

Editorial

Annapolis, 27 November 2007

At last the Israel-Palestine agenda has moved to the point where the fundamental issues are to be tabled for negotiation between the two parties, with the US to act as monitor and no doubt mediator. The Annapolis conference of 27 November announced initiation of negotiations to produce a Peace Treaty covering over “all outstanding issues, including core issues without exception”. At last the roadmap concept, which sought to go through years of pre-conditions before final status negotiations could begin, is effectively turned around. The aim is to achieve results by the end of 2008.

Sceptics are everywhere. The ‘legacy’ motivation of the Bush administration is blatant, with implicit recognition of the disastrous policies that came in with the first Bush term, which devised the roadmap as an instrument for evading the real issues. And in the meantime the Sharon government set upon building the separation barrier, and settlement construction continued, with huge expansion East of Jerusalem in particular. Palestinian politics became remarkably democratic, with the election of President Abbas, and then with parliamentary elections, with gains for Hamas that the West tried to get overturned. And then the civil war within the Palestinian territories, with Hamas winning against Fatah security forces in Gaza.

This creates now the unintended two-state solution, of Gaza and West Bank. Voices are heard writing off the regular two-state solution. Instead there is the idea of Gaza being joined with Egypt and the West Bank with Jordan. For example the former US ambassador to the UN, John Bolton, was heard this last week advocating this, given the impossibility now of the politically correct two-state solution.

Given the lack of substance in the Annapolis declaration, are there other signs to mitigate the prevailing skepticism? The only one that could be observed was the warmth of the physical embrace between Prime Minister Olmert and President

Abbas, to be compared with the relations between Prime Minister Sharon and President Arafat, whose high point was Sharon’s statement that his armed forces would take care not to assassinate Arafat.

Both Olmert and Abbas cover desperate divisions – on Olmert’s side within his coalition government, on Abbas’ side the divide with Hamas and Gaza. At least there is a certain symmetry here. Moreover the fundamentals of the Peace Treaty, if there is to be one, are patently obvious, as foreshadowed by the Arab Peace Plan and Geneva Accord of a few years back. Territorially it has to be based on pre-1967 borders, coupled to the principle of 1 for 1 land compensation for the Palestinians for the Israeli settlements that may remain in the West Bank. The refugee issue has to be solved largely through a mix of regularization of citizenship in countries of residence and resettlement elsewhere in the region and the West. The idea of large scale return to Israel cannot work. Both Olmert and Abbas will be violently opposed for concessions – by Olmert over settlement dismantlement, and Abbas over the right of refugees to return. Can they make together a deal, which offers their peoples the prospect of peace at last? Surely yes. Can they do and survive politically? Nobody really knows, yet opinion polls on both sides have suggested a willingness of the majority of the people to make a peace. The course of history can and does take surprising turns.

Michael Emerson

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European Neighbourhood Watch Index

The Annapolis Conference Joint Understanding, read by US President George W. Bush

US Department of State press release

27 November 2007. [Link](#)

PRESIDENT BUSH: The representatives of the government of the state of Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization, represented respectively by Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, and President Mahmoud Abbas in his capacity as Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee and President of the Palestinian Authority, have convened in Annapolis, Maryland, under the auspices of President George W. Bush of the United States of America, and with the support of the participants of this international conference, having concluded the following joint understanding.

We express our determination to bring an end to bloodshed, suffering and decades of conflict between our peoples; to usher in a new era of peace, based on freedom, security, justice, dignity, respect and mutual recognition; to propagate a culture of peace and nonviolence; to confront terrorism and incitement, whether committed by Palestinians or Israelis. In furtherance of the goal of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security, we agree to immediately launch good-faith bilateral negotiations in order to conclude a peace treaty, resolving all outstanding issues, including all core issues without exception, as specified in previous agreements.

We agree to engage in vigorous, ongoing and continuous negotiations, and shall make every effort to conclude an agreement before the end of 2008. For this purpose, a steering committee, led jointly by the head of the delegation of each party, will meet continuously, as agreed. The steering committee will develop a joint work plan and establish and oversee the work of negotiations teams to address all issues, to be headed by one lead representative from each party. The first session of the steering committee will be held on 12 December 2007.

President Abbas and Prime Minister Olmert will continue to meet on a bi-weekly basis to follow up the negotiations in order to offer all necessary assistance for their advancement.

The parties also commit to immediately implement their respective obligations under the performance-based road map to a permanent two-state solution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict, issued by the Quartet on 30 April 2003 -- this is called the road map -- and agree to form an American, Palestinian and Israeli mechanism, led by the United States, to follow up on the implementation of the road map.

The parties further commit to continue the implementation of the ongoing obligations of the road map until they reach a peace treaty. The United States will monitor and judge the fulfillment of the commitment of both sides of the road map. Unless otherwise agreed by the parties, implementation of the future peace treaty will be subject to the implementation of the road map, as judged by the United States.

*Remarks at the Annapolis Conference by
Condoleezza Rice, US Secretary of State*

US Department of State press release
27 November 2007. [Link](#)

Secretary General Ban, Prime Minister Blair, Fellow Ministers, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen: Good afternoon, and thank you for coming here to Annapolis.

It is our hope that Annapolis will represent a significant step to realize our common vision of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. And it is our hope that Annapolis can provide positive momentum toward our goal of a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace between Arabs and Israelis.

These efforts were significantly advanced earlier today. We have just heard from all three leaders. It is clear that all are committed to ending the conflict, ending the occupation that began in 1967, and creating two states that can live side by side in peace and security. It is clear that negotiations for peace will proceed as the parties also work simultaneously and intensively to fulfill their obligations under the Roadmap. And it is clear that, to succeed, these efforts require the sustained and vigorous support of both regional states and the international community more generally. Providing that support is one of the main purposes that brings us all here to Annapolis today.

As President Bush said, Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas have agreed to an ambitious work plan to negotiate and resolve all outstanding issues, including all core issues, without exception, as specified in previous agreements, by the end of next year. These issues include borders, refugees, security, water, settlements, and Jerusalem.

As the President also said, the parties have agreed to immediate implementation of the Roadmap, and they have asked the United States to help monitor and judge their progress. These are extraordinarily important developments, and a sign of the two leaders' commitment to move forward together as partners. We here today must do everything in our power to support them.

Let me now describe briefly how today's sessions will proceed.

After lunch, we will hear from Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov, UN Secretary General Ban, and EU High Representative Solana, who along with the United States make up the Quartet. We will then proceed to the afternoon plenary sessions.

In our first session, we will consider how regional states and the international community can increase the prospects for success of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. We look forward to hearing from Saudi Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal, as the Chair of the Arab Summit and the Arab League Follow-up Committee, as well as the Foreign Ministers of Egypt and Jordan. We will also hear, among others in this session, from the Arab League Secretary General.

In our second session, we will consider how regional states and the international community can support the Palestinian Authority in its efforts to build the effective institutions

of a democratic state. We will hear from the Quartet's Special Envoy, former Prime Minister Tony Blair, about what international support is needed to support Palestinian reform and institution building efforts, and we will get a progress report on these ongoing efforts from Prime Minister Salam Fayyad. Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak will also speak in this session, among others.

This discussion is particularly important as we consider how to make the upcoming Paris Donor's Conference a source of tangible support for the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian people.

