Editorial

From Kosovo to generalized conflict escalation, or resolution

The EU and US say Kosovo is unique. Russia says that universal principles must be respected, to avoid escalating tensions over the multiple unresolved of the wider European neighbourhood. Both are right. All these cases are different, yet the world’s great powers have responsibility for the global order, and this requires rules. Actually the rules can be discerned, including the legal procedures of UN legitimation, but also principles of political morality drawing on the rules of the ‘just war’ that translate also into rules for ‘just secession’. These principles are basically whether the seceding party has a ‘just cause’ of sufficiently serious injustice inflicted upon it, such as genocide or mass deportation or credible threat thereof, whether it is a sufficiently well-identified people and territory to make a plausible functional state, and whether independence is really the last resort.

The EU – or almost all its member states - seems now to conclude that the injustice that Kosovo suffered at the hand of Milosevic was such that indeed supervised independence in the context of the European political paradigm of post-modern integration is both plausible and the last resort. The US agrees, but Russia thunders on that this is going to unleash an escalating wave of unpredictable destabilization of our region’s other so-called frozen conflicts. Meanwhile Russia encouraged Belgrade to adopt a blocking position, whereas two years ago Belgrade seemed to be heading for recognition of Kosovo’s independence as not only inevitable but desirable. “We should get rid of Kosovo as fast as possible” (in the words of one Serbian civil society leader).

So the great powers of the wider European region, the EU, Russia and the US – are walking into a scenario of escalating disputes between themselves and within the conflict zones. Yet their combined power is overwhelming in relations to these small entities of just tens or hundreds of thousands of people.

Could not these great powers, which assemble together at G8 summits, not take the combination of Kosovo and the Annapolis process for the Middle East as the starting point in 2008 for moving towards comprehensive conflict resolution rather than escalation? 2008 is already billed as the year of both Kosovo and the Middle East. Are all these conflicts so impossible to resolve, if in particular the G8 partners seriously united over the solutions, rather than prop up differences between the conflict participants? Could they not use common principles to set all the conflicts onto a path of resolution? Let us sketch what this could mean, beyond the cases of Kosovo and the Middle East. How close could these cases be to plausible solutions?

In the Nagorno Karabakh case the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan have been looking at a solution drafted by the Minsk group (France, Russia and the US) for some years. While unpublished, it is thought to be based on returning occupied Azeri territories to Ajerbaijan, leaving Armenians in Nagorno Karabkah itself while admitting refugee return, and assuring internationally guaranteed access corridors to both parties. The two presidents have been close to agreement, but one or the other baulked at final acceptance. Let the Minsk group, or better the whole G8, publish it and push it.

In Georgia the two cases of Abkhazia and South Ossetia are quite different. Abkhazia has a historical case for statehood, and Tbilisi went to war there and lost. The Georgian refugees still have a case to be respected. A compromise solution has been identified, and seems to be supported by Russia, under which the Gali district of Abkhazia bordering the rest of Georgia and which was mainly populated by Georgians, would be handed back to Tbilisi. The line would be drawn there. The case for Southern Ossetian statehood is the weakest of all those here reviewed. The territory is a mosaic of ethnic Ossetian and Georgia villages. The secessionist entity has survived only on smuggling. Irredentist ideas to be reunited with Russian North Ossetia are absolutely unacceptable. Independent statehood is not plausible. A gradual easing of the status quo seems the only way ahead for the time being.

continued on page 2
Table of Contents

Kosovo ................................................................. 3
Kosovo's status: Troika Press Communiqué .......... 3
Ban Ki-moon receives Kosovo Contact Group Report .. 3
EU Presidency Conclusions on Kosovo ................. 3
UN Security Council discusses Kosovo's future status .. 4
Speech of Serbian PM at UN Security Council ......... 4

Western Balkans ................................................. 5
EU Council Conclusions on the Western Balkans ... 5
Initialing of Bosnia-EU SAA ................................. 7

Enlargement .......................................................... 7
EU Council Conclusions on Enlargement ............... 7
Declaration by TR PLUS - Centre for Turkey in Europe .. 8

European Neighbourhood Policy ........................ 9
A strong European Neighbourhood Policy ............. 9
Commission Communication: A stronger ENP ......... 9

Russia Elections ....................................................... 10
Russian Parliamentary Election Results ................. 10
EU declaration on Russian elections ...................... 10
Putin speech at United Russia Party Congress .......... 11

Russia - CFE Treaty .................................................. 11
Russian MFA on Russian suspension of CFE Treaty ... 11
EU presidency statement on CFE Treaty ................. 12
NATO statement on Russian suspension of CFE obligations .. 12

Georgia Elections .................................................. 13
Measures to combat fraud at Presidential elections ... 13

Middle East ............................................................ 14
EU Council Conclusions on the Middle East .......... 14
Commentary: Annapolis gains momentum ............. 14

EU-Africa Summit .................................................. 15
Lisbon Declaration on EU-Africa Summit ............... 15
Joint Africa-EU Strategy ........................................ 16

Mediterranean Union .............................................. 16
Merkel on Mediterranean Union ............................ 16
Sarkozy on Mediterranean Union ......................... 16

CEPS Publications ............................................... 16
Andorra and the European Union ......................... 16
Kosovo and the principles of just secession .......... 16

Editorial continued:

The case of Transnistria has been the subject of negotiations between Moldova and Russia, with the US and now the EU becoming active parties in various negotiating formats. This is not an ethnic conflict, and the frontiers are relatively open. Discussion of constitutional settlement has been taking place, and a solution somewhere in the spectrum of federal to autonomous arrangements is plausible.

The case of the Western Sahara is also open to resolution. Morocco occupies this territory. A proposal before UN Security Council has been for this to be decided by referendum of the Sahrawi people, many of whom live a miserable life in desert refugee camps on the Algerian side of this other, lesser-known separation barrier. What would the leaders of G8 lose, if all together were to unite in insisting on this referendum, rather than playing small individual games of diplomatic favouritism?

Last but certainly not least for the European Union is the case of Northern Cyprus, which stands in the way of the Republic of Cyprus agreeing to Kosovo's independence. For Northern Cyprus there is consensus against independent statehood, but the negotiating positions of the two parties are miles apart. Yet the frontier is open, the people of Northern Cypriots are citizens of the Republic of Cyprus and therefore also of the European Union. Improvement of the status quo is the most plausible way for the time being.

Might the great powers of G8 make of 2008 and 2009 years when they would really coordinate to eliminate these small problems that together amount to a strategic menace, and each at the same time satisfy their objectives as global players? The new United States administration of 2009 will want to re-establish its country's reputation for principled international leadership. The EU, with its Reform Treaty bringing in its new super-High Representative for foreign policy and a new European Council permanent president, will want to assert its role as a normative foreign policy power. Might even the Putin regime, secure after its elections, prefer to join its G8 partners as a real partner rather than an adept spoiler? How does this add up for G8? Not exactly a Congress of Vienna or a Yalta. Still the great powers of Europe have some tidying up to do. All the more so that they may wish to hurry by example in the heralding of a 21st century of a normative, rule-based international order, which is going to be even more important in dealings with the new world powers, notably China and India.

