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# Kazakhstan and OSCE: How Relations Developed

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The relations between Kazakhstan and OSCE (the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) have been rapidly developing since the moment Kazakhstan became one of its members in 1992. Kazakhstan has always been distinguished as a country aspiring toward taking an active part in the all-European processes that allow developing and using in practice the principles stipulated in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975\* [1].

At the initial stage of the development of the relations between Kazakhstan and OSCE, the joint activities were focused on informational and practical exchanges that promoted the accomplishment of appropriate reforms at the time of the development of market economy, strengthening the regional security and developing an open civil society.

Signing a series of documents, such as the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Kazakhstan and OSCE, the agreement on opening the OSCE Center in Almaty in January 1999 helped to strengthen the cooperation between the Republic of Kazakhstan and OSCE. Since February 2003, in conformity with the Memorandum with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)/OSCE, the realization of projects dealing with the improvement of the institution of Ombudsman, elective legislation, and the reforming of the judicial system, has started in Kazakhstan.

A new stage in the development of the relations between Kazakhstan and OSCE began in 2003, when Kazakhstan proposed the country's chairmanship in OSCE, preliminary for the year 2009. For the next four years, Kazakhstan had been consistently focused on the realization of its initiative. Active processes of political reforming and strengthening of civil society had begun in the country.

Since 2004, Kazakhstan has become a member of the group of countries involved in the reformation of OSCE. The participation of Kazakhstan's representatives played an important role in strengthening the image of the country, whose opinion is taken into account when important decisions on the increasing of OSCE's efficiency are made. In December 2005, Mr. Tokayev, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, spoke at the

OSCE Ministry of Foreign Affairs summit in Ljubljana. At the meeting, he expressed the position of the Republic of Kazakhstan in relation to the reformation of the organization, announced the results of the presidential election, and confirmed Kazakhstan's initiative concerning the chairmanship in OSCE in 2009 [2].

The OSCE Conference on Tolerance titled 'Inter-Cultural, Inter-Religious and Inter-Ethnic Understanding' was held in Astana, in June 2006. Mr. de Brichambaut, OSCE Secretary General, Mr. Chevalier, Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Mr. Strohal, ODIHR Director, and Mr. Ekeus, OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, all took part in the work of the conference. In his speech at the conference, Mr. Nazarbayev, the President of Kazakhstan, clearly defined the aims of Kazakhstan's chairmanship in OSCE:

– In view of the general political situation in Central Asia, Kazakhstan is ready to guarantee a genuine and long-term regional safety;

– Kazakhstan, having a vast positive experience of inter-ethnic and inter-confessional accord in its history, is aiming at the further development of the dialog between civilizations, acting as a bridge between the West and the East;

– Kazakhstan is adhering to democratic modernization of its political system and, as an active OSCE participant, is intending to strengthen the potential of the organization that pays the greatest attention to the interests of its member countries [3].

The year of 2007 became particularly significant in the relations between Kazakhstan and OSCE. Now in accordance with the new legislation, amendments were made to the Constitution and to the electoral legislation. Parliamentary election was also held. Since 2007, Kazakhstan delegations have been taking an active part in the work of the OSCE Permanent Council, in the Forums for Security Co-operation, in the conferences of the Economic Forum and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, and in ODIHR seminars.

Mr. Moratinos, OSCE Chairman-in-Office and Spanish Foreign Minister, visited Kazakhstan in April 2007. Working meetings with Mr. Nazarbayev, as well as with the chairmen of the Senate and Majilis of the Parliament,

\* The Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe was signed in Helsinki on August 1, 1975. It contains ten principles defining the behavior of the states towards each other and their own citizens: I. Sovereign equality, respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty; II. Refraining from the threat or use of force; III. Inviolability of frontiers; IV. Territorial integrity of States; V. Peaceful settlement of disputes; VI. Non-intervention in internal affairs; VII. Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief; VIII. Equal rights and self-determination of peoples; IX. Cooperation among States; X. Fulfillment in good faith of obligations under international law // [www.osce.org](http://www.osce.org)



took place during the visit. The questions of cooperation between Kazakhstan, OSCE and Spain, Kazakhstan's application for the OSCE chairmanship in 2009, as well as the social and political situation in the country and in the Central Asian region in general were all discussed at the negotiations.

In May 2007, the representatives of the official delegation of Kazakhstan spoke at the three working conferences on the development of civil society and democratic institutions, the ensuring of the supremacy of law, the freedom of speech and mass media, the freedom of religion, the rights of national minorities, and the ensuring of equal rights for women.

