

## Editorial

It is urgent that the EU should follow up on UN Resolution 1701 and the deployment of member states' troops to Lebanon with a strategic-diplomatic initiative aimed at the fundamental problem, namely the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The unresolved conflict remains poison for the region and the world. The Palestinian cause did not create al Qaeda, but the persistence of the conflict has helped al-Qaeda ideologues coalesce together different sets of fundamentally unconnected crises in pursuit of a global jihad. It has been a prime recruitment motivation of terrorists in Europe and has escalated tensions between Islam and the West.

The EU and its member states should now take the initiative diplomatically because of its deepening involvement in the conflict. The EU tried to get the peace process going in 2002 by spearheading the Roadmap. But the US took over the agenda, which in practice sought the removal of Arafat as a precondition for negotiations over a two-state solution. The Roadmap was essentially stillborn.

However, the Lebanon war and the European peacekeeping efforts there have heightened EU stakes in Middle East peace. The EU must now take the initiative on the political front, since it has its soldiers exposed to the hazards of crossfire between the Israeli army and Hezbollah. Italy is in the lead with 3,000 troops. Yet alone, peacekeeping in Lebanon and more so in the occupied territories runs the risk of enmeshing European forces into an endless 'mission impossible'. There have to be legitimate and recognized borders for the EU to protect.

A further reason for serious European diplomatic action is the state of Israeli policy itself. Israel's strategy is now in tatters. Sharon's disengagement plan emerged from the search for an alternative to a negotiated two-state agreement. Raising successively as excuses Arafat's ambivalence, Abbas' impotence and Hamas' radicalism, Israel argued that the only game in town was that of unilateralism. The events of the summer of 2006, the Qassam rockets fired from Gaza and now the Hezbollah war, shattered the unilateralist idea. Military means alone cannot provide Israel with the security it yearns for.

What should the EU do? It should convene a conference of the parties and the Quartet and table as primary working documents the most constructive contributions available, namely the Arab Peace Initiative of March 2002 and the Geneva Accord signed by 70 distinguished Israeli and Palestinian personalities in October 2003. At some point there could be referenda held in both Israel and Palestine with the following question: "Do you agree that the Arab Peace Initiative and Geneva Accord should be the basis for negotiations for a permanent and complete settlement of the conflict?" Past opinion polls suggest that with careful preparation both parties could deliver majorities in favour.

The Sharon and Olmert governments cold-shouldered the Geneva Accord. But now Israel faces a new situation. Some

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Israeli ministers have expressed support for renewed negotiations. Would the Palestinians accept? All signals suggest that they would. Would the US mount such a set of pre-conditions that the process would stall, just like the Roadmap? The EU should proceed with resolve and clarity, collecting surely the support of the Arab world and Russia. Maybe the US would be heartily relieved to see the EU do this, and join in uncompromisingly this time.

*Michael Emerson & Nathalie Tocci*

*National Conciliation Document -**«Prisoners Document»*Palestine, 11 May 2006. [Link](#)

In the name of God, the Compassionate and the Merciful,  
 “Abide by the decree of God and never disperse” (a verse from the Holy Quran)

Based on the high sense of national and historical responsibility and due to the dangers facing our people and for the sake of reinforcing and consolidating the Palestinian internal front and protection of national unity and the unity of our people in the homeland and in the Diaspora, and in order to confront the Israeli scheme that aims to impose the Israeli solution which blows up the dream of our people and the right of our people in establishing their independent Palestinian state with full sovereignty; this scheme that the Israeli government intends to implement in the next phase as the completion of the apartheid wall and the Judaization of the Jerusalem and the expansion of the Israeli settlements and the seizure of the Jordan Valley and the annexation of vast areas of the West Bank and blocking the path in front of our people to exercise their right in return.

In order to maintain the accomplishments of our people achieved in long struggle and in loyalty to the martyrs of our great people and the pains of their prisoners and the agony of their injured, and based on the fact that we are still passing through a liberation phase with nationalism and democracy as the basic features, and this imposes a political struggle strategy that meets with these features and in order to make the Palestinian comprehensive national dialogue succeed, and based on the Cairo Declaration and the urgent need for unity and solidarity, we present this document (the national conciliation document) to our great steadfast people and to President Mahmoud Abbas Abu Mazen and to the PLO Leadership and to the PM Ismail Hanieh and to the Council of Ministers and to the Speaker of the PNC and to the members of the PNC and to the Speaker and members of the PLC and to all Palestinian forces and factions and to all nongovernmental and popular organizations and institutions and to leadership of Palestinian public opinion in the homeland and in the Diaspora.

Hoping to consider this document as one whole package and with the hope to see this document get the support and approval of everybody and that it can contribute to reach a Palestinian national conciliation document.

1- the Palestinian people in the homeland and in the Diaspora seek to liberate their land and to achieve their right in freedom, return and independence and to exercise their right in self determination, including the right to establish their independent state with al-Quds al-Shareef as its capital on all territories occupied in 1967 and to secure the right of return for the refugees and to liberate all prisoners and detainees based on the historical right of our people on the land of the fathers and grandfathers and based on the UN Charter and the international law and international legitimacy.

2- to work quickly on achieving what has been agreed upon in Cairo in March 2005 pertaining to the development and activation of the PLO and the joining of Hamas and Islamic Jihad Movements to the PLO which is the legitimate and sole repre-

sentative of the Palestinian people wherever they are located and in a manner that meets with changes on the Palestinian arena according to democratic principles and to consolidate the fact that the PLO is the legitimate and sole representative of the Palestinian people in a manner that reinforces the capacity of the PLO to assume its responsibilities in leading our people in the homeland and in the Diaspora and in mobilizing the people and in defending their national, political and humanitarian rights in the various fora and circles and in the international and regional arenas and based on the fact that the national interest stipulates the formation of a new Palestinian National Council before the end of 2006 in a manner that secures the representation of all Palestinian national and Islamic forces, factions and parties and all concentrations of our people everywhere and the various sectors and the figures on proportional basis in representation and presence and struggle and political, social and popular effectiveness and to maintain the PLO as a broad front and framework and a comprehensive national coalition and a gathering framework for all the Palestinians in the homeland and in the Diaspora and to be the higher political reference.

3- the right of the Palestinian people in resistance and clinging to the option of resistance with the various means and focusing the resistance in the occupied territories of 1967 alongside with the political action and negotiations and diplomatic action and continuation of popular and mass resistance against the occupation in its various forms and policies and making sure there is broad participation by all sectors and masses in the popular resistance.

4- To set up a Palestinian plan towards comprehensive political action and to unify the Palestinian political rhetoric on the basis of the Palestinian national consensus program and Arab legitimacy and the international legitimacy resolutions that grant justice to the Palestinian people who are represented by the PLO and the PNA as president and government, and the national and Islamic factions and the civil society organizations and the public figures in order to mobilize Arab, Islamic and international political and financial and economic and humanitarian support and solidarity to our people and to our PNA and to support the right of our people in self determination and freedom and return and independence and to confront the plan of Israel in imposing the Israeli solution on our people and to confront the oppressive siege on the Palestinian people.

5- To protect and reinforce the PNA since it is the nucleus of the future state; this PNA which was established by the struggle and sacrifices, blood and pain of the Palestinian people and to stress on the fact the higher national interests stipulates respecting the temporary constitution of the PNA and the effective laws and respecting the responsibilities and authorities of the president elected according to the will of the Palestinian people through free, honest and democratic elections and to respect the responsibilities and authorities of the government that was granted the confidence vote by the PLC.

And the importance and the need for creative cooperation between the presidency and the government and joint work and hold regular meetings between them to settle any disputes that might arise through brotherly dialogue based on the temporary constitution and for the sake of the higher interests and the need to hold a comprehensive reform in the PNA institutions, especially the judicial apparatus and the respect of the

judiciary authority at all levels and to implement its decisions and to reinforce the rule of the law.