Michael Emerson
Over the course of the talks, the Troika urged the parties to consider a broad range of options for Kosovo's status. The Troika explored together with both sides every reasonable status outcome for Kosovo to determine where there might be potential for a mutually-acceptable outcome.

Regrettably, the parties were unable to reach an agreement on Kosovo's future status. Nevertheless, the Troika believes that the parties benefited from this period of intensive dialogue. It was an opportunity for them to build trust and to identify shared interests, in particular their desire to seek a better future through achievement of a European perspective.

The Troika-led negotiations provided the parties six occasions to discuss directly the final status of Kosovo. The negotiations created an opportunity to engage in dialogue at the highest levels. These meetings have permitted the Troika to reiterate the importance of maintaining peace, avoiding incitement to violence and jeopardizing security in the region. The parties have accepted these principles repeatedly, most recently during the Baden Conference. Both sides made it clear they wish to avoid violence. This commitment to peace must continue after the Troika completes its work on December 10. The Troika calls on Belgrade and Pristina to maintain communications without prejudice to their positions on status. It is up to Belgrade and Pristina to sustain their commitment to peace and dialogue on issues of mutual concern.

The Troika will now begin to draft the report which will be submitted no later than December 10 to Secretary General by the Contact Group. During the Troika’s December 3 visit to Belgrade and Pristina, it will review this report with the parties. After the Contact Group submits the report to the UN Secretary General, the Troika’s mandate will conclude.

On Kosovo, the European Council noted the conclusion of the Troika process on 10 December and the final report submitted by the Contact Group to the United Nations Secretary-General. It expressed its gratitude to the Troika for having tirelessly explored all options to secure a negotiated settlement of the Status of Kosovo. In particular, it thanked Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger, the EU’s Representative to the Troika, for his efforts.

The European Council underlined that the negotiating process facilitated by the Troika between the parties on Kosovo’s future Status has been exhausted. In this context, it deeply regretted that the two parties were unable to reach a mutually acceptable agreement despite the Troika’s comprehensive and good faith efforts, fully supported by EU Member States.

The European Council welcomed the fact that both parties have committed repeatedly during the Troika process to refrain from any activities or statements which might endanger the security situation and to avoid violence. This commitment to peace, which is also important for regional stability, must continue.

The European Council agreed with the UN Secretary-General that the status quo in Kosovo is unsustainable and, thus, stressed
the need to move forward towards a Kosovo settlement, which is essential for regional stability. Such a settlement should ensure a democratic, multi-ethnic Kosovo committed to the rule of law, and to the protection of minorities and of cultural and religious heritage.

The European Council underlined its conviction that resolving the pending status of Kosovo constitutes a sui generis case that does not set any precedent.

The European Council noted that the United Nations Security Council will address this issue in December. The European Council underlined that the EU stands ready to play a leading role in strengthening stability in the region and in implementing a settlement defining Kosovo’s future status. It stated the EU’s readiness to assist Kosovo in the path towards sustainable stability, including by an ESDP mission and a contribution to an international civilian office as part of the international presences. The General Affairs and External Relations Council is invited to determine the modalities for the mission and when to launch it. The Secretary-General/High Representative is requested to prepare the mission in discussion with the responsible authorities in Kosovo and the United Nations. The EU will also be ready to assist economic and political development through a clear European perspective, in line with the European perspective of the region.

The European Council reaffirmed that the future of the Western Balkans lies within the European Union. It considered that a stable and prosperous Serbia fully integrated into the family of European nations is important for the stability of the region. In this regard, it encouraged Serbia to meet the necessary conditions to allow its Stabilisation and Association Agreement rapidly to be signed and, in the light of Serbia’s considerable institutional capacity, and recalling its conclusions of December 2006, it reiterated its confidence that progress on the road towards the EU, including candidate status, can be accelerated.

The Security Council today held a private debate over the future status of Kosovo, a Serbian province where ethnic Albanians outnumber Serbs and other minorities by nine to one.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon attended the debate, as did Vojislav Kostunica, Serbia’s Prime Minister, and Fatmir Sejdiu, the President of Kosovo, which has been run by the UN since Western forces drove out Yugoslav forces amid inter-ethnic fighting in 1999.

Earlier this month, a report submitted to the Council by the troika – comprising the European Union, Russia and the United States – noted that despite four months of intense and high-level negotiations, Belgrade and Pristina have been unable to reach agreement on Kosovo’s final status. The province’s Albanian leadership supports independence but Serbia is opposed.

“Neither party was willing to cede its position on the fundamental question of sovereignty,” the report said.

The troika was established after a stalemate emerged over a proposal by Mr. Ban’s Special Envoy, Martti Ahtisaari, for a phased process of independence for Kosovo.

Mr. Ahtisaari declared talks on the future status of the province deadlocked in mid-March, a little more than a month after unveiling his proposals, which aimed to address the demands of a multi-ethnic society.

His plan called for a constitution enshrining principles to protect the rights of all communities, including culture, language, education and symbols, as well as granting specific representation for non-Albanians in key public institutions and requiring that certain laws may only be enacted if a majority of the Kosovo non-Albanian legislative members agree.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,
I believe that, respecting the UN Charter and its own Resolution 1244, the Security Council cannot in effect pass the decision to take away from Serbia 15 percent of its territory. This because such a decision would practically mean that, at the cost of violating the entire body of international law and order, the Albanian national minority in the Serbian province of Kosovo is permitted to form another Albanian state in the Balkans, in addition to the one already existing. Proceeding from this belief, I must point out that we are all together facing yet another issue posing an open and direct challenge to the authority of the Security Council and that of the UN. I have in mind the announced illegal act of unilateral declaration of independence of the province of Kosovo.

It is well known that unilateral declaration of the Province’s independence, as well as recognition of such independence, have been announced a number of times in recent months. Since you, as the Security Council, guarantee with your Resolution the sovereignty and territorial integrity to my country, who could arrogate for himself the right to violate the valid Resolution 1244 and who could dare embark upon the adventure of recognizing such unilateral independence holding
that the Security Council resolution was not binding upon him? Who has the right to position himself above and above the Resolution 1244 and to openly violate it by recognizing unilateral independence? Does any state really think that it has that right and that it can, with the support of its allies, act contrary to the decisions and resolutions of the Security Council?

Serbia holds that whoever is able to say that he is above the Security Council and above international law, and that he is not obliged to abide by Security Council Resolution 1244, could as well openly declare right away that a new era has commenced in the history of international relations, an era in which might is above right and over and above the law.

As on all past occasions, Serbia at the Security Council today is once again advocating the view that the Kosovo issue is, in its essence, an issue of respect for the law. We all see that international law and Resolution 1244 have been most directly jeopardised by an open threat that there will be unilateral declaration of independence for the Province. It is particularly dangerous that the supporters of unilateral independence keep referring to Ahtisaari’s rejected plan. Here, at the Security Council, that very same Ahtisaari proposal had been put on the table and the Security Council did not accept it. The question that follows is: is it possible that a document already rejected by the Security Council can serve as a basis for violation of its valid resolution and even the UN Charter itself?