Finally, in our third session of the day, we will discuss how our renewed efforts for Israeli-Palestinian peace can also stimulate positive progress toward a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace between Arabs and Israelis.

This session will begin with Turkish Foreign Minister Babacan, followed by a number of other speakers, and concluding with Israeli Foreign Minister Livni and Palestinian lead negotiator Ahmad Qurei. We look forward to constructive ideas for building on progress between Israelis and Palestinians to bring peace, security, and recognition to all countries in the region.

In all of our discussions, we who are gathered here today must affirm, as President Bush said, that Annapolis is the beginning, not the end, of a renewed effort to realize the two-state vision of peace and security. So we must be prepared to commit to the work of tomorrow with equal energy and urgency as we approach the work of today. We must all be ready to rise to our responsibilities for the sake of peace, and to ensure that regional and international support is forthcoming.

One of our most important goals today is to define as clearly as possible how our support for peace will proceed the day after Annapolis, just as the parties have described to us how they will embark on sustained efforts together to resolve their differences.

So welcome again to Annapolis. I look forward to a serious and substantive Conference today. And I am confident that, by tackling the challenges before us with honesty, goodwill, and a genuine desire for peace, we can seize this real opportunity for progress.

The Commission's 2007 enlargement reports

Presentation at European Parliament AFET

By Olli Rehn EU Commissioner for Enlargement

Brussels, 21 November 2007. [Link](#)

I would like to begin by presenting the findings and recommendations of the 2007 enlargement package.

In December last year the European Council achieved a renewed consensus on enlargement. This consensus strikes the right balance by confirming the consolidated enlargement agenda (involving Turkey and the Western Balkans), applying strict and fair conditionality, and better communicating enlargement to the public, combined with the EU's capacity to integrate new members.

Our strategy now is about implementing this new consensus. We are taking steps to improve the quality of the enlargement process: extensive use of benchmarking, impact studies on issues related to integration capacity, better linkage of political and economic reforms and negotiations, more transparency in accession negotiations.

Progress over the last year has been uneven. We still have major challenges and serious risks ahead of us such as settling the status of Kosovo, state-building in Bosnia and Herzegovina, reinforcing democracy in Serbia, better governance in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and regenerating the reform process in Turkey.

Let me highlight some of the key challenges.

Croatia

To begin on a positive note, negotiations with Croatia are advancing well and are entering a decisive phase. Croatia is demonstrating with its progress to the region as a whole that the European perspective is indeed real and tangible.

Croatia however has much work ahead on judicial and public administration reform, in the fight against corruption, on refugee return and minority rights. We also hope that Croatia will soon be able to meet the outstanding benchmarks so that some of the more difficult chapters (such as competition policy and public procurement) can be opened. If Croatia achieves the necessary results, substantial progress in the accession negotiations can be made in 2008.

Turkey

Turkey went through an extremely difficult period this year, with a severe constitutional crisis and high political tensions. Turkey came out of the crisis remarkably smoothly, in accordance with constitutional rules and with reinforced democratic institutions.

Now the time has come for Turkey to regenerate the momentum of the reform process. It is welcome that the government has put the constitutional reform at the top of its agenda, with a view to reinforce democracy and individual freedoms. But this should not result in postponement of reforms that are urgently needed, such as freedom of expression and of religion. In

particular, Article 301 of the Penal Code must be revised without delay, in line with the European Convention on human rights. Freedom of expression is fundamentally important – that is why the Commission proposed that a revision of article 301 as an opening benchmark for Chapter 23 (judiciary and fundamental rights) in the accession negotiations with Turkey. Now, the issue is in the hands of the Turkish Government and Parliament. They have a clear incentive and an interest in making progress.

Turkey is facing continuous cross-border terrorist attacks from the PKK – this has become a defining issue in Turkey over the past year. The EU condemns all terrorist attacks and understands Turkey's need to protect its citizens. We continue to urge Turkey and Iraq to tackle this problem through co-operation between the relevant authorities and by respecting international law.

Kosovo

The Commission reaffirmed in its 2007 Strategy Paper that clarity on the Kosovo status needs to be reached as rapidly as possible. This is necessary for regional stability and for Kosovo's further development. Our report welcomes the fact that the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government have fulfilled their core roles and that overall stability is being maintained, while considerable further reform efforts are needed, not least in the area of minority rights and decentralisation.

Negotiations are continuing. We must use the last weeks available to really press for a solution. The EU is ready to turn every stone - and even more – to arrive at a negotiated solution.

Elections were held in Kosovo last weekend. I welcome that the elections in Kosovo were conducted in a peaceful and orderly manner and in accordance with international standards, as reported by the preliminary assessment of the international observation mission. I am pleased that the European Parliament participated in the election observation. The low participation by the Kosovo Serb community and Belgrade's call for a boycott are regrettable.

The elected politicians should now work smoothly for the rapid formation of the new government. I urge the democratically elected authorities to engage constructively in a managed and multilateral process for sustainable status settlement steered by the international community and the EU, as well as to facilitate progress on European integration.

Serbia

On 7 November, I had the pleasure of initialing the SAA with Serbia on behalf of the Commission. This decision was taken following demonstration of concrete improvements and intensified co-operation by Serbia with the ICTY. The SAA is a key step in developing the relations between Serbia and the EU, and a gateway to candidate status. It is evidence of the EU's commitment to Serbia's European course.

Our policy of conditionality has moved this process forward. I have been in regular contact with the ICTY Chief Prosecutor C. Del Ponte who last visited Belgrade at the end of October.

The satisfactory implementation of the SAA will be Serbia's gateway to the next stage towards the EU. I am convinced that the country can make great strides, as we have said in our Progress Report, but Serbia should now meet its international obligation to fully cooperate with the ICTY, leading to the arrest of the remaining indictees. By initialling the SAA now, we put the ball to Serbia's court. We are ready to move to next phase, once Serbia is ready by meeting the political conditions. It is in the hands of the leaders of Serbia.

We are entering a period that will be critical for Kosovo, Serbia and the wider region. The events of the coming months may shape the region for years to come. A sustainable solution to the status of Kosovo is in the interests of all parties.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

While the security situation remains stable, the current political situation in BiH raises considerable concerns. The resignation of Prime Minister Spiric and the threat by the Republika Srpska to withdraw from the State institutions is potentially damaging.

Given the political tensions in the country, it was no great surprise that the Commission's Progress Reports on BiH was rather critical. The report underlined that BiH has failed to properly address the majority of the European Partnership priorities.

It is now important to calm the situation down and avoid further escalation. Mr Lajcak and his team are working on this and the Commission supports them. Bosnia and Herzegovina has lost much time already on its reform agenda.

In every crisis, there is an opportunity. The Declaration signed in Mostar on 28 October by the country's main party leaders may provide that opportunity. I believe that party leaders present in Mostar understood the gravity of their country's situation and that this was their key motivation for striking a consensus on police reform in accordance with the EU's three principles. The Mostar Declaration can be a basis for taking forward the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, if it is converted into legislative action.

The same party leaders who adopted the Mostar Declaration are meeting again tomorrow. The results of this meeting will be an important indicator of their commitment to EU integration.

The country has a chance now to leave the damaging tensions behind. I trust its leaders realize their responsibility and seize the opportunity to take Bosnia and Herzegovina forward towards its European perspective.