As part of the work of the Economic and Environmental Forum, the Kazakh delegation suggested uniting the European and Asian development processes into a single Eurasian process, as well as holding the 3d World Summit on Sustainable Development in Kazakhstan.

In July 2007, Mr. Yertysbayev, the Minister of Culture and Information, in his speech at the conference of the OSCE Permanent Council, reported about the main aspects of the reforms in the sector of mass media and the improvement of legislation in the field of mass media.

In November 2007, the Kazakh delegation headed by Mr. Tazhin, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, took part in the work of the regular 15<sup>th</sup> OSCE Ministerial Council in Madrid. To achieve consensus on the application of Kazakhstan for chairmanship in the organization was one of the key questions of the agenda of this conference. Following the talks, an agreement on the chairmanship of Kazakhstan in OSCE in 2010 was reached. Moreover, compliance with any political criteria was omitted from the resolution of Ministerial Council [4].

The resolution about the chairmanship is to a large extent an acknowledgement of Kazakhstan's achievements in terms of reforming of the political system and development of liberal market economy. The consensus resolution of the OSCE member countries is based on the acknowledgement of the successfulness of the country's domestic and foreign policies, which are aimed at political stability in the region.

That Kazakhstan's candidacy was supported by the organization member countries became an unprecedented case in the history of OSCE. It will be for the first time that a country situated mainly in Asia becomes an active chairman. From the data given in Table 1, we may draw a conclusion that representatives of Western Europe, members of, or candidates for, European Union prevailed among the chairmen of OSCE before. No CIS country had taken any such initiative earlier.

The positive resolution about the chairmanship of Kazakhstan confirmed the equality of all the member countries of the organization in practice.

In general, the status of the OSCE chairman will help Kazakhstan to strengthen its positions as a subject of international relations. At present, Kazakhstan has the experience of chairmanship in such regional organizations as the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC), and Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA). The problems of Central Asia are a key part of the organization, and attracting OSCE member countries' attention to them as part of the ensuring of security and cooperation is able to change the process of its transformation considerably.

The post of the chairman-in-office has been occupied by Ilkka Kanerva (Finland) since January 1, 2008. Kazakhstan

Table 1

## Acting chairmen of OSCE (1991-2008)

| Year of chairmanship | Chairman country | Minister of Foreign Affairs,<br>Chairman-in-Office |
|----------------------|------------------|--|
| 2008                 | Finland          | Ilkka Kanerva                                      |
| 2007                 | Spain            | Migel Angel Moratinos                              |
| 2006                 | Belgium          | Karel de Guht                                      |
| 2005                 | Slovenia         | Dimitrij Rupel                                     |
| 2004                 | Bulgaria         | Solomon Pasi                                       |
| 2003                 | Netherlands      | Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, Bernard Rudolf Bot          |
| 2002                 | Portugal         | Jaime Gama, Antonio Martins da Cruz                |
| 2001                 | Romania          | Mircea Dan Geoana                                  |
| 2000                 | Austria          | Wolfgang Schüssel, Benita Ferrero-Waldner          |
| 1999                 | Norway           | Knut Vollebaek                                     |
| 1998                 | Poland           | Bronislav Geremek                                  |
| 1997                 | Denmark          | Niels Helveg Petersen                              |
| 1996                 | Switzerland      | Flavio Cotti                                       |
| 1995                 | Hungary          | Laszlo Kovac                                       |
| 1994                 | Italy            | Beniamino Andreatta, Antonio Martino               |
| 1993                 | Sweden           | Margaretha af Ugglas                               |
| 1992                 | Czechoslovakia   | Jiri Dienstbier, Josef Moravcik                    |
| 1991                 | Germany          | Hans-Dietrich Genscher                             |

received a proposal to take part in the work of the three chairmen, beginning from this year, to define OSCE long-term programs together [5]. On the initiative of Finland, Kazakhstan was proposed to head the OSCE Economic and Environmental Committee, which is aimed at solving urgent tasks of economic and environmental development of the member countries of the organization. The work in this committee is of paramount importance to Kazakhstan and other countries of Central Asia, as it is focused on the problems of strengthening of the economies and transit and transport potential of the landlocked countries.

Thus, Kazakhstan has already entered the structures of OSCE, and has started working there at a period of development that is not easy for the organization. Since 2003, the main priorities of their activity for the alternating chairmen-in-office were: the reforming of OSCE; the overcoming of regional conflicts; the struggle with terrorism, drug and human trafficking; the assistance in democratic processes; the consolidation of tolerance and the freedom of religion.