Another question imposes itself in the same context: how could the EU send its Mission to implement Ahtisaari’s scrapped plan when that would be an illegal decision, evidently contrary to Resolution 1244? Clearly, only once the Security Council approves the comprehensive solution reached by both sides through negotiations, and not before, could one raise the issue of the character of international mission empowered to put such solution into practice. In any other case, the Security Council and the entire world would witness a blatant violation of the fundamental norms of international law. This is precisely why it is the shared duty of Serbia and the Security Council to identify the right way of preventing unilateral independence of Kosovo, at the same time avoiding the announced violations of Resolution 1244 and the UN Charter.

Mr. President,

Serbia has already made its choice and brought its decision. We shall never and at no price give up the rights laid down by the UN Charter, the rights that guarantee to us the inviolability of Serbia’s internationally recognised borders. Serbia sincerely wishes and is ready to resume forthwith the negotiations on living together with the Kosovo Albanians within Serbia. If we were able to live together for close to 10 centuries, it is impossible to understand how today - when the entire world is advocating multi-ethnicity - some people can categorically claim the opposite? On behalf of Serbia, I claim that it is possible for us to live together. The Constitution of Serbia sets forth and guarantees substantive autonomy to the Kosovo Albanians, which makes it possible for them to freely decide on their lives, overall progress and their future.

Once again, I appeal to the Security Council to respect and support Serbia’s stance and decide on resumption of the negotiations within the framework of the Resolution 1244. We are not setting any conditions and are willing to start the negotiations on the future status of Kosovo right away and in the Province itself. Serbia will hence do everything within its power to take part, as a partner to the Security Council, in the quest for a negotiated solution. And if, instead of resumption of negotiations, unilateral acts take place directly violating the Resolution 1244, rest assured that Serbia will – not only for a year, not only for 10 years but forever – go on consistently respecting international law and that it will consider Kosovo to be an integral and inalienable part of its territory. I am also confident that not a small number of the UN member states committed to the Charter will stand alongside Serbia and will continue to recognise it within its present-day internationally recognised borders, thus respecting the rights and the honour of millions of Serbs and rejecting unilateral independence as an illegally created puppet entity.


Aware that the year ahead will be an important one in consolidating the transition process in the Western Balkans, the Council reaffirmed that the future of the Western Balkans lies in the European Union and reconfirmed its continued support to the region’s course towards the EU. The EU engagement through the Stabilisation and Association process has made a significant contribution to the progress achieved in recent years by the countries of the region. These achievements now need to be built on and made irreversible. Recalling the European Council Conclusions of December 2006, the Council reiterated that each country progresses from one stage to the next, when it has fulfilled the established conditions. Provided the conditions are fulfilled, Stabilisation and Associations Agreements could be signed with the remaining Western Balkans countries at the earliest opportunity.

The Council considered that the challenges faced by the countries of the Western Balkan region warrant greater focus on key reform priorities, which relate to state-building, rule of law, reconciliation, administrative and judicial reform, and to fight against corruption and organised crime. Strong progress on these issues, hand in hand with sustainable economic and social development, will enable the countries of the region to move forward in building modern democracies and in developing a political culture of dialogue and tolerance.

The Council recalled the importance of regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations and of the need to find mutually acceptable solutions on outstanding issues with neighbouring countries. It welcomed good progress made in regional cooperation, in areas like trade, energy, transport
and environment and expressed the hope that this would continue, including in the relevant regional fora and initiatives. The Council noted with satisfaction that the Western Balkan countries will take increased responsibility for regional cooperation with the transition from the Stability Pact to the Regional Cooperation Council.

The Council welcomed the Commission’s intention to present a communication early in 2008, in which it takes stock of developments and points the way forward in following up the Thessaloniki Agenda, as well as the Salzburg communication, on promoting the course of the countries of the Western Balkans towards the EU. In this context, the Council invited the Commission to further explore possibilities to promote people-to-people contacts as well as civil society development. Recalling its 18 June conclusions, the Council expressed its readiness to hold a discussion during the first half of 2008 on these issues, based on the Commission’s communication, as well as on Member States’ contributions.

Albania

The Council noted that Albania has made progress in a number of areas, but underlined that good governance and rule of law, in particular the fight against corruption and organised crime, remain major challenges requiring sustained efforts. Noting progress made in the areas of the protection of minorities and freedom of expression, the Council stressed the importance of Albania continuing to make progress in these areas. The Council encouraged all political forces to contribute to a constructive dialogue in moving reforms forward, notably in the electoral and judicial fields. The Council noted that Albania is implementing its trade commitments under the Interim Agreement smoothly and pointed out that a sustained and effective track record of implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement is essential for further progress towards the European Union. The Council also underlined the importance of Albania’s continued constructive and stabilizing role in the region.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Council welcomed the latest positive developments, including renewed commitment to police reform. However, the Council reiterated its concern over the political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and slowdown in reform process over the last year. It underlined the responsibility of the political leaders to ensure the full functioning of State institutions and to advance reforms which are essential for Bosnia and Herzegovina to move forward and assume full ownership of its governance. The Council reiterated its full support to HR/EUSR Miroslav Lajcak and his efforts to advance the reform agenda.

The Council noted the initialling of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement as an important step. The Council reaffirmed its readiness, as soon as the four conditions are met, including full cooperation with ICTY, to sign a Stabilisation and Association Agreement.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

The Council noted that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia achieved some progress but regrets the delays in reform because of internal political tensions, which diverted the focus of the country’s political institutions away from the priorities of European integration. The Council encouraged all political parties to deepen political dialogue and cooperation, including on inter-ethnic relations, in order to move ahead in the accession process. It called for acceleration of the pace of reforms in key areas such as judicial and public administration reform, implementation of the police reform and the fight against corruption, as well as in addressing unemployment and enhancing the general business environment. However, the Council noted that there has still been no solution to the name issue. It called on the Government to make renewed efforts, with a constructive approach, to find a negotiated and mutually acceptable solution on the name issue with Greece, under the auspices of the UN, thereby contributing to regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations.

Montenegro

The Council noted that Montenegro has made in a number of areas, including adopting a Constitution and in establishing the necessary legal framework and institutions following independence. The Council stressed the need for Montenegro to implement the new Constitution in line with European standards and to continue efforts in broadening consensus on basic features of state building. It encouraged Montenegro to continue enhancing its administrative capacity, as well as to achieve significant reform results notably in strengthening the rule of law and fighting corruption and organised crime.

Serbia

The Council noted the initialling of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement as an important step and recalled that its signature remains conditional upon Serbia achieving full cooperation with the ICTY. The Council called for further efforts in reform, in particular of the judiciary and of the security sector, as well as the fight against corruption and structural economic reforms. In view of Serbia’s institutional capacity, the Council was confident that Serbia would be capable of accelerating its preparations on the road towards the European Union.

Serbia/Kosovo

While noting progress made by the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government in addressing certain priorities, the Council stressed the need for major efforts to strengthen the rule of law, anti-corruption policy and the fight against organised crime, as well as to enhance the dialogue between the communities. The Council recalled the crucial importance of further effective implementation of the Kosovo Standards, including the protection of minorities, historical and religious sites. The Council stressed that resolving the status of Kosovo will facilitate progress in the reform agenda. The Council confirmed that the European Union will continue to assume its responsibilities in Kosovo.
I am happy to be back in Sarajevo today on such an important day for the European future of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is a great pleasure and honour to initial the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) and the Interim Agreement with your country.

