, can significantly enhance the influence of the intelligence product, is the professional stature of the intelligence organization. But, at the same time, intelligence organizations must always remember that their job is to support the policymaker’s decision, not to try to step into their shoes, regardless of how strongly they feel about an issue. We are facing limited influence when decision-makers reject new information that is not consistent with their priorities. This situation arises with a closed decision-maker and an interested intelligence producer.

The intelligence product serves either to reinforce the policy agenda of the decision-maker, or to build up support for government policies in the political and public arena. So, the decision-maker is interested in receiving intelligence products consistent with his agenda, and the intelligence producer is ready and willing to enlist support for the existing policy or preferred course of action already fixed by the decision-maker. In this case, intelligence personnel deliberately avoid presenting analyses that are not perfectly in line with the decision-makers’ agenda. Intelligence personnel present only those analyses that reinforce the worldview or policies of the decision-maker. This situation appears to be identical with the ideal intelligence situation, for it appears that an atmosphere of perfect harmony and understanding prevails between decision-making and intelligence communities. However, a closer examination of this situation reveals that the sole contribution of the intelligence product is to provide emotional and political support to the decision-maker. In this case, the intelligence product does not enhance the decision-making process by providing new information or new interpretations of the facts; instead, it serves to justify the policies and viewpoints of decision-makers even before the presentation of the intelligence product.

**Partial influence.** In this situation, the decision-maker is willing to receive information presented by intelligence, even if it does not comply with his expectations or agenda. He adopts raw information contained in the intelligence product, and, to a large extent, rejects the conclusions.

Unlike the first two situations, since the decision-maker is receptive, the intelligence product stands a chance of influencing the decision-making process even if it is inconsistent with the expectations of the decision-maker. However, in contrast with the case of great influence, here the intelligence organization does not enjoy a reputation of high professional standards within the decision-making community, and so its ability to influence decision-making decreases. While the decision-maker demonstrates interest in the entire intelligence analysis, in fact he analyses the material differently and arrives at different conclusions.

And, finally, **no influence.** In this case, the decision-makers reject the raw facts and analyses contained in the intelligence product. This characteristic is even more pronounced when the decision-maker prevents the intelligence product from being presented at all within the decision-making forum. This situation arises when an unreceptive decision-maker interacts with a professional intelligence producer. The intelligence producer stands behind his opinion, and insists on expressing it, even if his assessments are not completely consistent with those of the decision maker. Under the circumstances, the decision maker prefers to limit his contact with the intelligence producer and sooner or later ends with expel-
ling the head of the intelligence services from his post. As a conclusion, the ability to comprehensively observe the world and report the most pressing issues to decision makers is no longer monopolized by the intelligence community. This change is compounded by the revolution brought about by advances in computer and telecommunications technology. Not only can news organizations report from almost anywhere on the planet, but in most cases they can do so in real time as events are taking place, influencing decision-making process, which will continue to take place in shorter and shorter time cycles.

The intelligence community may not need to compete with news agencies, but it should be concerned when decision-makers act based only on information from media, without intelligence community input, based on classified sources and methods. Generally, decision makers believe intelligence is still very useful in the information age, but they are also finding that information age sources of data and analysis are becoming extremely useful, especially in the cases where they cannot get a personal intelligence briefing. An effective management of uncertainty and related challenges to sound decision-making requires close cooperation between policy and intelligence officers. In short, better integration of intelligence into the decision-making process is needed. Serious decision makers are always interested in disagreements among analysts, because analysts, as well as decision-makers, are constantly grappling with uncertainty.

The analyst and the collector have to know the operational agendas of decision makers and to understand the continuous and largely informal processes by which they come to a decision. Similarly, decision makers have to get close enough to intelligence to provide direct guidance to the collection and analytic processes. Intelligence analysis, especially interpretative and predictive analysis, is an input not a substitute for policy analysis.

Policy analysts take account of other providers of information and judgment, and also bring their own, often considerable, experience, insights, and biases to the difficult task for which they must take ultimate responsibility. The analytic and decision-making communities must become better informed on the other’s needs. To that end, closer ties could increase the danger of politicization, the potential for the intelligence community to distort information or judgment in order to please political authorities.