6- to form a national unity government on a basis that secures the participation of all parliament blocs, especially Fatah and Hamas and the political forces that desire to participate on the basis of this document and the joint program to upgrade the Palestinian situation at the local, Arab, regional and international levels and to confront the challenges through having a strong national government that enjoys Palestinian popular and political support from all forces and to present the best possible care for the sectors that carried the burden of steadfastness and resistance and the Intifada and who were the victims of the Israeli criminal aggression, especially the families of the martyrs, prisoners and injured and the owners of the demolished homes and properties which were destroyed by the occupation, in addition to the care to the unemployed and the graduates.

7- Administration of the negotiations is the jurisdiction of the PLO and the President of the PNA on the basis of clinging to the Palestinian national goals and to achieve these goals on condition that any final agreement must be presented to the new PNC for ratification or to hold a general referendum wherever it is possible.

8- To liberate the prisoners and detainees is a sacred national duty that must be assumed by all Palestinian national and Islamic forces and factions and the PLO and the PNA as President and government and the PLC and all resistance forces.

9- The need to double efforts to support and care for the refugees and defend their rights and work on holding a popular conference representing the refugees which should come up with commissions to follow up its duties and to stress on the right of return and to cling to this right and to call on the international community to implement Resolution 194 which stipulates the right of the refugees to return and to be compensated.

10- To work on forming a unified resistance front under the name "Palestinian resistance front" to lead and engage in resistance against the occupation and to unify and coordinate action and resistance and to form a unified political reference for the front.

11- To cling to the democratic trend and to hold regular general free and honest and democratic elections according to the law for the president and the PLC and the local and municipal councils and to respect the principle of peaceful and smooth transfer of authority and to promise to protect the Palestinian democratic experience and respect the democratic choice and its results and respect the rule of the law and the public and basic freedoms and freedom of the press and equality among the citizens in rights and duties without any discrimination and to protect the achievements of women and develop and reinforce them.

12- To reject and denounce the oppressive siege against the Palestinian people which is being led by the US and Israel and call on the Arabs at the popular and official levels to support the Palestinian people and the PLO and the PNA and to call on the Arab governments to implement the political, financial, economic, and media decisions of the Arab summits that sup-

port the Palestinian people and their steadfastness and their national cause and to stress that the PNA is committed to the Arab consensus and to joint Arab action.

13- To call on the Palestinian people for unity and solidarity and unifying the ranks and support the PLO and the PNA as president and government and to reinforce steadfastness and resistance in face of the aggression and siege and to reject intervention in the Palestinian internal affairs.

14- To denounce all forms of split that can lead to internal conflicts and to condemn the use of weapons regardless of the reasons in settling internal disputes and to ban the use of weapons among the members of the Palestinian people and to stress on the sanctity of the Palestinian blood and to abide by dialogue as the sole means to solve disagreements and freedom of expression through all media, including the opposition to the authority and its decisions on the basis of the law and the right of peaceful protest and to organize marches and demonstrations and sit ins on condition that they be peaceful and without any arms and not to attack the properties of citizens and public property.

15- The national interest stipulates the need to look for the best means towards the continuation of participation of the Palestinian people and their political forces in Gaza Strip in their new situation in the battle for freedom, return and independence and to liberate the West Bank and Jerusalem in a manner that makes the steadfast Gaza Strip a real support force to steadfastness and resistance of our people in the West Bank and Jerusalem as the national interest stipulates reassessing the struggle methods to seek the best methods to resist occupation.

16- The need to reform the develop the Palestinian security institution with all its branches on a modern basis and in a manner that makes them capable of assuming their tasks in defending the homeland and the citizens and in confronting the aggression and the occupation and to maintain security and public order and implement the laws and end the state of chaos and security chaos and end the forms of public armed presence and parades and confiscation of the chaotic weapons that harm the resistance and distort its image and that threaten the unity of the Palestinian society and the need to coordinate and organize the relation with the forces of resistance and organize and protect their weapons.

17- To call on the PLC to continue to issue laws that organize the work of the security institution and apparatuses with their various branches and work on issuing a law that bans exercise of political and partisan action by the members of the security services and to abide by the elected political reference as defined by the law.

18- To work on expanding the role and presence of the international solidarity committees and the peace loving groups that support our people in their just struggle against the occupation, settlements, the apartheid wall politically and locally and to work towards the implementation of the International Court of Justice decision at The Hague pertaining to the removal of the wall and settlements and their illegitimate presence.

Signed by:

Fatah – PLC member Marwan Barghouti, Fatah Secretary.  
 Hamas – Sheikh Abdul Khaleq al-Natsheh – Higher Leading Commission  
 Islamic Jihad Movement – Sheikh Bassam al-Sa'di  
 PFLP – Abdul Rahim Mallouh – member of PLO Executive Committee and Deputy  
 General Secretary of the PFLP  
 DFLP – Mustafa Badarneh

Note: Islamic Jihad expressed reservations on the item pertaining to the negotiations

### *United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701 (2006) on the Situation in the Middle East*

Adopted on 11 August 2006. [Link](#)

The Security Council,  
 Recalling all its previous resolutions on Lebanon, in particular resolutions 425 (1978), 426 (1978), 520 (1982), 1559 (2004), 1655 (2006), 1680 (2006) and 1697 (2006), as well as the statements of its president on the situation in Lebanon, in particular the statements of 18 June, 2000, of 19 October, 2004, of 4 May 2005, of 23 January 2006 and of 30 July 2006;  
 Expressing its utmost concern at the continuing escalation of hostilities in Lebanon and in Israel since Hezbollah's attack on Israel on 12 July 2006, which has already caused hundreds of deaths and injuries on both sides, extensive damage to civilian infrastructure and hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons;  
 Emphasising the need for an end of violence, but at the same time emphasising the need to address urgently the causes that have given rise to the current crisis, including by the unconditional release of the abducted Israeli soldiers;  
 Mindful of the sensitivity of the issue of prisoners and encouraging the efforts aimed at urgently settling the issue of the Lebanese prisoners detained in Israel;  
 Welcoming the efforts of the Lebanese prime minister and the commitment of the government of Lebanon, in its seven-point plan, to extend its authority over its territory, through its own legitimate armed forces, such that there will be no weapons without the consent of the government of Lebanon and no authority other than that of the government of Lebanon, welcoming also its commitment to a UN force that is supplemented and enhanced in numbers, equipment, mandate and scope of operation, and bearing in mind its request in this plan for an immediate withdrawal of the Israeli forces from southern Lebanon;  
 Determined to act for this withdrawal to happen at the earliest;  
 Taking due note of the proposals made in the seven-point plan regarding the Shebaa farms area;  
 Welcoming the unanimous decision by the government of Lebanon on 7 August 2006 to deploy a Lebanese armed force of 15,000 troops in south Lebanon as the Israeli army withdraws behind the Blue Line and to request the assistance of additional forces from Unifil as needed, to facilitate the entry of the Lebanese armed forces into the region and to restate its intention to strengthen the Lebanese armed forces with material as needed to enable it to perform its duties;  
 Aware of its responsibilities to help secure a permanent cease-fire and a long-term solution to the conflict;

Determining that the situation in Lebanon constitutes a threat to international peace and security;