Why is the Stabilisation and Association Agreement important? For one, it will bring concrete benefits to the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It means more trade and economic opportunities and it means closer co-operation with other European countries in key areas in the framework of the European Union – for instance in fighting organised crime and solving cross-border environmental problems. The Stabilisation and Association Agreement is also the gateway to candidate status to the European Union, provided that it is properly implemented. The Agreement contributes to the establishment of a stable and predictable legal environment for potential investors. I am confident that it will create a sense of growing stabilisation amongst potential investors, who will see your country as a new promising location for their operations. The reforms promoted by the SAA will contribute to the growth of the economy of the country and thereby help create jobs. For these reasons, I want to warmly congratulate the citizens and leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina on this achievement.

I want to congratulate the leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in particular, for acting in a true European spirit of compromise and paving the way for a normalisation of the political situation and for the implementation of police reform.

You have, as leaders of your country, proven the “Cassandras” wrong – those who predicted an eternal political crisis or even worse. Instead, Bosnia and Herzegovina has been able to able to break the political stalemate and take a major step on its road towards European integration. Bosnia and Herzegovina should and will become master of its own destiny in the framework of the European Union and European integration. I want to thank EU Special Representative Miroslav Lajcak as well for his substantial contribution to this watershed of a political development in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

So, dear friends, it is now essential to keep up the momentum, finish the job for the SAA, and get prepared for future challenges on your European road. But today is a day to celebrate; it is a great European day for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Our presence here today, our work together in the last couple of weeks, is a concrete proof that Europe wants you to join once you are ready to do so.

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The Council regrets the limited progress achieved in political reform in Turkey in 2007 but welcomes the Turkish government’s declared intention and renewed commitment to continue the reform process and address the existing shortcomings. It looks forward to see these commitments soon translated into real and tangible actions.

The Council notes the process underway to revise the Constitution. This will constitute a key opportunity to fully enshrine the European standards in the Turkish constitutional law. Nevertheless, the Council stresses that this process should not delay long awaited reforms, in particular in the key areas of freedom of expression and freedom of religion where Turkey needs to proceed without delay.

Significant further efforts are also needed in other areas such as judicial reform, the fight against corruption, minority rights and the strengthening of cultural rights, women’s rights, children’s rights, trade union rights and the civilian control of the military. As regards the East and Southeast, the Council recalls the need to promptly develop and implement a comprehensive strategy that will guarantee the economic, social and cultural development of this area.

The Council condemns all terrorist attacks and violence in Turkish territory and expresses its solidarity with the people of Turkey as well as its support for Turkey’s efforts to protect its population and fight terrorism, while respecting human rights, fundamental freedoms and international law and preserving regional peace and stability.

In line with the Negotiating Framework and previous European Council and Council conclusions, Turkey needs to unequivocally commit to good neighbourly relations and to the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the United Nations Charter, including, if necessary, jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice. In this context, any threat or action which could negatively affect good neighbourly relations and the peaceful settlement of disputes should be avoided.

Recalling its conclusions of 11 December 2006, the Council notes with regret that Turkey has not fulfilled its obligation of full non-discriminatory implementation of the Additional Protocol to the Association Agreement and has not made progress towards normalisation of relations with the Republic of Cyprus. The Council will continue to follow up and review progress made on the issues covered by the declaration of the European Community and its Member States of 21 September 2005 in accordance with its conclusions of 11 December 2006. Swift progress on these issues is expected.

Recalling the Negotiating Framework, the Council also expects Turkey to actively support efforts to implement the agreed 8th of July process leading to a comprehensive and viable settlement of the Cyprus problem within the UN framework and in line with the principles on which the Union is founded including concrete steps to contribute to a favourable climate for such a comprehensive settlement.

Croatia

The Council commends Croatia for the overall progress it continued to make in the past year, which allowed the country to enter an increasingly important and demanding stage. Negotiations are on the right track. This also demonstrates to the Western Balkan region as a whole that the perspective of EU membership is tangible. Increased attention must be given to further transpose and implement effectively the acquis, in order to be able to meet the obligations of membership in good time.

Further sustained efforts are required in a number of areas. Croatia needs to build on its achievements and implementing record and to make further progress particularly in judicial and administrative reforms, the fight against corruption, economic reforms, minority rights and refugee return. Full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) must be continued and further improvements are needed to ensure that the prosecution and trial of war crimes in Croatia itself is carried out, without ethnic bias.

The fulfilment of the obligations under the Stabilisation and Association Agreement remains crucial. It is also essential that Croatia continues its efforts towards good neighbourly relations, including work to find satisfactory solutions to pending bilateral issues with neighbouring countries, especially as regards border issues. The Council also calls on Croatia to fully respect the 4 June 2004 agreement concerning the Ecological and Fisheries Protection Zone referred to in the June 2004 European Council conclusions and the Negotiating Framework and not to apply any aspect of the Zone to the EU Member States until a common agreement in the EU spirit is found.

**A declaration by TR PLUS – Centre For Turkey in Europe**

Brussels, 11 December 2007. [Link]

**THE EU SHOULD STAND FAST**

We are astonished and dismayed at the decision to remove the word ‘accession’ from references to European Union negotiations with Turkey in the draft of the final communiqué prepared by EU Foreign Ministers for submission to the European Union summit on 14 December 2007.

This change in wording, motivated by pressures from the French government of President Nicolas Sarkozy, carries with it the inference that the goal of Turkey’s negotiations with the EU is no longer viewed as “accession” but merely as a ‘privileged partnership’.

Such a change in approach would severely damage the confidence of Turkish citizens and business in the European Union and its institutions. At TR PLUS, we see it as our duty to warn our friends in the EU, with whom we share common values, of all the dangers that this could imply. We appeal to EU governments and EU citizens: Stand fast by your commitments.

TR PLUS - Centre for Turkey in Europe is an independent non-profit policy network based in Brussels.
A new Communication from Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, sets out what actions are needed by the Member States and the Commission, particularly in the fields of trade, mobility and tackling frozen conflicts in the EU’s neighbourhood. A number of actions are foreseen in 2008 to reinforce sectoral reforms in the neighbourhood countries. A further communication next spring will address the performance of the neighbourhood partners, with progress reports on each.

The Communication sets the following objectives for 2008 and beyond:

- Greater political commitment to foster economic integration and improve market access. The Communication calls on Member States to support ongoing agricultural negotiations, in particular limiting the number of products excluded from full liberalisation.

- The facilitation of legitimate short-term travel, as well as more ambitious longer term developments in managed migration. The Commission urges the Council and the European Parliament to adopt its 2006 “package” on visas, and to make full use of the opportunities under existing rules to facilitate travel.

- Further engagement with ENP partners in tackling frozen conflicts, using the full range of instruments at the EU’s disposal, to stabilise conflict and post-conflict areas.

- Intensified EU support for partner countries’ sectoral reforms in areas such as: energy, climate change, fisheries, transport, maritime policy, research, information society, education, employment and social policy.

Since the Communication proposing measures to strengthen ENP, a number of the items suggested then have already been implemented:

- The Commission has decided today on its first 50 million euro allocation to the Neighbourhood Investment Facility to be committed by the end of this year. Some Member States have already signalled their intention to contribute to the Facility. Operation of the facility will begin in 2008.