Finally, the relationship between decision-makers and intelligence producers is institutional and personal, as well as professional, and the dynamics varies both across issues and over time. Mutual understanding of professional values and modes of behavior will be tested most when the political stakes are highest. Analysts, therefore, face a recurring challenge in maintaining both their professional standards and effective relations with political clients on the issues that matter most for both parties. We should take into consideration that analysis does not solve the problem itself. It is not a substitute for imagination, leadership, or wisdom. It does not make decisions, but it does serve to discriminate between choices, separating the knowable from the unknowable and offering decision-makers the opportunity to focus on the issues requiring experience and values and the exercise of their judgment.
Religion and Conflict. Violence and Radicalization in the Wider Black Sea Area

I. MECHANISM OF RADICALIZATION AND VIOLENCE

In the first part, I will address four fundamental questions on the relation between religion and conflict. These questions are obvious if we consider the tolerance, love and acceptance all the holy books in all religions preach about, but also the real facts and connections between religion and violent actions.

1. Do ethnical and religious conflicts exist?

In fact, we all know that there are three main principles of power: authority, resources and prestige (or status). But these are not the only ones, and no pure conflicts really exist. Concerning this issue, we can say that a conflict of authority is, at the same time, one of access to resources and one of prestige and that a person who has one of those elements – authority, resources or prestige – could easily obtain the others, as well.

Conflicts based on prestige and status start off the most complicated conflicts because of the symbolic grounds of the conflict. A particular case of those are identity conflicts, which are harder to solve, particularly the ethnic or religious ones.

One could say that there is no such thing as a religious or ethnic conflict. Even though this identity principle is used to define the parts of the conflict and fuel it, the purpose has nothing to do with identity – whether ethnic or religious. It has to do with resources or authority. It is true that these are obvious goals in any conflict, but we cannot rule out the existence of ethnic or religious conflicts once there are conflicts and crimes that happen only because the people involved have a different ethnicity or religion.

Due to these factors and the genocides that took place in several places, be they known or unknown, we cannot rule out the very existence of a religious or ethnical conflict; these very roots bring more intricacy into the conflict and the settlement process.

The segregation of Jerusalem and the Middle East conflict, where the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Jewish temple wreck are located one above the other on the
same Hebrew piece of land are suggestive examples. This situation raises a lot of problems both at the level of Muslim and the Jewish community. Not to mention the Christian Jerusalem and its religious significance.

2. Religion and conflict: strong identity and the means for polarization

Religion in itself is not the cause of any conflict. But very often it is dragged into conflicts and used as a reason to concentrate and polarize communities in a war because of the force and the important sense of identity that a principle such as faith gives to people. Important actors drive the conflict and push one community against the other based on differences in their religious identity.

There is no such thing as a good or a bad conflict. Conflict is inherently linked to humanity and the main issue is the way towards solving the conflict: in a violent or peaceful way, using weapons or institutions, norms, laws and informal mechanisms of mediation and conflict settlement in those communities.

Violence is a choice. There is no group of persons to possess elements of violence. Therefore, it is the humankind that created violence and gave it legal framework to be followed by observing human rights, the army and other law enforcement mechanisms – police, gendarmerie, and security bodies.

The mechanisms that explain and drive the conflict come mainly from access to power – be it authority or resources. The third cause or element of power is prestige and symbolic authority. This is driven by the very human characteristics, such as selfishness and greed in the first place – both condemned by all religions – by fear and mistrust – used in any conflict in the polarization phase as to obtain people's support for the war to come.

Another mechanism of status conflicts is a symbolic one, as it is linked to prestige; it is the case of someone, particularly someone who has some authority, and who gets to persuade another person to stand up for something; thus polarization has been generated, as well as the public support needed to fuel identity pressure, the need to reaffirm it or protect it against attacks, against blasphemous gestures worthy to take revenge for.

3. Radicalization in religion

What drives religious people to become radical and extremist and to challenge the sayings of their holy books and concentrate on false prophets that preach violence?

The most obvious answer is poverty, inequality, lack of rights and chances, no sense of belonging to a strong community that gives confidence, and no access to necessary resources. But the 9/11 attacks, as well as those in London and Madrid proved that the authors were not poor people recruited in refugee camps, but very healthy and educated young people, who went to Western schools or had private tutors and were completely integrated in the British society, second or third generation immigrants born in the West. There were also numerous American, British, German, French citizens born in the respective states from completely integrated families that flew to Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia and other places to join terrorist organizations.