1. Calls for a full cessation of hostilities based upon, in particular, the immediate cessation by Hezbollah of all attacks and the immediate cessation by Israel of all offensive military operations;
2. Upon full cessation of hostilities, calls upon the government of Lebanon and Unifil as authorised by paragraph 11 to deploy their forces together throughout the South and calls upon the government of Israel, as that deployment begins, to withdraw all of its forces from southern Lebanon in parallel;
3. Emphasises the importance of the extension of the control of the government of Lebanon over all Lebanese territory in accordance with the provisions of resolution 1559 (2004) and resolution 1680 (2006), and of the relevant provisions of the Taif Accords, for it to exercise its full sovereignty, so that there will be no weapons without the consent of the government of Lebanon and no authority other than that of the government of Lebanon;
4. Reiterates its strong support for full respect for the Blue Line;
5. Also reiterates its strong support, as recalled in all its previous relevant resolutions, for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon within its internationally recognized borders, as contemplated by the Israeli-Lebanese General Armistice Agreement of 23 March 1949;
6. Calls on the international community to take immediate steps to extend its financial and humanitarian assistance to the Lebanese people, including through facilitating the safe return of displaced persons and, under the authority of the government of Lebanon, reopening airports and harbours, consistent with paragraphs 14 and 15, and calls on it also to consider further assistance in the future to contribute to the reconstruction and development of Lebanon;
7. Affirms that all parties are responsible for ensuring that no action is taken contrary to paragraph 1 that might adversely affect the search for a long-term solution, humanitarian access to civilian populations, including safe passage for humanitarian convoys, or the voluntary and safe return of displaced persons, and calls on all parties to comply with this responsibility and to cooperate with the Security Council;
8. Calls for Israel and Lebanon to support a permanent cease-fire and a long-term solution based on the following principles and elements:
  - Full respect for the Blue Line by both parties;
  - security arrangements to prevent the resumption of hostilities, including the establishment between the Blue Line and the Litani river of an area free of any armed personnel, assets and weapons other than those of the government of Lebanon and of UNIFIL as authorised in paragraph 11, deployed in this area;
  - Full implementation of the relevant provisions of the Taif Accords, and of resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1680 (2006), that require the disarmament of all armed groups in Lebanon, so that, pursuant to the Lebanese cabinet decision of July 27, 2006, there will be no weapons or authority in Lebanon other than that of the Lebanese state;
  - No foreign forces in Lebanon without the consent of its government;
  - No sales or supply of arms and related materiel to Lebanon except as authorized by its government;
  - Provision to the United Nations of all remaining maps of land mines in Lebanon in Israel's possession;
9. Invites the secretary general to support efforts to secure as

soon as possible agreements in principle from the government of Lebanon and the government of Israel to the principles and elements for a long-term solution as set forth in paragraph 8, and expresses its intention to be actively involved;

10. Requests the secretary general to develop, in liaison with relevant international actors and the concerned parties, proposals to implement the relevant provisions of the Taif Accords, and resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1680 (2006), including disarmament, and for delineation of the international borders of Lebanon, especially in those areas where the border is disputed or uncertain, including by dealing with the Shebaa farms area, and to present to the Security Council those proposals within 30 days;

11. Decides, in order to supplement and enhance the force in numbers, equipment, mandate and scope of operations, to authorize an increase in the force strength of Unifil to a maximum of 15,000 troops, and that the force shall, in addition to carrying out its mandate under resolutions 425 and 426 (1978):

- a. Monitor the cessation of hostilities;
- b. Accompany and support the Lebanese armed forces as they deploy throughout the South, including along the Blue Line, as Israel withdraws its armed forces from Lebanon as provided in paragraph 2;
- c. Coordinate its activities related to paragraph 11 (b) with the government of Lebanon and the government of Israel;
- d. Extend its assistance to help ensure humanitarian access to civilian populations and the voluntary and safe return of displaced persons;
- e. Assist the Lebanese armed forces in taking steps towards the establishment of the area as referred to in paragraph 8;
- f. Assist the government of Lebanon, at its request, to implement paragraph 14;

12. Acting in support of a request from the government of Lebanon to deploy an international force to assist it to exercise its authority throughout the territory, authorizes Unifil to take all necessary action in areas of deployment of its forces and as it deems within its capabilities, to ensure that its area of operations is not utilised for hostile activities of any kind, to resist attempts by forceful means to prevent it from discharging its duties under the mandate of the Security Council, and to protect United Nations personnel, facilities, installations and equipment, ensure the security and freedom of movement of United Nations personnel, humanitarian workers, and, without prejudice to the responsibility of the government of Lebanon, to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence;

13. Requests the secretary general urgently to put in place measures to ensure Unifil is able to carry out the functions envisaged in this resolution, urges member states to consider making appropriate contributions to Unifil and to respond positively to requests for assistance from the Force, and expresses its strong appreciation to those who have contributed to Unifil in the past;

14. Calls upon the government of Lebanon to secure its borders and other entry points to prevent the entry in Lebanon without its consent of arms or related materiel and requests Unifil as authorised in paragraph 11 to assist the government of Lebanon at its request;

15. Decides further that all states shall take the necessary measures to prevent, by their nationals or from their territories or using their flag vessels or aircraft;

• a. the sale or supply to any entity or individual in Lebanon of arms and related materiel of all types, including weapons and ammunition, military vehicles and equipment, paramilitary equipment, and spare parts for the aforementioned, whether or not originating in their territories, and;

• b. the provision to any entity or individual in Lebanon of any technical training or assistance related to the provision, manufacture, maintenance or use of the items listed in subparagraph (a) above, except that these prohibitions shall not apply to arms, related material, training or assistance authorised by the government of Lebanon or by Unifil as authorised in paragraph 11;

16. Decides to extend the mandate of Unifil until 31 August 2007, and expresses its intention to consider in a later resolution further enhancements to the mandate and other steps to contribute to the implementation of a permanent ceasefire and a long-term solution;

17. Requests the secretary general to report to the Council within one week on the implementation of this resolution and subsequently on a regular basis;

18. Stresses the importance of, and the need to achieve, a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East, based on all its relevant resolutions including its resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967 and 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973;

19. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter.

### General Affairs and External Relations Council Conclusions on the Middle East Peace Process

Brussels, 15 September 2006. [Link](#)

"1. The Council discussed the situation in the Middle East. It underlined that lasting peace and security in the region can only be ensured by a comprehensive settlement with a negotiated two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at its core. The Council underlined the importance of reinvigorating the Peace Process and requested the High Representative to pursue his efforts to this end.

2. The Council stressed its commitment to support the full implementation of UNSCR 1701, welcomed the declared commitment of all regional parties to this end, and commended the efforts of UNSG Annan. It welcomed the early deployment of the Lebanese army in southern Lebanon and the substantial contribution by EU Member States to the reinforced UNIFIL mission. It appreciated the significant contributions pledged by other countries. The Council called for a full and speedy implementation of UNSCR 1701, including the withdrawal of Israeli troops in parallel with the deployment of UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces. The Council welcomed the lifting of the Israeli air and sea blockade, which will ease the delivery of humanitarian aid and facilitate economic recovery, and the instrumental role played by EU Member States. The EU reiterated its call for the immediate release of the two abducted Israeli soldiers.

The Council invites the Presidency, the High Representative and the Commission to draw up a report on a possible European contribution to the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701 on the Lebanese-Syrian border.

3. The Council underlined the EU's commitment to assist the Lebanese government in meeting emergency, humanitarian and environmental needs, launching the rehabilitation and reconstruction process, extending its authority throughout Lebanese territory and taking forward political, security,

economic and social reforms. It called on all outside actors and neighbours to support this process. The Council welcomed the Stockholm Conference for Lebanon's Early Recovery on 31 August. It noted that the EU/Lebanon ENP Action Plan provides an agreed framework through which the EU can assist the Government in implementing its reform agenda.