- The first allocations have been made under the new Governance Facility, which provides additional support to partner countries that have made most progress in implementing the governance priorities in their action plans. Morocco (28 million euros) and Ukraine (22 million euros) are the first recipients.

- The Black Sea Synergy has been launched to provide a regional dimension for the Eastern Neighbourhood.

- Negotiations to enable neighbours to participate in EU programmes and agencies are underway with Israel, Morocco and Ukraine. The imminent signature of the Protocol with Israel will enable it to become the first ENP partner to participate in the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme.

- The European Neighbourhood Policy, a partnership for reform with the neighbouring countries to the South and to the East, has already produced tangible, concrete results. It has allowed a substantial deepening of the Union’s relations with some of its close neighbours (EU offer is directed to Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine), according to the principle of the differentiation that enables those who wish to engage more deeply with the EU to do so.
The European Union has taken note of the provisional results of the elections to the State Duma which were held on 2 December in Russia. The EU welcomes the fact that elections took place in an orderly and organised fashion.

The EU regrets however that there were many reports and allegations of media restrictions as well as harassment of opposition parties and NGOs in the run up to the elections and on election day, and that procedures during the electoral campaign did not meet international standards and commitments voluntarily assumed by Moscow. The EU hopes that investigations will clarify the accuracy of these allegations.

The EU regrets that there was no long term observation mission from ODIHR/OSCE to follow the election campaign and underlines that the presence of ODIHR would have constituted a reliable basis for a full assessment of the elections. “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 and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well Georgia align themselves with this declaration.
[Extract]

I propose that this United Russia congress nominate Dmitry Anatolyevich Medvedev as candidate for the President of the country.

In conclusion I feel that it is necessary to point out the following.

I am perfectly aware that by heading the list of United Russia and convincing voters to vote for our party I took upon myself a great responsibility. People have shown enormous confidence in us. And that confidence cannot be betrayed, it must be justified. People expect us to continue the intense, creative work in order to strengthen the country, raise the living standards, and improve the quality of our citizens’ lives. And they, the voters, the citizens of Russia, have given us a unique opportunity to create a sustainable, constitutional, parliamentary majority and to form a workable basis for the government. In its turn, it of course must set up a constructive dialogue with the entire Parliament, with all the parties in the Duma.

In recent years we have indeed done a lot together and achieved a great deal. But we must have the courage to recognise that our unresolved problems far outnumber our achievements. Today we must not talk about past successes, even though there is much in the past we can be proud of, but rather about all that remains to be done. We need to fulfil the promises we have made to the people: implement the planned development programmes and justify the confidence of the citizens of Russia. This is why we need to roll up our sleeves and get to work, without arrogance or ambition, as hard and as efficiently as we can. This applies to each of us, including me of course.

In this regard, I consider it necessary to say that if our people, the citizens of Russia, show their confidence in Dmitry Anatolyevich Medvedev and elect him as the new president of Russia, then I also would be ready to continue our joint work, in this case, as Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, without changing the distribution of powers between the president and the government itself.


In practical terms this means that, at 0000 hours Moscow time, on December 12, 2007, all of Russia’s activities for implementing the Treaty and related documents was suspended.

In particular, the provision by it of information and the acceptance and conduct of inspections are brought to a halt. During the suspension period, Russia will not be bound by restrictions, including flank restrictions, on the number of its conventional weapons. At the same time we have no plans for their massive buildup or concentration on the borders with neighbors in the present circumstances. Later on, the real quantities and stationing of weapons and equipment will depend on a concrete military-political situation, particularly the readiness of our partners to show restraint.

This move was due to the exceptional circumstances pertaining to the content of the CFE Treaty affecting the security of Russia and requiring some immediate measures. Of them we had repeatedly and thoroughly told our treaty partners.

The Treaty, signed during the Cold War, has long since ceased to meet contemporary European realities and our security interests. Its adapted version has been unable to enter into force for eight years now because of the position of the NATO countries tying its ratification to the fulfillment by Russia of farfetched requirements having nothing to do with the CFE Treaty. Moreover, they undertook a number of steps incompatible with the letter and spirit of the Treaty and undermining the balances that lie at its core. Russia’s continued compliance with the Treaty in such a situation of legal uncertainty would put in jeopardy its national interests in the sphere of military security.

The suspension is not an aim in itself, but a means of endeavor by the Russian Federation to restore the viability of the conventional arms control regime in Europe, to which we see no reasonable alternative. This move is politically justified, well-grounded from the legal point of view and makes it possible, given the political will of Russia’s partners, within a fairly short space of time to resume the operation of the CFE Treaty by a decision of the President of the Russian Federation.

Our positive program to restore the viability of the CFE Treaty is well known. We voiced it at the Extraordinary Conference of the States Parties to the CFE Treaty in June 2007, and also explained it in the course of a number of multilateral and bilateral meetings with the treaty partners.
We consider that to achieve this goal it is necessary to:
- agree on how to compensate for the additional potential acquired by NATO as a result of its expansion;
- arrange the parameters for restraint in the stationing of forces on foreign territories;
- resolve on the abolition of so called flank restrictions for the territory of Russia (they hinder our common struggle against terrorism);
- ensure the participation in the Treaty of the new NATO members Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Slovenia;
- enact the adapted version of the CFE Treaty as soon as possible and without artificial conditions and embark on its further modernization.

We wait for a constructive response to these proposals, from the NATO countries in the first place. The consultations already begun with the partners confirm that a substantive, professional conversation is needed based on mutual respect and consideration for the interests of each other in the area of security.

The Russian Federation is ready to continue a result-oriented dialogue on the CFE Treaty also during the period of its suspension. We hope that such dialogue will yield its fruits, of course, if the other states parties to the Treaty show political realism and the will to search for mutually acceptable solutions.

Following the decision of the Russian Federation to suspend the implementation of the CFE Treaty, taking effect as of 12 December 2007, and taking into account the declaration issued today in Moscow by the Ministry of Defence, the EU Presidency reiterates that the EU considers the CFE Treaty as the cornerstone of security and stability in Europe.

The EU Presidency urges Russia to continue to engage with CFE partners in the search for an acceptable solution to the outstanding concerns of all State parties related to the implementation of the CFE Treaty.

Constructive proposals which have been presented so far to solve the current situation should continue to be pursued.

NATO Allies deeply regret that the Russian Federation has proceeded with its intention to unilaterally “suspend” implementation of CFE Treaty obligations as of 12 December 2007.

This is particularly disappointing because, as NATO Foreign Ministers recalled in their December 7 communiqué, Allies have worked intensively with other Treaty partners over the past months to try to resolve the Russian Federation’s concerns constructively. NATO Allies continue to place the highest value on the CFE Treaty regime with all its elements and underscore its strategic importance as a cornerstone of Euro-Atlantic security.

NATO Allies reaffirm their right to take any steps provided for by the Treaty and international law. At the same time, they want to resolve the current impasse and preserve the benefits of this landmark Treaty. They have therefore chosen not to respond in kind at this stage to the Russian Federation’s political decision to “suspend” its legal obligations and NATO Allies will continue to meet theirs, without prejudice to any future action they might take. As a first step, when the annual CFE exchange of military information takes place this week, the NATO Allies will meet their obligations.