A study undertaken by Cambridge University, under Mary Sharpe's coordination that took place in prisons, with the assistance of British Imams specially trained to talk and interview suicide bombers that failed proved that all previous assumptions were false or exaggerated. It is not about the faith and the death of unbelievers. It is not about the occupation of the Palestinian or Arab lands. It is not about the reward that was offered in Lebanon, for example, to the families of the heroes. It is not even about obtaining the status of a “hero” of Islam. All of these people proved to be very pragmatic: the most important cause invoked to explain the mechanism of adopting radical measures proved to be the 72 virgins that were waiting at the gate of heaven to honor the hero of the Islam.

4. Is Islam a religion that favors radicalization and extreme gestures?

The obvious and politically correct answer would be NO! We cannot assign terrorism and radicalism to the Islamic religion. The Inquisition in the Dark Ages, the wars between Catholics and Protestants in Europe, and the recent fights for faith in Northern Ireland would prove that it is not the case. Behind the outspoken fight to protect religion, one can find more pragmatic motivations than national identities, such as political options or access to power and resources. This is also the case in the Western Balkans, both in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Kosovo.

But in the case of Islam some would say that there are grounds that would indicate the contrary. The study has proved that the way of life offered by the Islamic religion to a young Muslim creates problems in the contemporary world. The young boy does not have access to any knowledge about women before having one as a spouse. The lack of experience and the pressure given by
that justified the first World Order. Vengeance was the mechanism that forged the revolutions since 1789, and the 1815 Congress of Vienna was a settlement among empires. The national passions forged the period until 1918, and the ideological conflict appeared after 1917 and was characteristic until the fall of the Berlin Wall.

After 1989, the quest for identity of peoples uncertain about their status, place in the world and prospects for a meaningful future became more obvious. Identity has replaced ideology as the engine of history with the consequence that emotions count more than ever in a world where media is playing a role of sounding board and magnifying glass.

Emotions – whether religious, ideological or purely personal – have of course always counted. The most important ones are nowadays those linked to confidence which is the defining element of how nations and people address the challenges they face, as well as how they relate one to another.

Three primary emotions are closely linked to confidence: fear, hope and humiliation. Fear is the absence of confidence and makes people apprehensive about the present and the dangers of the future. Hope, by contrast, is an expression of confidence, it is based on conviction that today is better than yesterday and tomorrow will be better than today. Humiliation refers to the injured confidence of those who have lost their hope in the future and for whom the lack of hope is a result and fault of the others, who have treated them badly in the past. The contrast between the idealized and glorious past and the frustrating present is so startling that humiliation prevails.

Hope means I want, I can, I will do it.

Humiliation means I will never do that because of the others, so I might try to destroy them since I cannot join them. I want, I can but they don’t allow me.

Fear means I am there, I have, I do not want to give to or to allow the others, I fear they will do something to me.

The three emotions express the personal level of trust. Confidence is vital for nations, civilizations, and individuals because it allows them to project themselves into the future to fulfill and even transcend their capabilities.

One can measure trust through perceptions. National trust is measured through indicators such as the level of the people’s trust in institutions, authorities and government, spending models and the level of investments. The birth rate could represent an indicator, but it is more complex and misleading because we can consider other

II. GEOPOLITICS OF EMOTIONS.

HOW HAS RELIGION BECOME A CONFLICT SOURCE?

1. Globalization, identity and emotions

States and governments are supposed to act rationally. Emotions are kept away from the analysis because they introduce additional irrationality into a world that was already in a natural state of disorder. But even those states are influenced by the emotions of the individuals placed in key positions in the decision-making process, and by different groups that begin to manifest a common state of emotion.

In history, the world has been dominated by the emotions of some individuals rather than by the emotions of groups of individuals, no matter the way they took form. Since the formation of the states, the first drivers were conquest and vengeance. Besides these, one would find pride and honor, the values of the knights of the first World Order. Vengeance was the mechanism that forged the revolutions since 1789, and the 1815 Congress of Vienna was a settlement among empires. The national passions forged the period until 1918, and the ideological conflict appeared after 1917 and was characteristic until the fall of the Berlin Wall.

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mechanisms than trust that could influence it. At the level of international or national relations we can discuss about the number and quality of the agreements among the actors as measures or level of trust.

The emotions expressed by an individual or a group are not pure, but they are rather a mix of emotions. Moreover, events and crises could trigger changes in the emotions since fear is never far from hope and, furthermore, fear can be very close to humiliation, which, under certain circumstances, could also be an element of support for hope.