4. The Council underlined its commitment to promoting tangible progress towards a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It welcomed the announcement by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on an agreement to form a government of national unity and expressed the hope that its political platform will reflect the Quartet principles and allow for early engagement. The Council welcomed the prospect of a meeting between PM Olmert and President Abbas in the near future with a view to re-launching negotiations. It called for an immediate end to violence by Palestinian factions as well as to Israeli military activity in the Palestinian territories. The Council reiterated its call for the immediate release of the abducted Israeli soldier. It further repeated its call for the immediate release of Palestinian ministers and legislators in Israeli custody. The Council reiterated the need for all parties to respect their Roadmap obligations. It renewed its call on the Israeli Government to freeze all settlement activity, including natural growth of settlements. Ministers reiterated that the EU will not recognise any changes to the pre-1967 borders other than those agreed by both parties.

5. The Council expressed deep concern at the humanitarian situation in the Palestinian territories. In this context the Council recalled the strong EU commitment made at the Stockholm International Donor Conference on 1 September. It welcomed the expansion of the Temporary International Mechanism, by which the EU and its Member States have already channelled substantial resources directly to the Palestinian people, and agreed that its operation should be extended for a further three months. It encouraged donors and others in the region to make full use of the mechanism. The Council repeated its call on Israel to resume transfers of withheld Palestinian tax and customs revenues. The Council called for the full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access and, in this regard, reiterated its continued commitment to EU Border Assistance Mission in Rafah. It urged that Rafah and all other border-crossings be re-opened and remain open."

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The Council also adopted a common position imposing an arms embargo in Lebanon in accordance with UN Security Council resolution 1701:

#### Lebanon - Arms embargo

The Council adopted a common position imposing an arms embargo in Lebanon in accordance with United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolution 1701(2006) (12257/06).

The UNSC adopted last August resolution 1701 introducing a ban on the supply of arms to entities or individuals in Lebanon unless authorised by the Government of Lebanon or by the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon. Action by the European Community is needed in order to implement certain measures of the UNSC resolution at EU level.

#### Troop Deployment Pledges for UNIFIL

Source: BBC News, 18 September 2006. [Link](#)

COUNTRY	PLEDGE
France (lead role)	2,000 troops
Italy	2,500 to 3,000 troops
Bangladesh	two battalions (2,000 troops)
China	1,000 troops
Malaysia	one battalion
Spain	mechanised battalion
Indonesia	battalion and engineering company
Nepal	one battalion
Denmark	at least two ships
Poland	500 troops
Belgium	400 troops
Finland	250 troops
Germany	maritime/border patrols, no combat troops
Norway	100 soldiers

#### Hezbollah has redrawn the Middle East

Comment by Olivier Roy, first appeared in the Financial Times, 18 August 2006. [Link](#)

The perceived victory of Hizbollah in Lebanon may be short term but has highlighted some new and important developments. For the first time, the Israel Defence Forces were unable to prevail in an all-out war. More significantly, the winner this time is a Shia Muslim, non-state, armed movement supported by Syria and Iran. In Israel's previous wars, from 1948 to 1982, the challengers were Sunni Arabs.

In fact, Israel's effort this time to eradicate Hizbollah was no remake of past Israeli-Arab wars. It signified several complex – and seemingly contradictory – trends in the Middle East. First is the revival of a radical Islamic front that rejects the Arab-Israeli peace process. Second is the growing divide between Shia and Sunni Muslims in the Gulf region. Finally there is the changed political dynamic after the recent entry by radical Islamist movements – such as Hizbollah and Hamas – to mainstream electoral politics.

The alignment between Hizbollah, Syria and Iran in a radical front against a peace settlement with Israel promotes anti-US and Arab nationalist mottoes more than any Islamic ideology could do. The Sunni "Arab street" has embraced Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, Hizbollah's leader, as the new Arab hero, the "Nasser of our time". But Mr Nasrallah's elevation also works partly to lessen the appeal of Osama bin Laden in the Arab Middle East.

That this radical front is led by Shia or secular Shia (as in Syria) is also significant. Since the US military intervention in Iraq in 2003, Sunni Arab conservative regimes in the Gulf and Jordan have been concerned not with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict but what they saw as a growing Shia "crescent", bringing under Iranian patronage oil fields north of the Gulf (Iraq, Bahrain and the Saudi north-east). Saudi Wahabi clerics had issued fa-

twa, or religious edicts, condemning the Shia as heretics. But they and the Sunni clerics were forced to retreat after Hizbollah's perceived victory. The same clerics who earlier condemned the Shia have issued new fatwa supporting Hizbollah in its fight with Israel. On the government level, the deafening silence from Jordan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia after the Lebanon ceasefire is a clear sign of embarrassment after their earlier hostility to Hizbollah's actions.

On the other hand, Iran and Syria have been quick to claim victory for themselves, too. Syria wants to regain its influence in Lebanon and is quite happy to see Israel destroying an already weak central state – as long as Israel does not retaliate inside Syria. But, paradoxically, Damascus is protected by its own weakness: a collapse of the regime would sooner or later put the Muslim Brotherhood radical Islamist movement in charge and, even if it is more moderate than its Egyptian or Jordanian cousins, neither Israel nor the west wishes to give any more opportunities to Islamist parties.

The Iranians are taking revenge for their defeat at Iraq's hands back in 1988, when Arab Sunni nationalist and Islamist movements supported Iraq against Iran, and only part of the Shia population supported Iran (hence Tehran's desire to help create Hizbollah as a client party from the Shia movement in Lebanon). Iran has never been able to unite the Shia under its patronage on a religious basis nor a purely political one. Now Tehran is playing the "Arab street" and undermining the legitimacy of the ruling Arab regimes by leading this new alliance of Islamism and Arab nationalism in the near east. In Iraq, however, the same alliance works against Iran. Hence Iran's leadership of the new radical front will not necessarily help bridge the Shia-Sunni gap in Iraq.

Besides settling their account with Arab regimes, the Iranians are managing a conflict by proxies against the west. Tehran wants to avoid a possible military strike on its nuclear facilities and in this respect welcomes western anxiety about the high costs of military intervention. Cleverly, Iran has adopted a low profile on its borders with Iraq and Afghanistan, knowing that time is working in its favour, while fuelling the crisis in the near east. To have European troops stuck in southern Lebanon, hostage to any escalation of tensions between Tehran and the United Nations Security Council on sanctions, suits Tehran well.

Clearly the Iranians were the real winners of the Lebanon conflict and will maintain their upper hand as long as Hizbollah is seen as a legitimate champion of the Arab cause, and not as part of the Shia crescent.

The key issue now is Hizbollah, which is positioning itself on three levels: first, it is signalling Shia solidarity with Iran. Second, it is appealing to Lebanese nationalism by presenting itself as a pivotal element in Lebanese domestic politics. Third, it is fomenting Arab militancy against Israel and the US. Hizbollah triggered the conflict with Israel as an internationalist movement eager to relieve pressure on Hamas. But Mr Nasrallah's recent "victory speech" portrayed the organisation as the champion of Lebanese interests and nationalism. Hizbollah will not be disarmed or marginalised; the only way to deal with it is to push for a new Lebanese polity in which it plays a central role, as a Lebanese party.

If the west wishes to counter the synergy between Arab nationalism, Sunni militancy and the Shia crescent, which will link battlefields from Afghanistan to Lebanon, it must draw Islamist movements such as Hamas and Hizbollah further into the mainstream. This means encouraging a proper settlement in Lebanon involving all Lebanese actors without interference

from Syria or Iran; supporting democratisation of Syria and negotiating with Hamas. It also means Israel must renounce its policy of "bunkerisation", withdrawing behind a fortified border and hammering at any perceived threat.