Allies’ proposals for parallel actions on outstanding issues are constructive, reasonable, and forward looking. NATO Allies strongly urge the Russian Federation to respond to these efforts, including by implementing existing obligations in full, and not to take further steps that would undermine the future of the CFE regime. We encourage the Russian authorities to work cooperatively with us to resolve outstanding concerns of all States Parties.
Central Election Committee announces measures to combat fraudulent voting

- Ensuring up-to-date, clean voter lists:
  - From October 19 to November 4, the CEC conducted door-to-door checks to improve the accuracy of the voter lists.
  - The CEC has subsequently posted these lists online (www.cec.gov.ge) and in local precincts so that citizens can check ahead of time whether they are registered.
  - A 24-hour hotline is also in operation to allow citizens to register complaints with the CEC. These complaints will be added to the CEC website (www.cec.gov.ge) to provide maximum visibility.
  - Whenever concrete facts are provided on the hotline, law enforcement bodies will look into the allegations and launch a criminal investigation if appropriate.
- Late voter registration:
  - There has been a recent re-drawing of precinct boundaries.
  - To remedy possible confusion, citizens will be allowed to register on Election Day (there are safeguards to prevent fraudulent registration and voting – see below).
  - For voters who register on Election Day, ballot envelopes of a different color will be issued and those votes will be tabulated separately to ensure extra scrutiny against impropriety or fraud.
- Anti-fraud measures:
  - Two video cameras—one at the registration desk and one at the ballot box—will be installed in each precinct to monitor against improper conduct.
  - These cameras will not be installed in the voting booths and will in no way compromise the secrecy of the ballot.
  - Citizens’ fingers will be inked in with indelible ink to make sure citizens only vote once.
- Public outreach efforts:
  - Information and ballots will be provided in Russian, Armenian, and Azeri in addition to Georgian to ensure minorities are fully involved in the electoral process.
  - The CEC is working to ensure that handicapped citizens are also able to exercise their right to vote without hindrance.

Daily update

- A poll released yesterday by ACT, a leading Georgian pollster, shows great interest in the elections, but also highlights citizens’ worries about the fairness of the process. The poll was based on interviews with 1500 citizens aged 18+.
  - Key results are:
  - 89% of respondents intend to vote in the Presidential election.
  - Only 43% believe the poll will be free and fair.
  - 24% do not trust the evaluations of foreign observers.
  - 82% have decided not to participate in post-election rallies on 6 January.
  - Former President Mikheil Saakashvili is the leading candidate with an estimated 37-41% of the vote, although 20% of voters remain undecided. Levan Gachechiladze by 11.1%, and Badri Patakarsishvili by 6.5%. All other candidates receive less than 5% support. 11.9% refused to answer the question.
- Referenda regarding date of Parliamentary elections and NATO accession:
  - The majority of voters prefer that the next parliamentary elections be held in spring 2008, rather than fall 2008.
  - Georgia’s aspiration to join NATO is supported by an overwhelming majority (approximately 85%) of voters.
- Candidates launch advertising campaigns:
  - Levan Gachechiladze, Davit Gamkrelidze and Shalva Natelashvili have all launched advertising campaigns taking advantage of the free airtime legislation.
  - Mikheil Saakashvili is the only candidate currently running a paid-for TV campaign.
- Candidate pledges 1.5 Billion GEL (590 million euro) from personal fortune to voters.
  - Speaking by telephone from London in an interview with Radio Imedi, billionaire candidate Badri Patarkatsishvili offered to personally pay citizens’ electricity and gas bills for a period of 18 months; to buy the full crop of grapes and citrus next year; and to pay a child benefit of 3000 GEL (approx 2000 USD) for the first child, rising to 4000 (GEL) for the second child and 5000 (GEL) for the fifth child. In addition, the candidate offered to pay 600 GEL per year to every unemployed person for a duration of 18 months.
- Clarification: Parliamentary election system:
  - In yesterday Election Monitor, we wrote about the switch to a proportional system for parliamentary elections. This will word as follows: 70% of MPs will be elected though a nation-wide party list, 30% will be elected through regional party lists.
- Right to vote of soldiers serving in Iraq and Kosovo confirmed:
  - The CEC has been instructed by a Tbilisi court to open polling stations in Iraq and Kosovo for the 2,100 Georgian servicemen and women on duty there.

For additional information, please contact the Embassy of Georgia
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tamara@georgia-embassy.be
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The EU welcomes the holding of the Annapolis Conference and the joint understanding reached between Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas to immediately launch good-faith bilateral negotiations in order to conclude a peace treaty before the end of 2008. This should lead to the establishment of an independent, democratic and viable Palestinian State in the West Bank and Gaza that will unite all Palestinians, living side by side in peace and security with Israel and its neighbours. It is also important that the parties implement their Road Map obligations in parallel to their negotiations. The EU welcomes the wide participation of Arab partners at the conference and calls for their continued and positive involvement.

The EU is determined to accompany this new momentum by supporting the parties in their negotiations in a sustained and active manner and through working closely with other members of the Quartet and partners in the region to keep the negotiations on track. As set out in the EU Action Strategy: “State-building for Peace in the Middle East” the EU stands ready to adapt and enhance its activities in support of a new, substantive and credible process. Amongst its immediate priorities the EU aims to further strengthen security and law and order. In this context, the re-engagement and expansion of EUPOL COPPS is an important element in the improvement of security. To this end, the Council expects Israel to engage constructively in providing accreditation to the mission without further delay. The EU will also further strengthen its programmes to foster institution building, good governance, civil society contributions and support for growth of the Palestinian economy working in close cooperation with the Quartet Representative. The Council welcomes the work of Tony Blair and in particular, his recent announcement of a number of quick impact projects.

The Paris Donors’ conference in December will be an important opportunity for the whole international community to back up its commitment to assist in the economic and financial development of a future viable Palestinian State and to provide the necessary support to the post-Annapolis process. In this context, the EU looks forward to the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan. In order to allow for the establishment of a new support mechanism the EU endorses the further extension of the TIM for three months.

The Council reiterates its grave concern at the humanitarian situation in Gaza and calls for the continued provision of essential services. All parties must work urgently for the opening of the crossings in and out of Gaza for both humanitarian reasons and commercial flows. As a first step the EU welcomes the recent opening of crossing for the export of agricultural products. Such moves will support progress on the political track.

The Council recalls that peace in the Middle East requires a comprehensive solution through a lasting and just settlement of the conflict in all its tracks based on the principles of land for peace, the relevant UNSC resolutions, the Road Map, and previous agreements reached between the parties. The Council emphasises again the importance of the Arab Peace Initiative as a major element in moving the Middle East Peace Process forward.

There is great public skepticism regarding the outcome of the Annapolis meeting. Many of the skeptics state that at the end of the day, it was little more than a photo-op for the principals - Bush, Olmert and Abbas - and that it produced no real substance.

The failure of the parties to produce a joint statement that contained any content on the principles for resolving the core issues for permanent status, for some, points to the Annapolis meeting as a failure.

In fact, the main strategic aim of Ehud Olmert and Mahmoud Abbas from Annapolis was to survive the meeting politically. That aim was achieved. Perhaps too little for some, however there is a new negotiating process under way, and it is the only game in town.