The first predecessors and supporters of the theory of emotions concerning the international relations are Plato and Hobbes, followed by Kant and Hegel. For example, the philosophers underlined the importance and influence of emotions and the classical concept of passion in comparison with the Marx’s definition of class interest. The influence of emotions at the level of geopolitics was presented by Raymond Aron, Stanley Hoffmann from Harvard, and Pierre Hassner from Paris, and the most comprehensive work was Dominique Moïsi’s foreign policy essay "Geopolitics of Emotions ".

Globalization, identity and emotions. A mechanism for today’s conflicts.

Thomas Friedman’s famous metaphor on globalization becomes the key of the theory: “Globalization can flatten the world.” This phenomenon made the world more passionate than ever, and the emotions become indispensable to understand the complexity of the world we live in. Amplified by media, emotions reflect and react to globalization (wrongly identified with Americanization due to the period in which the process appeared, even if the Cold War was the period when two ideology-based blocks, became global and the integration became reality).

After the Cold War, globalization without the ideological and balanced background – which maintained the cohesion and order based on the mutual destroying capabilities – triggered insecurity and raised the question of identity, because the superior objective of ideology defense and the threat posed by the enemy disappeared, as well as the two opposite systems. In an ever-changing world without borders, the question of “who we are and what is our place and role” became more prominent. That forged the search for new principles and ideas of identities – the natural ones, rather than the constructed ones – and the reconsideration of all types of identities, all strongly linked to confidence and emotions, especially those of fear, hope and humiliation.

In a globalized world, without any limits and ideology censorship, the access to media and information become a constant characteristic and very soon the West will not be able to maintain its monopoly on media. In a transparent world, those who are poor or uneducated and without rights became aware of the rich world, and the rich lost the privilege to deny the right to these benefits. The West became more vulnerable, and the outside world increasingly more difficult to be managed.

During the Cold War there was only one enemy, easily to be identified, analyzed and countered. In this postmodern complex world, the diffuse, fluid nature of the enemy – who can be a partner, friend or competitor, or a non-state enemy at the same time, transforming an external conflict into a domestic one as the enemy is within the citizens – creates the invisible terrorist threat with a high degree of incertitude, vulnerability and finally fear.

Against this background, even the global terrorism represented by Al-Qaeda after the 9/11 attacks proved to be nothing but a label which had helped define the enemy rather than clearly identify it. Even if the criticism against the global war concept is partially correct – and this is why even George W. Bush gave up using this expression during his second term, in fact, this is just a method to simplify the model by taking into account post-global changes.

This process of globalization, the complexity of threats and the change in the nature of the enemy, together with the disappearance of the ideologies as a principle of cohesion, and the new born era of the affirmation of individuality after the fall of the Communist empire, all led to the need to find the community linkages in identities. It became important to assert one’s individuality, and the needed cohesion of the group led to a struggle for identity.

Identity is defined less by political ideas and beliefs than by the perception of our essence gained through the respect received from others. Emotions are our mirror. They are mutual and based on group’s characteristics. A modern well educated young Muslim woman chooses to wear a scarf in the West, because of her need to be perceived in a certain way by the group she is part of, by the need to belong to such a community, to have an identity. So it is about strongly interdependent emotions, essential for the understanding of our world dominated by identity.

Fear, humiliation and hope are natural and vital ingredients in human beings, and the health comes
from a right balance among them. As the Dutch philosopher Spinoza said, hope and fear were very important for the relation with uncertainty about the future. But all three are important for life: fear is necessary for survival, hope ignites and fuels "the engine of life", humiliation in small doses, can stimulate the improvement and development of someone, if it comes from somebody who does better and is a friend or an uninterested part. But desperate humiliation without hope is destructive and causes too much fear, too much humiliation and not enough hope, thus being the most dangerous of all possible social combinations, the one that leads to the greatest instability and tension.

2. Identity and conflict

Identity plays a vital role in social conflict, generally because it is fundamental to how individuals and collectivities see and understand themselves in conflict. Identities delineate who is “us” from who is “them”, mobilizing individuals and collectivities, providing legitimacy and justification for individual and group aspirations. But most important, identities themselves are fueling and motivating conflicts and social struggle.

Identity conflicts are among the most complicated to be solved due to the symbolic nature and emotional attributes of the prestige and status that humans tend to attribute to their own person or group.

Identities acquire significance, meaning and value within specific contexts and cultures and help people understand who they are as individuals, as occupants of particular roles, as members of specific groups. There are two types of identities: personal or self-identity, focusing on the individual’s sense of himself as an autonomous unique person and group or social identity, which refers to the aspects of one’s image that derive from salient group membership.