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

I welcome progress made by the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for example in the fight against corruption. Yet, continuing political tensions in the country have been delaying reforms. We need a more constructive and inclusive political dialogue, so that reforms will gather a new momentum next year in 2008. This is a must before considering any move to the next stage towards the EU.

The prospect of accession to the European Union can be a powerful catalyst towards the reforms in the candidate countries and potential candidate countries. We need to maintain the EU's soft power to encourage democratic and economic transformation whilst, at the same time, ensuring EU's capacity to gradually integrate new members.

In this context the Commission welcomes the priority which the Slovenian Presidency will give to the Western Balkans region. Early next year, the Commission will issue a Communication taking stock of actions endorsed in Salzburg in 2006 and exploring possibilities of further steps supporting the Western Balkan countries on their way towards the EU.

We will pay due attention to issues of particular importance for the Western Balkans. Visa facilitation agreement need to be implemented. We will launch a dialogue on road maps setting out the way for a visa-free regime with the countries concerned. We will also deploy measures to support better governance, strengthen the rule of law, increase people-to-people contacts, and strengthen civil society.

Our support to the Western Balkans also encompasses important financial assistance, policy advice and technical expertise. We are devoting a lot of efforts to ensure a smooth transition, by end 2008, from the European Agency for Reconstruction to programming and implementation of assistance by EC Delegations in Skopje, Belgrade and Podgorica, as well as EC Liaison Office in Pristina. The decision of phasing out the EAR in the Western Balkans, and the parallel phasing in of reinforced Commission delegations, was taken with the assent of the European Parliament. I am grateful to the members of this Committee who

have supported our efforts in this regard. I also dare ask for your support, notably in convincing the Committee on Budgetary Control, who have started to question this approach.

Let me re-iterate: The agency has done excellent job in reconstruction, but now focus shifts from building bridges to building states and institutions, rule of law and legal systems. In other words, talking about core tasks of enlargement policy. It is our joint responsibility that these tasks are conducted with best possible effectiveness and efficiency.

Let me conclude by underlining that the process of accession is an equation that must have two essential components in order to lead to results. Conditionality is its cornerstone, but it only works if the EU respects its own commitment to the prospect of accession. We have to be fair in order to be firm.

We have major challenges ahead. I trust I can count on your support in implementing our gradual and carefully managed accession strategy.

Related Documents:

EU Enlargement Strategy and Progress Reports 2007
[Access here.](#)

EU External Relations Council Conclusions on the Western Balkans

Brussels, 19 November 2007. [Link](#)

Kosovo

The Council welcomed the fact that elections in Kosovo took place in an orderly and peaceful manner and that the Council of Europe Election Observation mission, in its preliminary statement, has assessed that the elections were conducted generally in line with international and European standards for democratic elections. The Council expressed its disappointment of the low overall voter turnout. It regretted the low participation by the Kosovo Serb community and Belgrade's call for a boycott and stressed the importance of the inclusion of all communities in political life in Kosovo. The Council looked forward to an early formation of a new Government to strengthen the reform agenda to the benefit of all communities in Kosovo.

The Council was briefed by Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger, the EU representative in the Troika facilitating negotiations between Belgrade and Pristina on the future status of Kosovo, on the state of play of the process.

Reaffirming its full support to the Troika and to Ambassador Ischinger, and in view of the imminent conclusion of the Troika process on 10 December, the Council looked forward to the intensification of the negotiations and urged the two parties to show greater flexibility, to respond positively and constructively to the Troika's initiatives, making every effort to secure a negotiated settlement of the status of Kosovo. The Council reiterated the necessity of rapidly finding a solution to the Kosovo status issue. The Council confirmed that the EU stands ready to play a significant role in Kosovo in the future and is preparing accordingly.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Council welcomed the Statement of the PIC meeting on 30 and 31 October 2007. The Council expressed grave concern over the deteriorating political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It underlined the responsibility of the political leaders of the country to stop undermining the foundations of the State, to ensure the full functioning of State institutions and to advance reforms which are essential for Bosnia and Herzegovina to move forward. The Council reiterated its full support for HR/EUSR Miroslav Lajcak and underlined the need for all parties, including those in the Republika Srpska, to fully respect and promptly implement his decisions.

The Council welcomed the Mostar Declaration of 28 October 2007 which can serve as the starting point for a positive re-engagement of the government coalition parties, and urged the signatories to take the necessary follow-up action.

Recalling its conclusions of 15 October 2007, the Council reiterated that police reform remains the key priority and one of the four necessary conditions for a Stabilisation and Association Agreement."

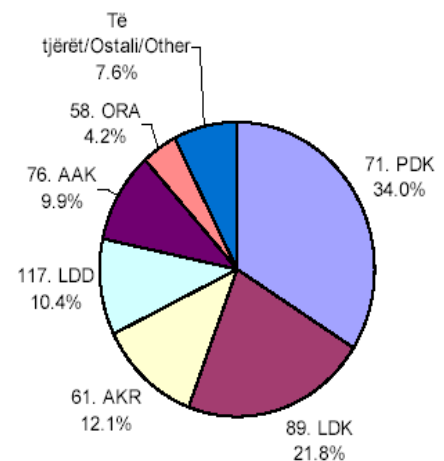
Kosovo Assembly Elections - Preliminary Results

Central Election Commission of Kosovo

19 November 2007. [Link](#)

Results as presented on 19 November, 2007 plus results from Skenderaj, Ferizaj, and Viti. For Leposavic and Zvecan there is not sufficient information for preliminary results. 85% of polling stations reported.

Certified results are expected to be published on the 4th of December 2007.



The initialling of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Serbia

EU Presidency Statement

Brussels, 7 November 2007. [Link](#)

The EU Presidency warmly welcomes the initialling by the European Commission and the Serbian representatives of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Serbia, which took place today, 7 November, in Brussels. This is an important step towards the establishment of contractual relations between the EU and Serbia, which demonstrates the EU's firm commitment to Serbia's European perspective.

The EU is willing to sign the agreement as soon as possible, provided that the necessary conditions are met. In this regard, the EU Presidency calls on the Serbian authorities to strengthen their efforts in order to rapidly achieve full cooperation with the ICTY.

The EU Presidency encourages the Serbian authorities to intensify the necessary reforms and to fulfil the Copenhagen criteria, as well as the requirements of the Stabilisation and Association Process, to achieve strong progress towards Serbia's integration into the EU.

The EU Presidency reaffirms that Serbia's future lies within the EU and that the Union stands ready to work closely with Serbia towards this goal.