The meeting did also buy for Olmert and Abbas a year of domestic political freedom that can now be used to arrive at the permanent status agreement.

The process did set up a formal mechanism for carrying out negotiations and has produced an American commitment to monitor, and for the first time, to judge, the parallel implementation of the road map phase I obligations of both sides. The negotiating mechanism established contains two main elements: the continuation of the biweekly Olmert-Abbas meetings and the establishment of a steering committee that will devise further mechanisms for negotiating permanent status.

THE PROCESS set forth has several severe limitations. For one, in the absence of the framework agreement or the “package deal” that will include the principles for dealing with the hard core issues (Jerusalem, boundaries, settlements, refugees and security) the steering committee and its sub-committees will be limited in their ability to proceed with many of the non-core permanent status issues. Nevertheless, there are a whole set of issues, mainly technical in nature, that can be confronted and dealt with by the Olmert-Abbas track, supported by their confidants and advisers. The process did set up a formal mechanism for carrying out negotiations and has produced an American commitment to monitor, and for the first time, to judge, the parallel implementation of the road map phase I obligations of both sides. The negotiating mechanism established contains two main elements: the continuation of the biweekly Olmert-Abbas meetings and the establishment of a steering committee that will devise further mechanisms for negotiating permanent status.

The main negotiations on the core issues will have to be dealt with by the Olmert-Abbas track, supported by their confidants and advisers. This must be done under a complete “news blackout” and can only be successful if dealt with as a package, and not by negotiating each issue separately from the others.

The steering committee and its sub-committees will be, by nature, a more public process and as such will be subject to use and abuse by both sides through media leaks - both intentional and unintentional - as part of the process of
providing information and disinformation as a tool of creating pressure on the negotiators. This is only one of the potentially dysfunctional aspects of the negotiations process under the work of the steering committee. It also seems apparent that the heads of the steering committee - Tzipi Livni and Ahmed Qurei - lack the very basic good chemistry that has characterized the relationship of Olmert and Abbas.

THE INCLUSION of the US monitoring mechanism that allows for “judging” is a new and positive development that will assist the parties in the parallel implementation of their road map obligations. This mechanism should include a clear definition of what those obligations are.

Additionally, the monitors should create a tri-lateral committee - Israelis, Palestinians and Americans - aimed at assisting and facilitating the implementation. When problems arise or when breaches of obligations are committed, the tri-lateral committee should attempt to work out agreements on resolving the difficulties prior to reporting on them in the formal confidential and public mechanisms for reporting that will be established.

It should be clear that much progress can be made in the realm of implementing road map obligations, economic development projects in the West Bank (and even in Gaza) and on the technical negotiations not connected to the core issues.

Once Olmert and Abbas do produce a draft framework agreement on core issue principles, and it is presented to the public, the Israeli coalition government will cease to exist and Israel will enter a new period of early elections. The elections will serve as a referendum on the draft agreement and will determine if the negotiations for permanent status will continue and if there will be something to implement subsequently.

There is no possibility of reaching the agreement on the core issues in a public process or through several sub-committees of the steering committee. This must be done in the Olmert-Abbas track.

The work of the steering committee is important and must be more than a smoke-screen for the hard core-issue negotiations at the Olmert-Abbas level. The steering committee’s work must deal with substance and will also be the more public face of the process.

One of the functions of the steering committee will be, by definition, a mechanism that will influence public opinion. Therefore, the heads of the steering committee should be very cautious in their public statements and the influence that these will have in setting the public mood.

Skepticism may remain high because the public will be largely excluded at this point from the core negotiations. There will be huge speculation in the media about the nature of the compromises and concessions that the leaders will be making. This will lead to public debate and perhaps even more to the issuing of threats by leaders of various political factions and groups on both sides.

With the understanding that Israel will have to go to elections following the publication of the draft agreement and that the Palestinians too will engage in some process of public referendum, Olmert and Abbas must proceed with determination to reach an agreement regardless of the domestic political concerns.

The work of the steering committee and its sub-committees may be more influenced by day-to-day realities on the ground and domestic political concerns, but the Olmert-Abbas track must be insulated from external influences. Without this, the core-issue negotiations may be easily side-tracked and derailed. With all of the skepticism, it should be realized that the very future of the viability of the two-state solution is at stake. The Annapolis process has taken off. It must now succeed.

The Lisbon Summit, bringing together the European Union and Africa, has offered us a unique opportunity jointly to address the common contemporary challenges for our continents, in the year that we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the European integration and the 50th anniversary of the beginning of the independence of Africa.

We have come together in awareness of the lessons and experiences of the past, but also in the certainty that our common future requires an audacious approach, one that allows us to face with confidence the demands of our globalizing world.

Since our first gathering in 2000 in Cairo, much has changed. In Africa we have witnessed the creation of the African Union, which offers a new continental framework for addressing African issues and has become a recognised voice for the continent, and of its economic instrument, NEPAD. In Europe, the EU has grown in membership and scope, deepening its process of integration and acquiring new responsibilities in the world. On a global scale, we have today an increased understanding of our vital interdependence and are determined to work together in the global arena on the key political challenges of our time, such as energy and climate change, migration or gender issues.

In recognition of our ambitions, and of all that we share today and have shared in the past, we are resolved to build a new strategic political partnership for the future, overcoming the traditional donor-recipient relationship and building on common values and goals in our pursuit of peace and stability, democracy and rule of law, progress and development.

We will develop this partnership of equals, based on the effective engagement of our societies, in order to achieve significant results in our fundamental commitments, namely: the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals; the establishment of a robust peace and security architecture in Africa; the strengthening of investment, growth and prosperity through regional integration and closer economic ties; the promotion of good governance and human rights; and the creation of opportunities for shaping global governance in an open and multilateral framework.
We are determined to give this new strategic partnership the necessary means and instruments that will enable it to fulfill the Joint Strategy and the Action Plan that we have adopted today, and to do so we have created a comprehensive and effective follow-up mechanism that can deliver on these goals and show us the results on the occasion of the Third Summit that shall be held in 2010.

We believe that this Summit will be remembered as a moment of recognition of maturity and transformation in our continent to continent dialogue, opening new paths and opportunities for collective action for our common future.

Related Document:

**Speech of German Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel at the Convention for Germany**
Berlin, 5 December 2007. Unofficial translation. Link

[Extract]

There are tendencies which point for instance to the creation of a Union of the Mediterranean, which I am very skeptical about. I declare without reservation: the cooperation between some EU member states must remain open to all. Such a form of cooperation between several EU member states must be approved by all.

If we establish such a Union of the Mediterranean, to which only the states bordering on the Mediterranean participate and which are funded by the financial instruments of the EU, then I foresee that others will say: then we should establish a Union of Eastern Europe with Ukraine, which would also benefit from EU funds. This would create a situation which I qualify as dangerous. A situation could be created whereby Germany may be drawn to Central and Eastern Europe and to the Mediterranean. This would create tensions within Europe, which I would not like. It must be clear: responsibility for the Mediterranean must also be shared with a Northern European, in the same vain as the future of the borders of Russia and Ukraine is a matter for those who live by the Mediterranean. If we can no longer summon this strength, then the EU will in my view fail in one of its core areas. The creation of a Union of the Mediterranean could only be a very short-term progress, which in my opinion will not prevail in the long term.