Individual identity conflicts

There are three theories addressing different aspects of identification processes and their implications on social relationships and social conflicts. First, social identities are projects, narrative sense of self-integrating past, present and future, symbols of meaning created from social interactions. They fill up the need of an individual to acknowledge his need to take up a role and to have a purpose in social life. The second one refers to social comparisons, linked to how identities are formed and constructed, how groups use differences and similarities to manage social implications and consequences of specific categories, how individuals negotiate, reconstitute and represent identities through talk and social interactions. The third perspective focuses on issues of salience. When and how identities become meaningful for individuals and collectivities, how individuals manage the intersection of several identities and how they negotiate boundaries and borders of identity categories.

Academic research and literature are addressing a full agenda of implications of identity in conflicts. First, social identity roles as a result of the need for self-understanding based on group membership. Second, individual identity issues in conflict considered as concepts like needs, so the sense of self, the identity and the public image of each individual. When interactions do not address identity needs issues that defy, diminish or threaten them arise. People could make huge sacrifices on substantive issues in order to re-establish a positive sense of self.

Group identity, social identity

Moving to group or to social identity, there is a huge body of literature discussing human behavior in collectivities from the potential of social change to the capacity of devastation. Topics include ethnocentrism, selective perception, attribution error, the use of collective identities to justify discrimination and inequality, polarization, enemy imaging and genocide. The inter-group conflict due to social identity – or the identity conflict – is explained by the collective attempt to create, define, develop and protect key social identities and satisfy identity needs.

Basic human needs linked to identity are essential needs, universal and non-negotiable. Three of these needs are involved in understanding violent social conflicts: personal development, security and recognition of the substance and specific features of identity. When the state system fails to meet identity needs, ethno-national struggles emerge. Because these basic needs are universal and immutable, people will go to great lengths to satisfy them. Moreover, when the denial of human needs is at the root of conflicts, traditional conflict settlement methods often fail.

At the level of collective and group identities, basic needs include the ability to develop a collective identity, to have this identity recognized by others and to have fair access to the system and structures that support and define the conditions that allow the achievement and building of identity.

If the state failed to satisfy the collective social needs of citizens, the inequality feeds frustration, frag-
mentation, lack of system legitimacy and, ultimately, the conflict. It is in the state’s interest to support and represent these identities as much as possible as they are an important fuel for societal cohesion. The anomaly of an indistinct society formed by individuals not organized in multiple social groups and collectivities, in spite of a strong and autocratic leadership, leads to the risk of anarchy and the existence of a failed state.

**Politicization of identity**

Theories of identity conflicts provide further insight into how community action is mobilized via collective identity for political purposes. Using identity categories is a key element to define the politicization of identity and the interactions between the identities and contexts which end in conflicts. There are three ways of assuming the collective identity: identity is defined and chosen by individuals or groups, imposed by those in a position of authority or constituted through social interactions. This triggers different identity ways and roles in conflicts.

The commitment and the power entailed by the identity are often used by politicians in several ways: first, in processes and mechanisms which shape and define “the novelty” and “revival” or “rediscovery” of the social identity; second, in order to create different identities and to contribute to the emergence and/or escalation of social conflicts; and, third, to mobilize or create, and make them the instrument of the conflict, a new social identity. However, all theorists had to recognize the fact that different identities could not lead to conflicts in the absence of resources.

The identity politicization mechanisms are powered by the worsening of the identity problems, when they refer to economic and social incertitude, which offers the possibility to question the legitimacy and credibility of the dominant social institutions, when there is relative poverty, when security is at stake because of a group with a collective identity (cases of Rroma people). Politicization emerges in cases of strong and culturally enduring and strong identities, with solid bases, where the collectivities and communities feeling that they have a lot to lose are easy to mobilize. Violence has also become highly likely when it can be easily applied by those who use the identity politicization to show a community that the recognition of another threatens its own identity.

**Theory of social identity and categorization**

The Social Identity Theory – SIT, developed by Henri Tajfel in 1981, analyses different aspects of the intergroup conflicts. The study is based on the way in which the identity problems and needs change the competition, the conflicts and the society the group is part of.

The comparison triggering an uncertain situation for a group or a negative self-perception may lead to strategies aimed at increasing the group’s value. These models of difficult situations fuel the revisionism of the status-quo. When that triggers pressure to change the general structure itself, in the attempt to offer the group a dominant or better position, the conflict can emerge if the dominant group or the former dominant group sees it as a threat to its status.