European Parliament resolution on strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy

Brussels, 15 November 2007. [Link](#)

[Extract]

Eastern European Neighbourhood:

25. Notes that democratic neighbours which are clearly identifiable as European countries and which respect the rule of law may in principle apply, pursuant to Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union, for membership of the EU, and that the pace and depth of a common European process should correspond as closely as possible to the abilities to implement the appropriate reforms and meet conditions (Copenhagen criteria) in the partner countries and in the EU;

26. Reiterates, with this in mind, the view stated in Parliament's recommendation of 12 July 2007 to the Council on a negotiation mandate for a new enhanced agreement between the European Community and its Member States of the one part and Ukraine of the other part(5) that the current negotiations with Ukraine should result in the conclusion of an association agreement which contributes efficiently and credibly to Ukraine's prospects in Europe and initiates the corresponding process, including the possibility of EU membership; is of the view that a corresponding approach should be taken in relations to Moldova, given that the initial period of ten years in force of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with that country is due to expire in June 2008;

7. Takes note of the initiative of the Commission to invite Belarus to attend as an observer at the ENP Conference held on 3 September 2007; is seriously concerned, however, by the lack of a positive response on the part of the government of Belarus to the conditional cooperation offer formulated by the Commission in its above-mentioned non-paper of 21 November 2006; condemns the continued executions carried out in Belarus, the only country in Europe still imposing the death penalty, and other violations by Belarusian authorities of fundamental human rights and freedoms, and calls upon them to release all political prisoners and to stop any oppression of democratic forces, in order to enable the Belarusian people to benefit from freedom, democracy and prosperity and from all the opportunities which stem from closer integration with the EU; underlines that the EU should urgently provide more effective support for civil society, free media and political parties committed to democracy, the rule of law and respect for universal human rights and fundamental freedoms; strongly urges Belarus to apply a moratorium on the death penalty as a first step towards the abolition of capital punishment, and to ratify the second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the European Convention for the protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its relevant protocols; encourages the Commission to make more effective use of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), and to ensure that the means provided by the EU financial instruments cannot be misused by the Belarusian government against Belarusian citizens and civil society;

28. Calls on the Commission to promote people-to-people contacts by reducing the current cost of visas for Belarusians,

especially for students, scholars and representatives of civil society, with a view to bringing such costs into line with those charged in other ENP countries, such as Ukraine, and in Russia;

29. Considers that Belarus has the same European vocation and perspectives as Ukraine and Moldova, once it embraces democracy, respects fundamental human rights and freedoms and enhances the rule of law;

30. Is convinced that a motivating framework with medium-term implementation targets should be established, based on a new generation of association agreements to be negotiated with ENP countries which respect fundamental European values, are willing to integrate more closely with the EU and demonstrate objective performance in terms of ENP action plan implementation;

31. Is of the view that those agreements should envisage the development of the bilateral relationship with the EU in progressive stages, negotiating concrete conditions and timetables to be met, including binding performance benchmarks to be specified in the jointly adopted action plans, and accompanied by a regular monitoring process; reiterates its earlier proposal to develop with those countries clearly identifiable as European deep free trade agreements in the context of a possible 'European Economic Area Plus';

32. Commends the conclusion of the visa facilitation and readmission agreements with Ukraine, as well as the initiation of such a process with Moldova, and urges that similar agreements be negotiated with the South Caucasus countries; is convinced that the prospect of a visa-free regime should be envisaged in the long term, with the steps necessary to achieve it being laid down; stresses that in the case of Georgia the progress of reforms and the unintended negative impact of the visa facilitation agreement between the EU and Russia on the settlement of conflicts in the breakaway Georgian regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia necessitate a speedy conclusion of the visa facilitation agreement between Georgia and the EU; urges that efficient monitoring mechanisms be put in place, in particular with regard to respect for the fundamental human rights of persons subject to readmission agreements; stresses the importance of having adequate guarantees of access to a fair asylum procedure for those in need of international protection, in particular when applying 'accelerated readmission procedures' to persons intercepted in border regions, as provided for in the readmission agreement with Ukraine and the proposal for a readmission agreement with Moldova;

33. Stresses the need for intensified implementation of the existing EU-supported transport projects in the region, in particular the Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia (TRASECA), fully utilising the transit potential of the countries involved;

34. Believes that the gradual integration of the EU's eastern neighbours into the European Energy Community should be pursued, and urges that reforms of energy sectors be implemented as a matter of priority, enforcing the principles of an open market economy and transparency, in particular as far as prices, network access and energy efficiency are concerned;

welcomes the efforts made to include external energy security in line with the CSFP as one of the cornerstones of the ENP;

35. Underlines the importance of the political dimension of the ENP; advocates stronger EU support for regional political cooperation projects such as the Community of Democratic Choice, GUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova) and the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) in order to promote democracy, confidence, multilateral cooperation and sustainable development within the region more efficiently;

36. Underlines the need for a stronger involvement on the part of the EU in the resolution of so-called frozen conflicts, inter alia through confidence-building programmes, conflict management and projects on education, culture and civil society building in breakaway territories; commends the work of the EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM); calls on the Council and the Commission to make it clear that participation in the ENP commits the countries concerned to good neighbourly relations and that, in order that the potential of the ENP may be fully exploited, it binds the countries concerned to make renewed, fresh and genuine efforts to find lasting and sustainable settlements to the conflicts in the region and to refrain from belligerent statements, threats and actions that could further deteriorate the situation and undermine the efforts of the international community;

37. Encourages Ukraine, within the framework of its alignment with the EU's CFSP declarations and positions, to join in the restrictive measures taken by the EU against the leadership of the Transnistrian region of Moldova, thereby making a further significant contribution to the peaceful settlement of the Transnistrian conflict;

38. Welcomes the assistance afforded under the ENPI to confidence-building measures in Georgia and its breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia; asks the Commission to explore the possibility of providing assistance, in the form of local confidence-building and local economic rehabilitation projects, to Nagorno Karabakh, with a view to helping to resolve the conflict there;

39. Calls on Turkey to establish normal diplomatic relations and to re-open its land border with its neighbour Armenia as part of the confidence-building measures necessary for lasting peace and economic integration in the region; asks Turkey and Armenia to commence a frank discussion on all outstanding issues;

40. Underlines the importance of elaborating a more sophisticated policy for the Black Sea area, complementing the ENP, and emphasises the importance of having Turkey and Russia as partners in the development of a viable strategy for that region;

41. Considers it important to enhance the parliamentary dimension of the political partnership between the European Parliament and the countries involved in the eastern part of the ENP; suggests, therefore, the setting-up of an EU-Neighbourhood-East Parliamentary Assembly (EURO-NEST), following the example of the multilateral parliamentary assemblies already established with the participation of the

European Parliament, and involving the Parliaments of Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan, as well as pro-democracy observers from Belarus;

42. With a view to reinforcing the parliamentary dimension, encourages the Council, the Commission and the Member States to develop, in cooperation with the governments of countries involved in the eastern part of the ENP, a platform for regional multilateral cooperation at ministerial level, strengthening further the political dimension of the ENP in the East of Europe;

43. Is convinced that such an assembly and ministerial cooperation would usefully contribute to the implementation of the strengthened ENP and would bring added value to the work of bilateral inter-parliamentary delegations, allowing all the parties concerned to reinforce cooperation, solidarity and mutual confidence, to contribute to the settlement of frozen conflicts, and to strengthen regular multilateral dialogue on subjects of common interest with a clear regional dimension such as energy, the environment, the fight against terrorism, migration management, human rights, etc.;

44. Stresses the need to use the strategic partnership between the EU and Russia to insist that fundamental human rights and freedoms, international law, democratic choice and the rule of law be respected as principles governing the approach of both partners to the shared neighbourhood; calls on the Russian authorities to assume their responsibility to help restore the territorial integrity of ENP countries, to comply with Russia's obligation to protect minorities in areas where it is involved in peace-keeping operations, and not to oppose possible European involvement in civilian and military peace-keeping operations in the frozen conflict areas, as requested by some of the parties concerned; regrets the use of energy resources as a tool for the realisation of political objectives; invites Russia to enter into a constructive dialogue with the EU and our common neighbours about possibilities for deepening multilateral cooperation in the Black Sea area;