The writer, a professor at Ecoles des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, is author of *Globalised Islam* (Hurst 2004)

**Lecture of Pope Benedict XVI**University of Regensburg, 12 September 2006. [Link](#)

[Extract]

I read the edition by Professor Theodore Khoury (Münster) of part of the dialogue carried on - perhaps in 1391 in the winter barracks near Ankara - by the erudite Byzantine emperor Manuel II Paleologus and an educated Persian on the subject of Christianity and Islam, and the truth of both.

[...]

In the seventh conversation (διαλεξις - controversy) edited by Professor Khoury, the emperor touches on the theme of the holy war. The emperor must have known that surah 2, 256 reads: "There is no compulsion in religion". According to the experts, this is one of the suras of the early period, when Mohammed was still powerless and under threat. But naturally the emperor also knew the instructions, developed later and recorded in the Qur'an, concerning holy war. Without descending to details, such as the difference in treatment accorded to those who have the "Book" and the "infidels", he addresses his interlocutor with a startling brusqueness, a brusqueness which leaves us astounded, on the central question about the relationship between religion and violence in general, saying: "Show me just what Mohammed brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached". The emperor, after having expressed himself so forcefully, goes on to explain in detail the reasons why spreading the faith through violence is something unreasonable. Violence is incompatible with the nature of God and the nature of the soul. "God", he says, "is not pleased by blood - and not acting reasonably (συν λογῶ) is contrary to God's nature. Faith is born of the soul, not the body. Whoever would lead someone to faith needs the ability to speak well and to reason properly, without violence and threats... To convince a reasonable soul, one does not need a strong arm, or weapons of any kind, or any other means of threatening a person with death..."

The decisive statement in this argument against violent conversion is this: not to act in accordance with reason is contrary to God's nature. The editor, Theodore Khoury, observes: For the emperor, as a Byzantine shaped by Greek philosophy, this statement is self-evident. But for Muslim teaching, God is absolutely transcendent.

**Declaration concerning Pope's Regensburg Address**

Vatican Information Service, 15 September 2006.

Yesterday evening, Holy See Press Office Director Fr. Federico Lombardi S.J. released the following declaration to journalists concerning the interpretation of certain passages of the address delivered by the Holy Father at the University of Regensburg on September 12.

"Concerning the reaction of Muslim leaders to certain passages of the Holy Father's address at the University of Regensburg, it should be noted that what the Holy Father has to heart - and which emerges from an attentive reading of the text - is a clear and radical rejection of the religious motivation

for violence.

"It was certainly not the intention of the Holy Father to undertake a comprehensive study of the jihad and of Muslim ideas on the subject, still less to offend the sensibilities of Muslim faithful.

"Quite the contrary, what emerges clearly from the Holy Father's discourses is a warning, addressed to Western culture, to avoid 'the contempt for God and the cynicism that considers mockery of the sacred to be an exercise of freedom.' A just consideration of the religious dimension is, in fact, an essential premise for fruitful dialogue with the great cultures and religions of the world. And indeed, in concluding his address in Regensburg, Benedict XVI affirmed how 'the world's profoundly religious cultures see this exclusion of the divine from the universality of reason as an attack on their most profound convictions. A reason which is deaf to the divine and which relegates religion into the realm of subcultures is incapable of entering into the dialogue of cultures.'

"What is clear then, is the Holy Father's desire to cultivate an attitude of respect and dialogue towards other religions and cultures, including, of course, Islam."

**Holy Father «Sorry» for reactions to his Regensburg talk**

Vatican Information Service, 17 September 2006

[Extract]

Before praying the Angelus with pilgrims gathered in the internal courtyard of the Apostolic Palace of Castelgandolfo, Benedict XVI recalled his recent trip to Bavaria, describing it as "a deep spiritual experience," that brought together "personal memories linked to places well known to me and pastoral initiatives towards an effective proclamation of the Gospel for today."

He then went on: "At this time, I wish also to add that I am deeply sorry for the reactions in some countries to a few passages of my address at the University of Regensburg, which were considered offensive to the sensibility of Muslims. These in fact were a quotation from a medieval text, which do not in any way express my personal thought.

"Yesterday, the Cardinal Secretary of State published a statement in this regard in which he explained the true meaning of my words. I hope that this serves to appease hearts and to clarify the true meaning of my address, which in its totality was and is an invitation to frank and sincere dialogue, with great mutual respect."

*Vladimir Putin Interview - edited by the Financial Times*

Meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and foreign academics and journalists, held at Novo-Ogaryovo, 9 September 2006. [Link](#)

[Extracts]

VP:[Mr Putin referred to the European energy charter which Russia is under pressure from the EU to implement and open its gas pipelines to private companies. He said Russia had analysed the proposal and had found "extreme profits will go to intermediaries between producers and consumers". "It will not bring down prices. Prices will continue at current levels or grow. This (ie cooperation in energy) should be equal cooperation. If they want something from us, if we allow them in what will be the benefit for us. They said they will remove some (barriers) but there is no gas production in Europe and no gas pipelines in Europe. So let's have something equivalent in western Europe and discuss how we will be let in."

[...]

Mr Putin also complained the European Energy Charter did not create an open market in nuclear fuel. "In the nuclear fuel market we should be put on to an equal basis." France was free to supply nuclear fuel, he said. "We hear no hue and cry over this but...this (Russia's position on the charter) is presented as Russia's refusal to ratify. ..First do what you agreed to do."

[...]

FT: does Russia prefer a strong or a weak European Union? What is its stance on Kosovo and on regions with frozen conflicts?

"we are interested in Europe being a strong state...It's not easy for us to maintain dialogue with the EU if there are no clear cut structures or if Europe is in a transition or transformation phase when every few months a president or chairman is changed...We are not going to manipulate or engage in some manipulations inside the EU. And what's more if the European states speak with a single voice in my opinion it will create favourable conditions for the development of international relations..."

(As for frozen conflicts,) we are ready to work with all our international partners and the EU as a whole in dealing with problems whenever and wherever they exist. This includes Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Nagorno Karabakh and Transdnistria...

...As far as Kosovo is concerned we have (UN) Resolution 1244 and we cannot manipulate or ignore the Security Council decisions. Also our actions in this respect should be coordinated certainly and care should be taken of all interests in the process. One can't apply one rule to Kosovo and other rules to other situations. In what way is the Kosovo situation different from the Abkhazia situation or the South Ossetia situation. In nothing. They are no different. If we start to manipulate the situation we will find problems. People will feel disappointed and disillusioned."

[...]

Mr Putin referred to Ukraine saying that Russia had to consider the \$5bn a year it has lost annually over 15 years in supplying cheap gas to Kiev. But – "Thank God" – there was finally an agreement earlier this year to raise prices.

"Our European and American partners decided to support the Orange Revolution...It is kind of shocking, problematic...If you started it, then go ahead and pay (ie subsidies to Kiev). You want the long term political benefits but you want us to pay. (If) you don't want to pay, take a realistic look at the situation."

Mr Putin argued that Europe would suffer economically if its metal industries paid \$250 per thousand cubic metres for gas while Ukrainian competitors paid \$50. "It's a political decision by our western European and American partners. It's a mistake and a bad approach."

THIS EDITED TRANSCRIPT HAS BEEN PREPARED BY THE FT ON THE BASIS OF INTERPRETATION INTO ENGLISH BY THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICIAL INTERPRETERS. AN OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT WILL BE PUBLISHED ON THE [PRESIDENTIAL WEBSITE](#).

### Victor Yanukovich's speech at the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine

5 September 2006. [Link](#)

[Extract]

Ukrainian foreign policy should be subordinated to the achievement of the country's strategic goals.

In our opinion, the main task of our diplomacy should be in transforming Ukraine in the shortest possible time into the country of the developed economy and therefore a stable and predictable partner on the international arena.

Economic stability will become a guarantee of the steady strengthening of democratic institutions, observance of fundamental laws and people's freedoms according to the Copenhagen criteria.