Identities are unstable and volatile when the states are weak or have a low level of social and collective cohesion. In the modern democratic collectivities, which have solutions to the problems linked to identity and recognition of the society’s unity in diversity, more fixed and stable identities are more useful to maintain the continuity in time. At this point, the challenges are represented by the immigration and the impact of the new identities in relation with the society or the changes which are not recognized and managed or sudden and less visible, their results taking the leadership by surprise.

**III. RELIGION AND CONFLICTS. BETWEEN EDEN AND ARMAGEDDON. RELIGIOUSLY MOTIVATED VIOLENCE.**

The religion’s role in a conflict can have different mechanisms and reasons. First, the identity conflicts are an important part of the conflicts for prestige and status and the religious identity principles represent a very important category of identity principles. Therefore, we deal with numerous, complex identity conflicts, which help us elaborate a series of mechanisms and instruments aimed at managing such conflicts – linked to the conflict emergence, its transformation into a violent conflict and subsequent settlement.

There are also special elements brought by the religious feeling and the religious life, which introduce a complexity that creates new mechanisms and ways to generate a violent conflict, elements linked exclusively to religion. Moreover, in a certain sense, religion itself can introduce other specific forms of conflict, using religion to explain or strengthen the cohesion or polarization. The access to authority is a conflict-generating mechanism, while resources are the generators of the real conflict-generating mechanism.
As religion becomes increasingly important in the lives of hundreds of millions of people, this type of commitment consecrates and generates an important power, which is attractive to the actors involved in this game. It comes also with important resources – the Mormons as well as the Catholic Church are relevant examples to that end. As previously shown, all religions praise understanding, tolerance and love, therefore peace and coexistence. On the other hand, the achievement of the religious experience requires peace and tranquility, an adequate climate for introspection and meditation.

The religious experience is, however, perceived differently by a wide range of worshipers, the rituals fill the gap between the ordinary believers' and the elite's perception on the religious feelings. Here, the faith is replaced by the unquestioned trust in the religious or pseudo-religious leaders; thus, for instance, the discourse of an ayatollah or another has become more important than the spirit and substance of the Quran or the Bible.

The agenda on the religion-conflict relationship should start with the discussion on the legitimacy of the believer's or faith defender's conduct, while the theory on the "just war" is extremely important in each religion. It is about the ethics and spiritual guidance which mentions that war is sometimes necessary as well as the choice to wage it or not. The ban of war and the eulogy to life could lead to the banning of the sale of deadly weapons. Moreover, there is a culture of the obligation to wage a war in self-defense and the culture of vengeance in certain religions. Other spiritual principles refer to the eternal love in the Christian religion and metta in Buddhism. Therefore, there is a list of ethical practices, spiritual experiences, laws and codes immanent to the religious life, which are abandoned when we hold debates on the just war, all the more so as the war becomes reality.

The myths and symbolism represent another two drivers of the "pure" religious conflicts, as the reasons behind the conflicts on these principles are not linked to the mechanisms aimed at gaining the power or to resources of the religious commitment, are not part of the identity component implied by religious feelings, being considered causes directly linked to the characteristics of the religion itself. In one of the cases, it is about questioning the faith by attacking, challenging or modifying histories deemed as the fundamental myths of the respective religion. This could come from rival religions or, most often, from different sects and components of the same religion. In the other case, it is about gestures which defy or deliberately mark the lack of respect or even about disruptive gestures or actions against external symbols or important people for the respective religion, respectively leaders of the cult and religion.

As I have highlighted above, people do not think in terms of biblical beliefs they represent, although the alleged reason of the violent conflicts is the very defense of the religion founded on the Holy Book, whose teachings are thus ignored. However, as far as the religious conflicts are concerned, we are interested in understanding how, when, and why violence is generated even by faithful people and beyond the content and the identity sense in the group's religious cohesion principle, which has been already explained in the previous chapter.

The violent religion-based conflict can be approached through the lens of debates on 'the just war' – containing the religion's ethics and global standards as far as the war is concerned and the way to overcome the opposition against the war, which is present in all religions. By evoking standards, the values and conducts shared at the international level represent a proper agenda to maintain and restore peace, but, in fact, by bringing in the limelight the common examples of coexisting multi-religious societies, we cannot completely ignore the cultural particularities or the unique character of the religious manifestation. The result lies in the identification and preventive use of the particularities of religion, traditions and practices which preach peace and tolerance in each religion.