45. Welcomes the initiative to strategically reinforce relations with neighbours of the Eastern ENP countries, in particular the countries of Central Asia; welcomes, in this regard, the recently adopted Central Asia Strategy; considers, in this framework that distinctive and far-reaching cooperation should be developed between the European Union and the countries of Central Asia; stresses that, given Kazakhstan's key political, economic and energy role in this region, as well as its distinctive and successful secular multi-ethnic structures, this country could be the first example of a reinforced relationship between the countries of Central Asia and the European Union, subject however to Kazakhstan's undertaking extensive political reforms, with special attention being paid to the respecting of human rights and democratic principles;

46. Insists that implementing the ENP should continue to be a common political task for all EU Member States; suggests to the Commission that account should be taken of the unique transition-related reform experiences of those Member States which joined the EU in the 21st century, so as to further develop and refine the new mechanisms currently in operation, which may be beneficial to the ENP countries;

Southern Mediterranean Neighbourhood

47. Emphasises the strong and long-lasting links between the EU and the southern Mediterranean countries, and stresses that close cooperation is in the interests of both sides;

48. Recalls that the European Union should actively support and encourage the reform processes in the southern ENP countries, as the potential benefits of far-reaching political, economic and social reforms amply exceed their cost; recalls also that this is a gradual process, which depends partly on the commitment of the partner countries to facilitating the reforms;

49. Calls on the Commission to further explore the various options for the next generation of broad-scope agreements with the southern ENP countries; stresses that those agreements must include provision for arrangements to implement the human rights clause; notes that those bilateral agreements should not be at the expense of furthering multilateral cooperation in the region, and in particular the pursuit of the Barcelona Process goals, including the creation of a free trade area; calls on the Member States to reflect on possible ways of strengthening cooperation, including by means of increased flexibility in opening agricultural and labour markets in the future, in ways compatible with social protection and equity; calls on the Southern ENP countries to redouble their efforts to open economic systems to a greater extent and to harmonise their economic rules with the relevant parts of the EU acquis; stresses the need to grant Mediterranean countries the right to control the pace at which their markets are opened up and their national economic and social development strategies; considers that more effective use of the ENPI for regional projects would make it possible to improve the situation so as to promote a genuinely integrated regional economic area;

50. Reiterates that universal human rights are at the core of EU values; regrets that, although, since the beginning of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), substantial progress has been achieved as regards democracy and human rights, this progress has not been sufficient, and urges the Commission to continue working with governments, regional and local authorities and civil society actors in the countries concerned; stresses the importance of freedom of expression in building a democratic culture and strengthening civil society; urges the Commission to establish genuine dialogues in this field and to actively develop joint education policies and programmes to promote mutual understanding, tolerance and women's rights, particularly among the new generations; considers that, to this end, the southern partners should display greater transparency and openness to the contribution of civil society; is convinced, however, that the human rights dialogue should not prevent the EU from indulging in public criticism and taking other measures in the event of serious infringements of fundamental rights;

51. Acknowledges the different circumstances, interests and priorities of each of the southern countries, which are taken into account in the negotiation and implementation of action plans; stresses the utmost importance of an increase in regional cooperation within the EMP framework; underlines that the ENP in no way replaces or competes with the EMP, but that the two policies are complementary, making it possible to combine the multilateral approach of the Barcelona Process

with the bilateral perspective; calls on the Commission to strengthen its communication efforts in order to clarify the link between the two policies, both to the partner countries and to the European public;

52. Reiterates the need for stronger political will on the part of the EU institutions and the Member States to engage actively in conflict resolution in the region, whilst preventing the conflicts from standing in the way of the development of the ENP; stresses that the ENP will not reach its full potential without resolving conflicts which make regional cooperation difficult or impossible; reiterates that ENP activities conducive to conflict prevention should be strengthened and focused on confidence-building measures, such as border management, support for reconciliation processes at national, regional and local levels and support for civil society organisations; stresses the important role of the governance facility instrument in preventing and resolving conflicts; emphasises, in this regard, the need for coherence and complementarity between the ENP and other instruments and policy matters, and the need for structured conflict analysis and conflict sensitivity in the design, implementation and monitoring of programmes;

53. Reiterates that the ENP, together with the EMP, constitutes the framework for all fields of cooperation; is of the opinion that enhanced cooperation between interested parties should be possible and indeed facilitated; observes that the consideration of new initiatives to step up cooperation in the Mediterranean should, at all events, involve imparting fresh impetus to the EMP, which necessitates serious thinking about the limits and difficulties encountered in recent years; insists that the Mediterranean should continue to be a common political concern for all Member States; recalls the importance of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly; stresses its hope that it will be possible for that institution to be involved in assessing the development of Euro-Mediterranean policies;

54. Considers it important to establish closer relations, even through new relationships, with the countries which are neighbours of our neighbours, such as the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council;
The role of the European Parliament

55. Reiterates its commitment to continue to scrutinise the implementation of the ENP, in particular by making use of its powers, including, as a last resort, its budgetary powers, and by continuing the dialogue with the Commission concerning the application of the ENPI and the EIDHR, a dialogue which started in 2007 and which is to be continued with a view to the review planned for 2009; intends to examine regularly the ENP progress reports; regrets, however, the fact that it has not been consulted on the ENP Action Plans, the assessment of their implementation or progress in the discussions within the human rights subcommittees;

56. Is aware of its role as a significant opinion-former and as a forum for public debate, and intends to strengthen its cooperation with parliaments and civil societies in the ENP countries; undertakes, therefore, to make more effective use of its delegations to interparliamentary bodies; stresses, in this respect, the importance of the non-governmental dimension, namely the Euro-Mediterranean civil society platform, in strengthening the political dynamic in the southern partner countries.

Related Document:

European Parliament resolution of 15 November 2007 on trade and economic relations with Ukraine

[Download here.](#)

Georgian President Saakashvili addresses nation during state of emergency

Tbilisi, 8 November 2007. [Link](#)

[Extracts]

Dear friends, I decided to address you today with an important message and the assessment of the current events.

What happened yesterday [7 November] was not our choice. I would like to stress that this was the only appropriate answer to the plot against Georgia and Georgian democracy, an attempt to undermine constitutional order. These were steps taken against democratic order in Georgia.

I want all of us to realize that it was not the incumbent authorities that we protected yesterday, but Georgia's democracy, society, and statehood.

I would like all of us to realize that this was the first case when it was not the government and the state that addressed people for protection and brought people out to a rally to shield the government, but it was the government that took all appropriate steps to ensure that people be protected from an attempt to organize unrest and undermine constitutional order.

What happened in Tbilisi yesterday, was very much like what happened in Vilnius in 1991 - a putsch organized by foreign forces there in Vilnius, what happened in Georgia at various stages, and what happened in Estonia just a few months ago.

[...]

I would also like to say that, of course, these events have achieved the goal that we wanted to avert: to cast a shadow on Georgia and its progress, our international positions, and Georgia's further development and we have, of course, incurred certain damage from this viewpoint. This is precisely the damage that all of us wanted to avert most.

I would also like to say that we were pushed towards holding the [parliamentary] election in spring [2008], when this is absolutely inadmissible. There was talk about parliamentary election although parliamentary and presidential elections have been scheduled for next autumn.