The civilized world does not seek to build new division lines, including the European continent. However, it is obliged to do it, being afraid of threats which the economic backwardness possesses.

Considering the European integration as a strategic goal of Ukraine, the new Government sees its task in becoming a player which is strong, self-sufficient, and therefore interesting to Brussels instead of a role played by Ukraine until now – the role of a “begger” in the EU negotiations. We should also do everything to harmonize the legislation of Ukraine with the EU legislation as soon as possible.

In this process, a special place will be assigned to the restoration of a mutually advantageous good neighbourhood with Russia. We are convinced that this is an obligatory condition of leading the country to a way of rapid economic development.

At the same time, I would like to emphasize our firm intentions to provide stable supply of energy carriers to Ukraine and through Ukraine to the EU.

We are a reliable partner both of Russia and Europe, and we will further endorse such a renome for our country, building the energy power policy which will correspond to Ukraine's interests.

Dear deputies!

The time when mostly declarative slogans prevailed in the eurointegration rhetoric of Ukraine should be left in the past. We should not try to convince the world of our exclusiveness. It is difficult to be surprised, the more today, during an epoch of globalization and an aggravation of disagreements between the main centers of world politics.

We should simply work a lot, guided by the national interests only.

When uniting the German lands, Bismarck acted only in the interests of Germany, and not of, say, Austria.

We should do our business, nonstop, with no right to rest,

until the first encouraging results appear. Work with obstinacy and persistence of a miner, who bites his jackhammer into lava to extract the coal needed by the people.

It is within our strength to do this, as the Ukrainian national character is not made of idle talk and jabber from which some of our politicians suffer, but of diligence.

### Yanukovich Blows Hot And Cold In Brussels

by Ahto Lobjakas

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

14 September 2006. [Link](#)

Ukraine's prime minister confirms his country's enthusiasm to join the EU, but adopts a step-by-step approach to NATO.

BRUSSELS, September 14, 2006 (RFE/RL) -- Today's visit to Brussels by Viktor Yanukovich was not his first as Ukraine's prime minister.

Given, however, that the last time Yanukovich was prime minister was immediately before the Orange Revolution in 2004, the current visit was eagerly awaited by EU and NATO officials as an opportunity to probe his government's intentions.

And true to most expectations, Yanukovich today confirmed Ukraine will continue seeking EU membership.

His EU host, the Finnish foreign minister and current EU chair, Erkki Tuomioja, gave Yanukovich's renewed call for an accession perspective a courteous, if clearly noncommittal welcome.

"I would say that the most important result of this meeting was that we were able to confirm, to take first of all on our side to welcome and take note of Ukrainian intentions to continue their European vocation, and from our side our firm commitment to furthering this," Tuomioja said.

When it comes to action, however, the EU remains cool. Only this week, the European Commission floated plans to negotiate a new partnership treaty with Kyiv -- underscoring that the treaty would not address the issue of membership.

One EU diplomat, who asked not to be named, told RFE/RL that the Ukrainian side was told in the run-up to Yanukovich's visit not to press the issue. "Don't ask, because you won't like the answer," was how the official summed up the EU message delivered to Kyiv.

The official said the EU today met Yanukovich with a pre-prepared "defensive point" to ward off demands for a membership perspective. The "defensive point" boils down to the standard EU line -- Ukraine's EU membership is not presently on the agenda. This does not mean that the EU has formally ruled it out, but simply that it wants to focus on concrete cooperation and reforms to bring the two sides closer.

The EU is encouraging political and economic reforms in Ukraine to bring the country closer to its own legislative standards. And the union is holding out for the prospect of a free-trade zone with Ukraine, but on condition the country first joins the World Trade Organization.

Ukraine is also hoping to sign an agreement by the end of this month easing EU visa rules. Although Yanukovich today described the agreement as the first step on the road towards the abolition of visas altogether, it will in the foreseeable future be limited to cutting red tape, visa fees, and waiting times.

Ukraine itself must sign up to a readmission treaty obliging it to take back illegal immigrants who reach the EU via its territory.

The EU was also keen to win assurances from Yanukovich that Kyiv will continue its strict enforcement of controls on the border with Moldova's breakaway region of Transdnier. Yanukovich said today Ukraine will continue supporting the peace plan put forth last year by the country's president, Viktor Yushchenko.

Finnish Foreign Minister Tuomioja today took pains to acknowledge that the fact that Yanukovich hails from the pro-Russian camp in Ukraine will not in itself hamper cooperation with the EU.

"We [also] covered relations with Russia, because our common view and understanding is that there is no contradiction between Ukraine's good relations with Russia and good relations with Europe -- and neither with [the] EU's good relations with Russia," Tuomioja said. "So, we do not see any competition in this respect."

However, Yanukovich revealed his pro-Russian colors while visiting NATO headquarters today. The Ukrainian prime minister told NATO ambassadors that his country wants to move step by step about plans to join the alliance because of public opposition.

This means Kyiv has given the cold shoulder to those NATO member states -- led by the United States and Poland among others -- who were preparing to indicate at the alliance's November summit in Riga that a membership invitation is in the offing. Ukraine's relations with NATO are, in the words of one NATO diplomat, now "on ice."

### Ukrainian President seeks closer ties with NATO

Press office of President Viktor Yushchenko  
15 September 2006. [Link](#)

Viktor Yushchenko has told reporters those who claim Ukraine is not ready to join NATO are wrong and their statements inconsistent with national interests.

The President said he had harshly criticized Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich for his "erroneous speech" at yesterday's meeting in Brussels.

"I clearly understand that his tone has been formed on the basis of political positions within the coalition and the Regions Party faction. I admit that some politicians in this party, perhaps, have a different vision of defense and security policies of the nation," he said, adding that Ukraine had long ago passed a law stipulating its EU and NATO accession. "Thus I would like to say again that this is the basis for pushing forward with changes in this area."

The Head of State urged the government and political forces involved in the formulation of Ukraine's foreign doctrine to adhere to the country's laws. He also reiterated that our Euro-Atlantic aspirations were the basics of the National Unity Pact.

"I accepted the prime minister's explanation that his position and the position of his political force was firm as far as the implementation of the fundamentals of the Law on national security and Ukraine's integration into the EU and NATO, including full membership," he said. "I am deeply convinced his arguments [...] are faulty and inconsistent with national interests, and should be corrected."

Mr. Yushchenko characterized Viktor Yanukovich's statement on EU membership as "quite consistent." He said Ukraine was now developing an enhanced agreement with the European Union.

*EU Presidency Declaration on the “referendum” of 17 September 2006 in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova*  
Brussels, 18 September 2006. [Link](#)

The European Union is aware that a “referendum” in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova has taken place on 17 September 2006. This “referendum” contradicts the internationally recognized sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova. The EU considers that the situation in Transnistria does not allow the free expression of popular will. The EU reiterates that it recognizes neither the “referendum” nor its outcome.

The European Union calls upon the mediators and observers in the OSCE-led 5+2 talks to make public statements to the same effect.

The European Union fully supports Moldova’s territorial integrity and calls on both parties to the conflict to return immediately to the negotiating table in the 5+2 format and work towards a speedy and transparent solution of the Transnistria conflict.

The Acceding Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Croatia\* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine align themselves with this declaration.

\* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

*Transnistria’s self-damaging «referendum»*

Commentary by Nicu Popescu  
CEPS Visiting Research Fellow  
Brussels, 26 September 2006.

On 17 September 2006 Transnistria, a secessionist and unrecognised entity in eastern Moldova held a referendum. Despite claims, it was not a referendum on independence. Its main question was asking whether Transnistrians want to become independent and subsequently join the Russian Federation.