Unfortunately, this preventive and pro-active way to approach religious violence is less encountered in real life than violence around the world, which is justified by appeals to religious concepts and traditions. The phenomena of religious consciousness and commitment can be used in the conflict polarization process, but it can also fuel the violence drivers through the very percepts of the religion per se.

Other levers of the impact between religion and conflict can be obtained by using the religious approaches on war and peace as well as on the inter-faith coexistence and by trying to interpret the settlement of conflicts as a religious experience per se. This has also contributed to the development of a certain field of the trans-cultural communication linked to the inter-confessional dialogue with a view to adapting the pre-existing relations among religions – mutual excommunication, historical religious wars and procedures to cast an evil eye and curses against the enemy, rituals which affect values and symbols of other religions.
Religion is included into the violence cycles fueled by the notions of identity and difference. But the religious conflict could also be the result of cognitive dissonance among the different representatives of religions or beliefs which co-exist in the same place and which are engaged in the fight among the belief, behaviors and social conditions such as they are and should be. The old hatred, deeply rooted in history, can be added, as well as the temptation to establish a hierarchy among different religions – which one is true, which is the right path that leads us closer to God, which one is sufficiently sophisticated to generate the most powerful and cohesive religious feeling or the tighter connection between an individual and his religion.

The sources of conflicts could also originate in the normative commitments of the respective groups according to the way they are reflected or assessed by the rival religions in the same area. The notions of purity within the group and weaknesses outside the group could be added as is the case with the mythic narrations, as well as the logic of the action and the models of differences among groups included in religion’s principles. Practically, all the elements of a religion which were translated into reality or the elements, behaviors, symbols connected to the orders and limits related to the religious principles could represent reasons for religious conflicts, when they tend to separate the rules, norms or the individuals’ way of life into the sacred and profane or when they refer to disturbing the moral or cosmic vital order of a myth of the religions – which one is true, which is the right path that leads us closer to God, which one is sufficiently sophisticated to generate the most powerful and cohesive religious feeling or the tighter connection between an individual and his religion.

Religious extremism and conflicts

In that regard, there is a series of examples of extremism fueled on these grounds. The extremists fight to preserve their identity as a group and remind of the way they imagine themselves or perceive the religion (or they are led by false preachers with the same extremist interpretation of the religion). This cosmic fight between the good and evil is recurrent in the religious conflicts and their violent actions represent, according to them, the necessary answers for the ones they fight against – a fact which is also a result of an extremist value judgment instead of an objective assessment.

In this situation, for bin Laden, the Jihad is “the fight against unrighteous and vicious forces”, Hamas sees the liberalization of Kuweit in 1991 as “a direct attack against the entire Islamic civilization”, which represents “another episode of the fight between the good and evil” and Mohammad Sidique Khan, responsible for the July 7, 2005 London bombing, claimed he was a soldier “in the fight against the government responsible for the atrocities committed against his people”, by his people meaning “not the entire Islam, but only the Muslims who share his political and religious identity”, according to his way of perceiving Islam. This perspective exonerates any crime, without a reasonable measure, argument or objective explanation.

In essence, there is no extremist religion and, at the same time, any religion could be subject to extreme interpretation. It is about creating an antagonism between good and evil, virtues and weaknesses and then attached to ingroups and outgroups. This process is called “collective axiology of identity”, defined by simplifying the collective generality to a single essential characteristic for the whole group. For instance, the adherent to the religion’s fundamentalist interpretation tends to focus on a high level of the collective generality. This dependence is obvious in the common narrations within groups associated with the apocalyptical fighting traditions against the evil forces.

Excesses go even further, projecting commitments pertaining to values, which define the actions to be prohibited and the actions that are necessary. Moreover, in the religious conflicts, revenge acts are related to promises of a spiritual glory, entering the holiest areas of spirituality associated to the respective religion, which are reserved for sacred, initiated personalities, in parallel with the demonization and dehumanization of the enemy, allowing, thus, the criminal act. This is the operation way for those who, for example, present the Jihad as a fight against the infidels, meaning the followers of another religions or branches or sect of the same religion, and not as a fight with the self and sins, according to the Quran.