This is why I have proposed and decided to hold the next presidential election in Georgia on 5 January 2008. Let us move it forward, let us hold it now without delaying it too much, because I, as this country's leader, need an unequivocal mandate to cope with all foreign threats and all kinds of pressure on Georgia, with attempts to annex Georgian territories, and with perfidious plans for the appropriation of Georgian territories, which I am absolutely sure exist, with plans that are being implemented and are aimed at destabilizing and shattering Georgia, shattering trust in Georgia, with making the Georgian people renounce freedom once and for all, and with returning us to the year 1921- to the period of Georgia's annexation and enslavement, and the demise of Georgian

democracy.

[...]

Until anyone starts discussing which eccentric, authoritative or, what is more, dictatorial ruler the Georgian president resembles, I would like to remind you that I am the president of Georgia who is reducing his own first presidential term on his own free will, and I am resorting to what is unprecedented in our region and in most world countries. I really do not know a lot of precedents like this.

I am doing this in order to once again stress that months and years mean nothing when the matter concerns our most important, our most vital interest: to ensure that the world is constantly a witness to and a participant in Georgia's being a strong democratic country which has an exact vision of how its future should be firm and how there should be precise guarantees for this firm future. I want to emphasize once again that I am deciding by [means of amending] the constitution to reduce my presidential term for the second time so that the people can demonstrate their will once again and achieve victory once again. I know the value of democracy, but I also know how we should fight the enormous machine of lies which has been turned on against Georgia. Protecting democracy and protecting the truth are not only not mutually exclusive, they are absolutely component parts of one another. I do not want us to be a country where there are some kinds of restrictions on democracy, where states of emergency are declared because there is a real danger of coup d'état and unrest, where restrictions are imposed on the mass media because the mass media issues direct calls for the overthrow of the government in a violent situation. I want us to be a people that is clenched together as a single fist, determined and full of confidence that we will achieve victory and I want to be the leader of this people. I want to be the one chosen by this people, but this is up to you to decide.

And I want to tell you that this will be the most democratic, freest and most transparent election given that we have held six free elections over the last four years that I have been Georgia's president. Right now I call on international organizations and international institutions to send as many observers as possible. In the coming few days the state of emergency in Georgia will be annulled because the situation has been stabilized very quickly thanks to the very energetic actions of our law-enforcement agencies. Our institutions are functioning anyway and all restrictions on the activities of various political groups will of course be lifted upon the cancellation of the state of emergency.

At the same time, so that no questions remain regarding the parliamentary election - the date of the presidential election is my prerogative, but as for the date of the parliamentary election, given that we believe that the election should not be held in parallel with the Russian election, I want us to hold a plebiscite in parallel with the presidential election so that the Georgian people can themselves answer the question as to when they want the president to call the [parliamentary] election: in spring or in autumn of next year. Let us not leave this for any of the noisy political groups [to decide]. You decide this, the true masters of this country, the Georgian people, Georgian society. [...]

Translated by BBC Monitoring

EU Presidency declaration on the situation in GeorgiaBrussels, 8 November 2007. [Link](#)

The European Union expresses its deep concern at recent developments that have taken place in Georgia, with the declaration of a state of emergency as the latest escalation.

The European Union urges all parties involved to immediately engage in a constructive dialogue in order to pacify the current situation and find appropriate and prompt solutions to the core issues. The existing political tensions must be solved without infringing democratic principles or fundamental rights, including the freedom of the media.

Furthermore, the European Union urges the parties concerned to exercise the necessary restraint and refrain from using language and actions that could further deepen the political crisis.

Statement by the NATO Secretary General on the situation in GeorgiaBrussels, 8 November 2007. [Link](#)

NATO is following closely and with concern events in Georgia. I have asked NATO's Special Representative for the Caucasus, Ambassador Robert Simmons, to express to the Georgian Foreign Minister the Alliance's view that all parties must exercise restraint, avoid violence and act within the law. The imposition of Emergency Rule, and the closure of media outlets in Georgia, a Partner with which the Alliance has an Intensified Dialogue, are of particular concern and not in line with Euro-Atlantic values.

President Saakashvili steps down from presidencyCommunications Office of the President of Georgia
25 November 2007. [Link](#)

Head of the Press Office of the Administration of the President of Georgia Ivane Noniashvili made an announcement today on the resignation of the President of Georgia and claimed: "today, on November 25 of 2007 President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili has stepped down from presidency. Let me remind you that the President's resignation is a formal and necessary procedure for the appointment of early presidential elections and for Mikheil Saakashvili to run for these elections".

Agreed Conclusions of the 9th Euro-Mediterranean Meeting of Ministers of Foreign AffairsLisbon, 6 November 2007. [Link](#)

Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership met on 5 and 6 November 2007 in Lisbon, under the Presidency of H.E. Luis Amado, Foreign Minister of Portugal. This meeting offered an appropriate opportunity to assess the progress made during 2007 in implementing the Tampere programme which is derived from the 5-year Work Programme adopted in Barcelona in 2005, and to agree on the priorities for next year.

Ministers reaffirm their commitment to pursue their efforts to realise the Barcelona Declaration objectives: to establish a common area of peace and stability, to create an area of shared prosperity and to develop a partnership in social, cultural and human affairs.

Ministers are pleased to note that 12 years after its creation, the Barcelona Process has led to an enhanced dialogue and cooperation in a wide range of fields of common interest for the Euro-Mediterranean partners. Notwithstanding the positive results achieved to date, Ministers acknowledge that new developments should be taken into consideration to consolidate the Barcelona Process in the future. Ministers emphasise the important role that the Barcelona Process can play in addressing common challenges facing the Euro-Mediterranean region, such as: economic and social development, climate change and energy, civil protection, migration, and countering terrorism and extremism.

Ministers also emphasise that while the Barcelona Process could be enriched by other initiatives aiming at strengthening the political, economic and cultural ties between the Euro-Med countries, they underline the strong attachment of all partners to the Barcelona Process and reiterate its centrality for the EU relations with Mediterranean countries.

Ministers reaffirm their commitment to maintain the comprehensive approach implemented since the inception of the Barcelona Process to achieve the objectives of the Euro-Med partnership. They welcome the fact that despite the prevailing tension in the Middle East, the Euro-Med partners have succeeded to maintain a constructive dialogue covering key issues such as efforts contributing to achieve further progress in the MEPP, partnership building measures and joint Euromed sectorial projects aiming at promoting a peaceful, stable and secure Euro-Med region, sustainable development, promoting and supporting reform based on a common commitment to shared principles, strengthening rule of law, democracy, political pluralism, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and association, the role of civil society as well as strengthening the role of women in society. This systematic and structured dialogue and cooperation has enabled the partners to develop a better understanding of each other based on a common commitment to shared principles, promoting respect for all religions, cultures and beliefs.

Ministers welcome the progress on the ongoing work regarding the improvement of working methods aiming at enhancing

co-ownership, increasing efficiency and ensuring visibility of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

Ministers reiterate their support to ongoing negotiations to establish a Euro-Mediterranean free trade area in accordance with the provisions of the Barcelona Declaration and the Associations Agreements. Substantial progress has been achieved to date with the scope of the negotiations gradually extended to services and right of establishment and agricultural and fisheries products. Ministers note with satisfaction the rising trend of foreign direct investments in the Euro-Mediterranean region and stress the significant role played by the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP). They are also pleased to note that Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in the fields of environment, transport, energy and information society has increased and that common objectives have been defined.