**The Mediterranean region matters to all of us in Europe**
Press release of the press conference of France's President Nicolas Sarkozy's official state visit to Germany
Berlin, 6 December 2007. Link

[Extract]

Stepping up policy on the Mediterranean

Turning to European policy on the Mediterranean, the two heads of state spoke out in favour of closer relations with Mediterranean countries that are not in the EU. “France has a long Mediterranean coastline, we have no Mediterranean coastline”, said Merkel. But this does not mean Germany has no interest in the Mediterranean region, she added.

On the contrary, she said, the region is of utmost importance to peace and stability in Europe. All European countries, she concluded, must be invited to contribute towards closer cooperation with the Mediterranean. “The Mediterranean region matters to all of us in Europe”, the German Chancellor emphasised.

**Andorra and the European Union**
Michael Emerson
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In the second half of the 20th century, the Pyrenean principality of Andorra saw an extraordinary boom, based on tourism, commerce, financial services and real estate, with its population multiplying 14 times, mainly due to immigration. The drivers of this growth were very low taxation and light economic regulation, combined with the attractive mountain environment. It became a sovereign independent state in 1993, remaining outside the European Union politically while enclave within it geographically. Since the turn of the century, the economy is encountering a mounting set of constraints: environmental limits, the erosion of commercial advantages and pressures to apply international fiscal and regulatory standards. This study therefore examines the possible futures for Andorra, in its search for economic sustainability and a sound systemic relationship with the European Union, and the now pressing interdependence between these two questions. For the architects of the EU’s foreign policies, who have to find a consistency in their dealings with all neighbours, large and small, from Russia to Andorra, this is a case study that has significance for the much wider set of very small states and entities around the EU.

**Kosovo and the Principles of Just Secession**
Bruno Coppieters
CEPS Policy Brief, n. 147, December 2007.
Download for free

Kosovo has raised three international debates. Firstly, NATO’s decision in March 1999 to go to war over Kosovo created a deep division within the United Nations. The second debate was about the creation of an international administration for Kosovo and the third is now about the future status of the territory. The six ‘just war’ principles - a just cause, last resort, likelihood of success, proportionality, right intentions and legitimate authority - are traditionally applied to war settings in order to assess the legitimacy of the use of force. They can be also used to answer the question to what extent the Kosovo conflict set a political model for forceful external involvement in a secessionist crisis with severe humanitarian consequences. But these six jus ad bellum principles can also be of heuristic value for dealing with the legitimacy of the creation of an international administration in Kosovo, and with Kosovo’s right to unilateral secession and its recognition by other states.
European Neighbourhood Watch index

Issue 32 • November 2007

- Annapolis Conference
- The Commission’s 2007 enlargement reports
- EU Council Conclusions on the Western Balkans
- Kosovo Assembly Elections
- EU-Serbia Stabilisation and Association Agreement
- European Parliament Resolution on strengthening the ENP
- State of emergency in Georgia
- 9th Euro-Mediterranean Meeting Conclusions
- A ‘Power Audit’ of EU 27-Russia relations
- OSCE 15th Ministerial Council
- Russia attempts to weaken OSCE
- Poland’s post election foreign policy
- CEPS Publications:
  - European Islam: Challenges for Society and Public Policy
  - Political Islam and European Foreign Policy
  - Europe’s External Energy Policy
  - Does Europe need a new missile defence system
- EBRD Transition Report 2007

Issue 31 • October 2007

- CEPS Commentary on EU Reform Treaty: Two for the price of one?
- President Sarkozy speech on Mediterranean Union
- 20th EU-Russia Summit
- Press Statement following the 20th EU-Russia Summit
- EU-Russia Energy Dialogue
- Gazprom on problems of gas supply
- Ukraine elections: What next after the election? ICPS Commentary
- CEPS Policy Brief: Kosovo merits “special status as part of the EU”
- EU External Affairs Council Conclusions on the Western Balkans
- Troika sets out principles for Kosovo talks
- EU External Affairs Council Conclusions on Uzbekistan
- EU External Affairs Council Conclusions on the Middle East Peace Process
- Message from the Palestinian and Israeli Civil Society to the International Conference on the Middle Eastern Conflict
- An open letter and call from Muslim religious leaders to Pope Benedict XVI and leaders of Christian Churches
- CEPS Publication:
  - Fusing Security and Development: Just another Euro-platitude?
- Gallup International and ECFR London poll: Europe is the world’s most popular global power
- Corruption Perception & Press Freedom in EU new member states, ENP countries, Russia and Central Asia

Issue 30 • September 2007

- Meeting of “New Group of Friends of Georgia”
- EU-Ukraine Summit Joint Statement
- Speeches of EU ENP Conference
- Eubarometer on EU’s relations with its neighbours
- Let the sane of Saudi Arabia unite
- Do not undermine moderate Islamists
- CEPS Paperback: Evaluating the EU’s crisis missions in the Balkans
- Poll on Hamas’ military takeover in Gaza?
- Poll on Dwinding Muslim support for Terrorism
- Poll: Transatlantic Trends 2007 NATO response to Russian CFE Treaty suspension

Issue 29 • July 2007

- Russian Decree on suspending CFE Treaty participation
- NATO response to Russian CFE Treaty suspension
- EU response to Russian CFE Treaty suspension
- Putin’s speech at the Balkans Energy Cooperation Summit
- UK-Russia relations: Litvinenko case and Lugovoy extradition
- EP recommendation on EU-Ukraine enhanced agreement
- EU External Relations Council Conclusions on Ukraine
- Poll on Ukrainian legislative elections
- EU declaration on Nagorno-Karabakh “presidential elections”
- EU External Relations Council Conclusions on the Middle East Peace Process
- Poll on Hamas’ military takeover in Gaza?
- Poll on Dwinding Muslim support for Terrorism
- Poll: Transatlantic Trends 2007 NATO response to Russian CFE Treaty suspension

Issue 28 • June 2007

- Strengthening the ENP
- EU-Central Asia: Strategy for a new Partnership
- Portuguese Presidency Priorities
- EU Progress Reports on Buglaria and Romania
- Global Corruption Report 2007
- EU-Georgia
- Palestine
- CEPS publications:
  - ‘Union of Mediterranean’
  - Readings in European Security, Volume 4
  - A Transatlantic perspective on European Neighbourhood
  - Political Islam in Syria
  - Political Islam in Morocco
  - Tajikistan and the EU

Issue 30 • September 2007

- Poll on Ukrainian legislative elections
- EU declaration on Nagorno-Karabakh “presidential elections”
- EU External Relations Council Conclusions on Ukraine
- Poll on Hamas’ military takeover in Gaza?
- Poll on Dwinding Muslim support for Terrorism
- Poll: Transatlantic Trends 2007 NATO response to Russian CFE Treaty suspension

Issue 28 • June 2007

- Strengthening the ENP
- EU-Central Asia: Strategy for a new Partnership
- Portuguese Presidency Priorities
- EU Progress Reports on Buglaria and Romania
- Global Corruption Report 2007
- EU-Georgia
- Palestine
- CEPS publications:
  - ‘Union of Mediterranean’
  - Readings in European Security, Volume 4
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  - Political Islam in Syria
  - Political Islam in Morocco
  - Tajikistan and the EU