In order to provide solutions to this type of conflicts, one should take the holy books and the real meaning of the religious principles, which are not recognized by the ordinary believers but only by the spiritual leaders, and encourage a moderate behavior. Democratization among the Islam followers would be also useful as it creates a comparison term. The religiosity should not be expressed through antagonism with another faith – and the holy books do not pretend such a thing, as we can see, but through the human behavior towards all living creatures. The humanization of the enemy is also a good step forward and all those efforts have proved their efficiency in increasing the public support for including a peace process gathering all religions in a given space.
Bucharest, Romania, April 4-6, 2011
Vienna, Austria, April 7-8, 2011
The Center for International and European Studies (CIES) at Kadir Has University was established in 2004 as the Center for European Union Studies. Since September 2010, CIES has undergone a major transformation by widening its focus in order to pursue applied, policy-oriented research and to promote debate on the most pressing geopolitical issues of the region and acquiring its current name.

OBJECTIVES

Its areas of research and interaction include EU institutions and policies (such as enlargement, neighborhood policies and CFSP/CSDP), cross-cutting horizontal issues such as regional cooperation, global governance, and security, inter alia with a geographical focus on the Black Sea Region (including the Caucasus), the Mediterranean, Southeastern Europe, Turkish-Greek relations, and transatlantic relations. In order to achieve its aims, the Center promotes activities that are sustainable both in terms of their funding and over the long term. It encourages synergies with relevant departments at Kadir Has University such as, in particular, the Department of International Relations. It pursues activities which enhance international cooperation by working with like-minded research centers, universities, and individual academics and by conducting research and building partnerships in the form of joint research projects, project proposals, and meetings in order to enhance the capacity building, international presence and reputation of the Center. It holds a number of outreach activities that promote the activities and findings of the Center to the wider university community and the general public.

CONCRETELY

Since September 2010, CIES has held over thirty events (international conferences, invited speakers, briefings to visiting students and faculty from foreign universities, etc.). Some of its partner institutions to date include, inter alia, the Harvard Black Sea Security Program, the Center for Technology, Security, and Policy (CTSP) at Virginia Tech, Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in Qatar, the German Marshall Fund of the United States, the Hollings Center for International Dialogue, the United States Association of Former Members of Congress, the Razumkov Centre (Kyiv), the Romanian Diplomatic Institute (Bucharest), the Open Ukraine Foundation (Kyiv), European Studies Institute of Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO), the International Relations Council of Turkey, the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures (Alexandria), the Corporate Social Responsibility Association of Turkey, the Carnegie Middle East Center, the Center for Governance and Culture in Europe at University of St. Gallen, and the Delegation of the European Union to Turkey.

CIES is, in particular, actively engaged in the activities of its "Understanding the Common Neighbourhood" program. Activities under this program include the 2nd International Neighbourhood Symposium (INS) on "Security and Democracy in the wake of the Arab Awakening" which will be held in Heybeliada, near Istanbul, between 26 June and 1 July 2012, the launching of its Neighbourhood Policy Paper series together with the Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation and its NATO co-sponsored project titled "Defining NATO’s Role in the Post-Arab Spring Era."

The International Neighbourhood Symposium aims to promote further understanding and cooperation in the Eastern Neighborhood and the Mediterranean South and beyond by providing a forum for study, dialogue and networking in a multicultural and interdisciplinary environment. Young professionals and graduate students, aged 22-35, primarily from the countries of the Eastern Neighborhood, the Mediterranean South, EU member states, and the United States are the Symposium target group in addition to young professionals from the fields of public policy, politics, journalism, and business. The objective of the International Neighbourhood Symposium is to provide a forum for study, dialogue and networking in a multicultural and interdisciplinary environment which is sustainable over the next few years and is truly regional.

The first of the Neighbourhood Policy Paper series was published in November 2011. This series is to be enriched by some 15 commissioned policy papers throughout the year on issues of relevance to the Black Sea region. The objective is to provide the policy, research and professional communities of experts with input on many of the important issues and challenges facing the region today they will be written by relevant experts. These papers will also be translated into Russian so that they are accessible to the Russian speaking world in an attempt to enlarge the scope of the dialogue an input on Black Sea Region-related issues.

As part of its "Defining NATO’s Role in the Post-Arab Spring Era," project, CIES has established a Task Force, comprised of key experts, to address pressing challenges to freedom and security in connection to the recent economic and political developments in the Southern neighborhood of NATO. The Task Force will discuss future prospects for action by the Alliance by producing a policy report that will be the basis of a public debate on NATO and its role in its Southern and Eastern Neighborhoods. Focus will also be given to Turkey’s involvement in the Middle East since the Arab Spring by evaluating the benefits of Turkey’s NATO membership and analyzing how Turkey can utilize NATO in the context of its foreign and security policy.

The CIES has recently received major grants from the NATO Public Policy Programmes and the Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation, among others in support of its activities.

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