Progress has also been registered in the social and cultural partnership, with joint initiatives launched to promote the role of women, young people and civil society. Ministers underline the important role of the Anna Lindh Foundation, established by the Euro-Mediterranean partners to promote dialogue between cultures and to convey universal principles and shared values and ensure better knowledge, mutual understanding and respect among Euro-Mediterranean peoples.

Ministers are pleased to communicate that most of the commitments made at their last meeting in Tampere have led to concrete initiatives in 2007, which are described below. They herewith present the main objectives and events planned for 2008.

Ministers stress the importance of the European Neighbourhood Policy, which contributes to reinforcing and complementing the Barcelona Process through implementing bilateral Association Agreements and the Action Plans in accordance with agreed priorities. They welcome the participation of Euro-Med partner countries in the International conference on 3rd September 2007 in Brussels «Working together - strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy». Ministers emphasise the importance of consultations regarding all new initiatives with the aim of enhancing cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean region. In this context, Ministers take note of a presentation on the Mediterranean Union as an initiative to complement the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

They remind that the political objectives of the Barcelona process are sustained by a substantial budget of more than 3.3 billion euros for 2007-2010, which has been earmarked for Mediterranean regional and bilateral cooperation in the framework of the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). They also take note of the establishment of a ENP Governance Facility to support willing Mediterranean partners in carrying out their reforms and welcome the progress towards establishing a substantial ENP Investment Facility.

Ministers acknowledge the EU-Africa Joint Strategy and Plan of Action and look forward to the EU/Africa Summit in Lisbon in December 2007.

Ministers welcome Albania and Mauritania into the Barcelona Process.

List of headings and subheadings:

I - Political and Security Partnership

- Political and security dialogue
- Enhancing the partnership building measures

II- Sustainable Socio-Economic Development and Reform

- Towards establishing a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area
- Stimulating economic cooperation and investments
- Enhancing cooperation in the fields of Energy and Transport
- Ongoing work on statistics cooperation
- Environment, Climate Change and sustainable development
- Information Society
- Developing a more systematic approach to cooperation in the field of employment
- Towards enhanced cooperation on health issues
- Human development

III - Education and Socio Cultural Exchanges

- Towards a Euro-Mediterranean Area of Higher Education and Scientific Research
- Civil Society
- The Role of Women in Society
- Enhancing the Anna Lindh Foundation and promoting dialogue between cultures
- Media activities
- Youth

IV - Migration, Social Integration, Justice and Security

Summary of planned initiatives for 2008

A 'Power Audit' of EU 27-Russia relations

European Council on Foreign Relations

By Mark Leonard & Nicu Popescu

ECFR Press release

London, 7 November 2007. [Link to full report](#)

The authors recommend for the European Union to:

- Push for the implementation of all international agreements and standards Russia has committed itself to, in order to further promote the rule of law;
- Make Russia's participation in G8 summits conditional on its commitment to the spirit and the letter of common agreements, with the threat of organizing more low-level meetings within the G7 format should Russia be uncooperative;
- Introduce the policy of 'principled bilateralism' where EU governments are expected to use bilateral links to serve common EU goals and introduce an early warning system to inform of impending energy deals or bilateral disputes;
- Make the EU Neighbourhood Policy more efficient to encourage participating countries to respect the rule of law and draw them further into the EU's orbit;
- Give the European Commission political backing to use competition policy to investigate energy deals; and authorise it to pre-approve major energy deals;
- Provide assistance to Turkey, Ukraine and Moldova in implementing the EU's energy acquis communautaire.

Ministers at OSCE Meeting should reject Russian attempts to weaken the Institution

Freedom House Press Release

28 November 2007.

Government ministers participating in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's Ministerial Council meetings in Madrid on November 29-30 should resist attempts by the Russian Federation to weaken the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), Freedom House said today.

Proposals circulated by the Russian Federation last month would limit ODIHR's ability to observe elections in member states. The Russian initiative is seeking to curtail ODIHR's independence by placing the body directly under the supervision of the OSCE Permanent Council, which would require its approval of the office's future election reports. Since the council – like most other plenary organs of the OSCE – reaches decisions by consensus, this would effectively amount to a veto for Russia, or any other country displeased with potentially critical ODIHR reports.

"ODIHR is one of the few intergovernmental bodies in the world that has been effective in promoting human rights," said Freedom House Executive Director Jennifer Windsor. "There is a considerable backlash against democratic and human rights norms from countries like Russia, and now, more than ever, democracies in the OSCE need to stick together to bolster vital institutions like ODIHR—not entertain proposals that would render it powerless."

The Russian proposals, as reported in the New York Times, call

for election observation missions numbering no more than 50 people, with no more than 5 percent from any one country. The observers would not be allowed to make any "public assessments of the election" prior to the official announcement of the election results by the host government.

"This and various other Russian proposals aimed at undermining the OSCE set a dangerous precedent that is being followed and, indeed, supported by a number of neighboring countries, such as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Belarus and Armenia. This may signal that the decade-long consensus underlying the OSCE's mission in support of democracy and human rights is eroding – and if so, this is bad news for the OSCE and the citizens of those countries, who continue to struggle for their political rights," said Freedom House Senior Program Manager for Europe Damian Murphy.

ODIHR recently declined an invitation from the Russian government to send international monitors prior to the December 2 elections, due to delays and unprecedented restrictions on observers. Russia's displeasure with ODIHR dates back to the 2003/2004 Russian Duma and presidential elections, which were criticized by the office as falling short of OSCE standards.

Last weekend, Russian authorities arrested and detained political opposition activists and leaders Garry Kasparov and Boris Nemtsov for conducting a political demonstration. March of Dissent protestors in more than 40 Russian cities were prevented from marching or detained by security forces.

"OSCE commitments state that issues of human rights and democracy are matters of legitimate concern to all participating states and are not matters of internal affairs of the state concerned," added Mr. Murphy. "Yet it appears that, given Russia's recent actions towards OSCE election monitors, taken together with this past week's suppression of opposition activity, the government is determined to use the OSCE to limit any outside criticism of the lack of political competition in Russia."

Russia ranks Not Free in Freedom in the World, Freedom House's annual survey of political rights and civil liberties. The country received a 6 (on a scale of 1 to 7, with 7 as the lowest) for political rights, and a 5 for civil liberties.

For more information on Russia, visit:

[Freedom in the World 2007: Russia](#)

[Nations in Transit 2007: Russia](#)

[Freedom of the Press 2007: Russia](#)

Freedom House, an independent nongovernmental organization that supports the expansion of freedom in the world, has been monitoring political rights and civil liberties in the Russian Federation since its independence in 1991.

Related Documents:

15th OSCE Ministerial Council, Madrid, 29-30 November 2007

[Download documents here.](#)

*Poland's post election foreign policy**– a turning point?*

Krzysztof Bobinski

Institute of Public Affairs, Poland

26 November 2007. [Download paper](#)

[Extract]

Poland's autumn election followed the collapse of the coalition between the majority Law and Justice Party (PiS) and the Samoobrona Party and the League of Polish Families (LPR) two years before the end of the parliament's four year term. The resignation of the government came in the wake of accusations and counter accusations between the coalition partners of corruption and unconstitutional behaviour. The short election campaign saw, in essence, a continuation of little more than the robust polemics between PiS and the Civic Platform (PO), the main opposition party during the government's two years in office. The PiS-led government's foreign policy played a small part in the campaign and what debate there was between the main contenders failed to reflect the electorate's concerns on Poland's continued involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as plans to site a US missile defence base in northern Poland. The election was fought on the government's record in combating corruption and saw a big mobilisation of voters on both sides of the political spectrum around this issue. High economic growth and declining unemployment during its entire term helped to buoy PiS's support in the election. Ultimately, however, the contest was decided by an unprecedented turnout of young people who voted to reject the government's traditionalist domestic policies and inherent suspicion of the outside world.