As all other previous elections and plebiscites in the secessionist entity, the current referendum was neither free nor fair.

Transnistria’s political system is similar to that of Belarus, with the main difference that Belarus had a change in leadership since the break up of the Soviet Union (in 1994), while Transnistria did not.

In addition, Transnistria’s de facto leader Igor Smirnov just recently declared that he will run in a few months for a fourth office as president, and that he does not intend to retire until Transnistria is recognised internationally.

Under such conditions, 97 percent of the participants at the referendum voted for unification with Russia. While the number is probably exaggerated and inflated, a majority of the region’s population probably indeed supports separation from Moldova. One can never know for sure, however, because there is no independent media, no right to free assembly, no free civil society or other democratic mechanisms ensuring the expression of free will in the region. No state or international organisation recognised the referendum. The EU and

candidate countries, the US, the OSCE and Ukraine have all condemned the conduct of the referendum. Russia was ambiguous. The Russian foreign ministry did not recognise the referendum but still claimed that it was an example of use of direct democracy and that it was “transparent and without significant irregularities.”

The referendum in Transnistria comes in a context when Russia and the secessionist entities of the former Soviet Union – Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Transnistria and Nagorno-Karabakh are set to make maximum use of the expected independence of Kosovo and the recent separation of Montenegro from Serbia, as “exportable” precedents. The policy line, as it was expressed by President Putin recently is that “Only fools refuse to understand that the situations in Kosovo, South Ossetia, and Abkhazia have similar backgrounds. Everyone understands that we’re right”.

Certainly Transnistria’s referendum will be used diplomatically and as propaganda to claim that Transnistria’s expressed will is to separate from Moldova, and that an overwhelming part of the population supports this. The next referendum will take place in South Ossetia on 12 November.

Despite the referendum’s aims of strengthening the international credibility of Transnistria’s separatist claims, it might have the opposite effects. First, because of the question that was asked in the referendum, Transnistria starts to transform itself from a secessionist movement willing to be independent, into an irredentist movement willing to join the Russian Federation. While recent international history knows precedents of secessionists being recognised as independent states, there is no such precedent of irredentism. Of course Transnistria’s hope is that Russia might make use of a 2003 law on the acceptance of other territories into Russia. But how such a law could be applied in practice is less clear.

Second, because Transnistria’s referendum was about joining Russia more than anything else, the potential diplomatic use of the “Kosovo precedent” for Transnistria (never a credible argument, anyway) is further undermined. Certainly, from the international community point of view Kosovo has more chances to become an independent state, than to join Albania. Nobody would support Kosovo joining Albania. But Transnistria strives exactly for a type of development that the international community will not accept for Kosovo. Thus the referendum in Transnistria in fact weakens those willing to export the “Kosovo precedent” to the east. For a comparison, South Ossetia’s referendum due in November, will be about independence, not about joining Russia.

The main effects of the referendum will be enhanced authoritarianism in the run-up to the December “presidential” elections in Transnistria (where Smirnov is guaranteed to win), greater self-isolation and dependence on Russia, and fewer chances for a solution in Transnistria in the medium term. Transnistria will seek to become a de facto second Kaliningrad at the border of the enlarged EU, but 1000 kilometres away from Russia. The question is how long an unrecognised authoritarian Kaliningrad 2 can be sustainable at the border of the enlarged EU?

*European Commission Monitoring report on the state of preparedness for EU membership of Bulgaria and Romania*  
26 September 2006. [Link](#)

[Extract]

**4. CONCLUSION**

Bulgaria and Romania applied for membership of the European Union in 1995 and accession negotiations with both countries were opened in February 2000. In 2002, the European Council announced its objective was to welcome Bulgaria and Romania into European Union in 2007, provided they made sufficient progress in fulfilling the membership criteria. Accession negotiations were completed in December 2004 and the Accession Treaty was signed in April 2005.

Bulgaria and Romania have made considerable efforts to complete their preparations for EU membership since the Commission issued its last report in May. Bulgaria and Romania are sufficiently prepared to meet the political, economic and *acquis* criteria by 1 January 2007.

Many of the challenges set out in the May reports have now been addressed. A number of sectoral issues have been resolved. There has been some progress in the areas of judicial reform and the fight against corruption, money-laundering and organised crime, but further tangible results are needed.

This report identifies those issues which require further work. It draws attention to provisions in the *acquis* and the Accession Treaty which are designed to safeguard the proper functioning of EU policies and institutions following accession. In line with the findings of this report, the Commission, after consulting the Member States, will set up a mechanism for cooperation and verification of progress in the areas of judicial reform and the fight against corruption, money-laundering and organised crime. For this purpose, benchmarks have been established which refer to the particular circumstances of each country.

The Commission has adopted the necessary legal provisions to ensure the proper management of EU agricultural funds. The report underlines that the existing rules contain the necessary guarantees for the proper management of EU structural funds, and other programmes.

In the area of food safety, some specific measures are in place. At present, certain animals and animal products may not be exported from Bulgaria and Romania to the EU because of the presence of animal diseases. These restrictions will be maintained after accession, if necessary.

In the area of aviation safety, particular measures will be needed for Bulgarian aircraft and carriers.

Overall, Bulgaria and Romania have made far-reaching efforts to adapt their legislation and administration to the laws and rules of the European Union. This has largely brought them into line with prevailing standards and practices within the European Union. Sustained support from the European Union will be available for addressing the remaining issues. Sufficient guarantees exist in the *acquis* and the Accession Treaty to ensure the proper functioning of EU policies and institutions. As a result of the progress made, Bulgaria and Romania will be in a position to take on the rights and obligations of EU membership on 1 January 2007. The Commission looks forward to welcoming Bulgaria and Romania as fully-fledged members of the European Union on this date.

*Presentation of Bulgaria and Romania accession report by José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission,*  
Strasbourg, 26 September 2006. [Link](#)

[Extract]

It is indeed important to ensure that, as we enlarge, we are still able to function efficiently.

I would like to use this opportunity to state my position concerning future enlargements. After the completion of the 5th enlargement, with the accession of Bulgaria and Romania, I believe that an institutional settlement should precede any future enlargement. This is the way to ensure that our enlarged Union will function in an efficient and harmonious way. In any case, the Nice Treaty already imposes on us, after the accession of the 27th member, adaptations to our institutional setup.

Last June's European Council conclusions have set the course for that institutional settlement and I hope that by the end of 2008 we will succeed.

In following that timetable, we would respect our commitments towards countries to whom we have opened an accession perspective and fulfil our strategic goal of consolidating peace and prosperity in our Continent.

### Georgian EU Integration Minister says «We try to be patient»

Interview with Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty  
Prague, 21 September 2006. [Link](#)

[Extracts]

Giorgi Baramidze, a former Georgian defense and interior minister, now serves as the country's state minister on European and Euro-Atlantic integration. He was in RFE/RL's Prague headquarters and spoke to correspondent Rob Parsons about Georgia's prospects for further integration with the EU and NATO.

RFE/RL: Georgia has negotiated a Neighborhood Policy action plan with the EU and frequently proclaims its desire for integration with Europe. What does this mean in practice? Does Georgia see itself one day as a member of the European Union, bearing in mind all the problems of resistance to further expansion within the EU?

Baramidze: First of all, I have to tell you that at this stage we are not even talking about membership, because we are realistic. We know that we are not ready, Europe is not ready. We don't want to be anybody's headache. We want to be good neighbors and good partners of Europe. Therefore, we are happy about the new [European] Neighborhood Policy. Moreover, Germany is planning to strengthen the new ENP, have it as a kind of "ENP-Plus," or enhance the ENP. So we will be concentrated on the ENP, and building our relationship with the European Union based on ENP and then on the new structural document that will define our relationship. So we're taking our time, particularly because we know that we need to keep our economy as liberal as possible, without too many regulations that the EU already has. So we need to keep the speed of our economic growth intact, because last year we had 9.3 percent real GDP growth, this year we anticipate at least 11 percent. So we need to keep going in that direction and have an open economy as much as possible. And therefore we think we have to be concentrated on the new Neighborhood Policy. Now we are concentrated on trade issues. A free trade agreement is a priority with the European Union. Before that, we hope that the EU allows Turkey to sign with Georgia a free trade agreement alongside the one, by the way, with Syria -- Turkey has signed this agreement with Syria, but now we're requesting the same status, and I hope it won't be a big problem. So we are concentrated on the economy. And through strengthening our economy we hope we can move forward on democratic reforms, and it greatly contributes to the peaceful conflict resolution as well.

[...]

RFE/RL: NATO is offering Georgia Intensified Dialogue status in its bid to join the alliance. How important a step is that for Georgia?

Giorgi Baramidze: It's crucially important because it is recognition of Georgia's reforms, not only in the military sphere but also in the sphere of strengthening the rule of law and fighting against corruption, strengthening our democracy and improving the situation in the economy. In parallel, the World Bank granted Georgia the world's best reformer status. It's a

great achievement for us. And on conflict resolution, every step toward NATO gives us a better chance to solve those conflicts peacefully.

[...]

RFE/RL: Russia is not going to be happy about you getting Intensified Dialogue status. Does it make sense, do you think, for Georgia to be constantly poking Russia in the eye? Isn't it time for Georgian foreign policy to start improving relations with Russia?

Baramidze: Actually, we are trying to engage Russia positively. Nothing we do objectively contradicts Russia's security or any other interests. We offer a win-win solution rather than a zero-sum game. We think that we have lots of common interests, including Georgia's NATO membership. It's not really, if we talk sincerely, a threat to Russia, because Russia itself has a strategic partnership with NATO and after the end of the Cold War has never considered NATO a threat. So why should Georgia in NATO should be considered by Russia a threat?

RFE/RL: At the heart of the problem is the issue of the frozen conflicts. Why is it that Georgia is so opposed to Russian mediation?

Baramidze: Well, unfortunately for us, Russia cannot be already a mediator because it was clear from the beginning that it was initiated by old Soviet rulers. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union the conflict was instigated by the early Russian leaders and now they still have the policy of divide and conquer. They have granted more than 90 percent of the population in the conflict areas -- Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region -- Russian citizenship. They provide all kinds of assistance, including military, economic, financial, political, and propagandistic, so Russia has there not peacekeeping forces but, in fact, police forces. So Russia cannot be neutral in this regard. We don't want to push Russia out of the negotiation process, but we don't want Russia to dominate this process. We want the European Union, the United States, and international organizations such as the OSCE and the United Nations to be equal partners during the negotiation process and the negotiating format with Russia. And we request the withdrawal of the so-called Russian peacekeepers from the territory of Georgia.

*Turkic leaders consider forming commonwealth*

by Igor Torbakov

The Jamestown Foundation

22 September 2006. [Link](#)

## RUSSIAN PUNDITS WARY OF ANKARA'S REVIVED GEOPOLITICAL AMBITIONS IN EURASIA

The suggestion to form a Turkish commonwealth among Turkic-speaking countries voiced at the recent gathering of leaders of Turkic states in Turkey's seaside resort city of Antalya appears to reflect Ankara's desire to strengthen its economic and political positions in Eurasia. Moscow should not treat Turkey's growing geopolitical ambitions lightly, some Russian analysts say.

On September 18-20, the 10th Turkic States and Communities' Friendship and Cooperation Congress took place at the posh hotel complex on Turkey's Mediterranean coast. Organized by the Turkish Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA), the Turkic Convention brought together top policymakers from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and the unrecognized Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, as well as delegates representing the Turkic territories of Russia, Ukraine and Moldova -- Chuvashia, Khakassia, Altai region, North Caucasus, Crimea, and Gagauzia.

"Turkic summits" were the brainchild of the late visionary Turkish leader Turgut Ozal. Ozal, prime minister and then president of Turkey from 1983 until his death in 1993, entertained a sweeping project that included a vibrant Turkic Common Market and a powerful Turkic Trade and Development Bank. A "Turkish model," based on Turkey's imperfect but seemingly workable market economy and somewhat restrictive parliamentary democracy, was offered to the post-Soviet states as a roadmap for their transition.

However, over the last decade, Ankara failed to play a leadership role in the post-Soviet space, and its activism in Eurasia proved to be rather fragile. Turkic summits have become the object of sharp criticism within Turkey's policymaking and analytic community for their failure to produce any concrete results: the forums were seen as venues where nationalist-minded politicians indulged in their extravagant rhetoric.

It appears that the government of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan is seeking to reverse this trend. According to TIKA sources, around 100 officials from Turkish state agencies participated in the convention this year, seemingly demonstrating the importance attached to the meeting by Ankara.

At a time when Turkey's relations with its traditional Western partners -- the United States and the European Union -- have soured over the war in Iraq and the growing skepticism about Ankara's European bid, the country's leadership seems ready to reinvigorate the "Eurasian vector" of its foreign policy.

Invoking the former glory of the Ottoman Empire that ruled across the vast lands of the Balkans, Black Sea area, and the Caucasus as well as the ethnic ties with Central Asian Turks, Turkish leaders suggested their country is destined to play a leading role in Eurasian politics. "Being the children of a historical state, we have to say our word too," Erdogan asserted.

The 2006 Turkic summit has indeed set quite an ambitious agenda. To further develop commercial activities among Turkic states, participants decided to encourage foreign investment and to provide additional incentives to investors from Turkic states. Common energy projects should be developed and additional backing given to pipeline projects passing through Turkey. A common alphabet should be worked out to improve communication among Turkic peoples. Studies in Turkic culture should be encouraged. The summit's participants agreed that there is a need to compile a common heritage list of the Turkic world; they also deemed it advisable "to rewrite our common history and teach it at schools."

To crown these integration efforts, the world's Turks will have to establish a Turkic Commonwealth "like English- and French-speaking countries do," Erdogan suggested. "This way we can encourage our cooperation and become more influential in the world."

The summit's Turkish hosts appeared keen not to arouse Russia's suspicions regarding Ankara's apparent readiness to infringe upon what Moscow considers to be its sphere of influence. The past several years saw a remarkable Russo-Turkish rapprochement based on the two countries' close energy ties and their mutual disillusionment with the West. At the same time, the Kremlin has recently redoubled its efforts to restore Russia's strategic position in the Central Asian region.

So far, there has been no Russian official reaction to the ambitious agenda advanced at the Turkic Convention. In fact, there was no coverage of the event in the mainstream Russian media. But some Russian analysts believe that such an attitude is far too shortsighted, as it ignores a strategically important development. "Is the regaining of [geopolitical] weight by [Russia's] historical rival, including its attempts to collect piece by piece on the vast expanses of Eurasia some morsels of the collapsed [Ottoman] empire, a topic that is completely uninteresting to Russian readers?" asks one commentator incredulously.

A number of Russian strategists warn that although Ankara is cultivating trade ties with Moscow, the Turkish policy elite is keen to turn its country into Eurasia's major energy hub -- a development that will run contrary to Russia's strategic interests, as it will further undermine the Russian monopoly on the transit of hydrocarbons from the energy-rich Caspian and Central Asian regions.

Speaking at the Turkic summit, Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev specifically highlighted the geo-strategic significance of the energy and transportation projects pursued by the "brotherly Turkic nations."

"The moment we finalize all these projects, the total look of the area will be radically changed," Aliyev said.

(Turkish Daily News, New Anatolian, September 19-21; Polit.ru, September 21) -Igor Torbakov

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