European Islam: Challenges for Society and Public Policy

Samir Amghar, Amel Boubekeur and Michael Emerson (eds)

CEPS Paperback, 16 November 2007.

[Download for free](#)

[Abstract]

Works on Islam in Europe often read like a juxtaposition of national case studies covering the history and perhaps the sociology of immigrant groups in the countries considered. Although the sociology of Islam is well-developed in certain European countries such as France, Germany and the UK, it is only in its infancy as a discipline at the European level. The chapters in this work, by leading European experts in the field, therefore aim to supply policy-makers, analysts and civil society leaders with an inventory of the main issues concerning the presence of Islam in Europe. The key message is that European Islam exists as a powerful transnational phenomenon, and European policy must keep pace with this reality.

Contributors include Samir Amghar, Amel Boubekeur, Michael Emerson, Chris Allen, Valerie Amiraux, Tufyal Choudhury, Bernard Godard, Imane Karich, Isabelle Rigoni, Olivier Roy and Sara Silvestri.

Political Islam and European Foreign Policy: Perspectives from Muslim Democrats of the Mediterranean

Michael Emerson and Richard Youngs (eds)

CEPS Paperback, 28 November 2007.

[Download for free](#)

[Abstract]

The time is ripe for the European Union, its institutions and member states to undertake an explicit review of its current policy of 'benign neglect' towards the broad collection of 'Muslim democrat' parties in the Mediterranean Arab states. The group of experts assembled to produce this new book adduces mounting evidence that this policy may lead to unintended consequences, such as the reinforcement of anti-democratic regimes and radical Islamism. Their arguments favour a broad inclusion of Muslim democrats in EU initiatives aiming at the reform of governance and the development of civil society, without extending to them any singular, exclusive or unsolicited privileges. Contributors include Michael Emerson and Richard Youngs (eds), Samir Amghar, Talal Atrissi, Senem Aydin, Amel Boubekeur, Rusen Çakir, Salah Eddine Jorshi, Salam Kawakibi, Emad El-Din Shahin, Robert Springborg and Nathalie Tocci.

Europe's External Energy Policy: Between Geopolitics and the Market

Richard Youngs

CEPS Working Document, n. 278, November 2007.

[Download for free](#)

[Abstract]

While energy security has gradually been incorporated into the EU's foreign policy calculus, the declared approach of extending a nexus of 'market-governance' energy norms has been realised only to a limited extent. The EU has eschewed a comprehensively political approach to energy security, with its energy security policy currently hovering ineffectively between market and geopolitical approaches. The EU needs more effectively to address the way that governance structures in producer states impact upon European energy interests.

Does Europe Need a New Missile Defence System?

Walter Slocombe, Oliver Thränert and Alexander Pikayev

27th European Security Forum Working Papers

28 November 2007. [Download for free](#)

[Abstract]

US plans for a ballistic missile defence system in Europe have given rise to opposition in Russia and tensions in Europe. While some argue that the defence shield is needed to protect Europe against new threats from the proliferation of long-range missiles and nuclear weapons (chiefly from Iran and North Korea), critics hold that the project may pose a threat to Russia's security and provoke yet another arms race.

In this ESF Working Paper, Russian, European and American experts give their perspectives on the controversial US defence initiative, each analysing the strategic rationale for the system and the impact on international relations.

Transition in Central eastern Europe and the Baltic states, South-eastern Europe and CIS countries

EBRD, Transition Report 2007. People in transition.
13 November 2007. Data compiled into table by CEPS.
[Link to EBRD Report](#)

	GDP 2006 (billion US\$)	GDP per capita 2006 (PPP)	GDP growth (%)		FDI (billion US\$)		FDI per capita (US\$)		Inflation (%)	
			2005	2006*	2005	2006*	2005	2006*	2005	2006*
Central eastern Europe and the Baltic states										
Czech Republic	142.4	22,719	6.5	6.4	11,630	4,667	1,135	455	1.9	2.5
Estonia	16.4	18,324	10.5	11.4	2,252	569	1,672	423	4.1	4.4
Hungary	112	19,569	4.1	3.9	5,412	3,055	537	304	3.6	3.9
Latvia	20.1	15,824	10.2	11.9	603	1,487	261	648	6.2	6.5
Lithuania	29.8	16,206	7.6	7.5	689	1,585	201	466	2.7	3.7
Poland	340.9	15,436	3.6	6.1	7,013	10,037	184	263	2.1	1
Slovakia	55.2	17,812	6	8.3	1,951	3,797	363	705	2.7	4.5
Slovenia	38.2	24,261	4.1	5.7	-88	-377	-44	-189	2.5	2.5
Average		18768.88	6.58	7.65	3682.75	3102.50	538.63	384.38	3.23	3.63
South-eastern Europe										
Albania	9.2	5,621	5.6	5	277	360	87	113	2.3	2.5
Bosnia and Herzegovina	11.4	8,543	5.5	6.2	550	420	145	111	4	7
Bulgaria	31.5	10,126	6.2	6.1	3,938	5,331	510	692	5	7.3
Croatia	42.9	14,059	4.3	4.8	1,551	3,170	349	714	3.3	3.2
FYR Macedonia	6.2	7,757	4.1	3.2	97	350	49	175	0.5	3.2
Montenegro	2.3	na	4.1	6.5	474	650	719	985	2.6	3
Romania	122.1	10,001	4.1	7.7	6,587	11,430	303	526	9.5	6.6
Serbia	28.8	6,771	6.3	5.7	1,481	4,400	197	587	17.5	12.5
Average		8982.57	5.03	5.65	1869.38	3263.88	294.88	487.88	5.59	5.66
Commonwealth of Independent States										
Armenia	6.4	5,414	14	13.4	255	291	78	90	0.6	2.9
Azerbaijan	19.9	6,949	26.4	34.5	458	-926	55	-110	9.6	8.3
Belarus	36.9	9,037	9.4	9.9	303	351	31	36	10.3	7
Georgia	7.8	3,755	9.6	9.4	529	1,115	117	247	8.4	9.2
Kazakhstan	80.4	8,800	9.7	10.6	2,123	6,556	140	426	7.6	8.6
Kyrgyz Republic	2.8	2,051	-0.2	2.7	43	182	8	35	4.3	5.6
Moldova	3.4	2,817	7.1	4	199	223	59	66	12	12.8
Russia	977.5	11,988	6.4	6.7	119	7,387	1	52	12.7	9.7
Tajikistan	2.8	1,468	6.9	7.6	55	66	8	10	7	10
Turkmenistan	10.2	na	9.6	9	418	731	64	112	10.7	10.5
Ukraine	106.4	7,556	2.6	7.1	7,533	5,336	160	113	13.5	9.1
Uzbekistan	17	2,295	7	7.3	88	195	3	8	10	14.2
Average		5648.18	9.04	10.18	1010.25	1792.25	60.33	90.42	8.89	8.99

*The figures for 2006 are based on estimates.

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