In the period of its chairmanship in OSCE, Kazakhstan intends to move in the same direction, concentrating the activity of the organization on maintaining stability in the region of Central Asia, which will help to strengthen security through the whole OSCE area.

Taking urgent measures to carry out social and economic programs in Afghanistan, strengthening economic links between the countries of Central Asia, developing transport and transit communications in the region of Central Asia and introducing rational use of water and energy resources, are the spheres in which OSCE has practical experience.

The chairmanship of Kazakhstan in OSCE confirms the main principle of the organization, which is the equality of all its members and an interest in the stable development of all its member countries. A new comprehensive approach to the security is a positive potential of OSCE. This approach implies creating a global Eurasian security system and developing the Asian sector of cooperation.

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# Pressing Security Problems in Central Asia

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Central Asia is proactively integrating into the modern system of global political and economic relations. With the development of technology, transportation and infrastructure, the Central Asian countries are increasingly assuming greater importance as a bridge between the West and the East, European and Asian markets. However, some experts, such as Professor Talipov from the Tashkent University, do not approve of this function of a linking bridge. Speaking at the conference 'Central Asia—China: from Geopolitics to Partnership' held on June 4-5, 2008 at the Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies, the Uzbek expert noted that the countries of Central Asia are the 'dwarfs' compared with the neighboring giants—Russia and China—and they do not want these giants to trample over them.

Today the Central Asia region is becoming more responsible for global and regional security assurance, which implies on the one hand the coordinated efforts of the Central Asian states, and on the other, the strengthened partner relations with extra-regional players to prevent the traditional and non-traditional threats and challenges.

In its foreign policy Kazakhstan attaches great importance to the development of mutually beneficial relations with the countries of Central Asia and seeking ways to make the region an independent and equal international actor. This attitude arises from the historically close political, economic, ethnic, confessional and cultural ties between the peoples of this region, as well as from today's common objectives for integration into the world community and increasing the countries' national competitiveness. Given the international state of affairs as well as the tough market competition, Central Asia must place top priority on the development of regional cooperation, political modernization, and continuation of market reforms.

The major trends in the Kazakh foreign policy summarized below are crucial for the social and political stability and economic growth in the region which form the basis for preserved regional security:

- developing the efficient regional and national security system, and facilitating conflict management in the potential conflict zones of the cross-border states, particularly in Afghanistan;
- preserving political and macroeconomic stability, and sustainability of the national political systems in the region, through strengthening of the democracy institutions, social and economic development, and enhancing the quality of life of the people; and

- overcoming geographical closedness and geopolitical peripherality, proactive integration of the Central Asia nations into the global trade and economy relations, and adapting the national economic models to the global market mechanisms.

The global problems did not blow over for Central Asia. The contradictory globalization processes, openness of the borders for international communication and growing interdependence bring new problems to the region. A number of non-traditional threats such as international terrorism and religious extremism, drugs and arms smuggling, illegal migration, and human trafficking are now the challenges facing Central Asia as well. These factors, threatening the countries' sustainable development, stem primarily from the region's vicinity to the instability of, and conflict zones in, Afghanistan, as well as in the Middle and Near East.

The current social and economic situation in Afghanistan and the resultant trans-border threats are causing a particular concern. As a result of the long-lasting wars, shattered economy and low living standards, the illegal production of drugs has become perhaps the only means of earning a living for the Afghan people.

Today Afghanistan is the main supplier of drugs to the world. With a view to increasing the illegal trafficking through Central Asia the international criminal groups are interested in slackening and weakening the state systems in the way of transit, and promote radical and extremist political groups. These factors create an auspicious environment for illegal trade of small arms and explosives, corruption, and money laundering. Unless this problem is eradicated today it will pose a threat of degradation not only to the adjacent countries but to modern civilization as a whole.

Situated at the geopolitical crossroads between Europe and Asia, Kazakhstan takes the appropriate measures to counter the drug trafficking on its territory.

Problems also exist inside the region. The political and economic reformation brings about certain difficulties for the countries of Central Asia. Over the period of reforms Kazakhstan has managed to attract investments, sustain and enhance its production capacity, though it has not overcome the raw material orientation of its economy. Meantime the other countries in the region have had a slower economic growth rate, for various reasons. Unresolved poverty and unemployment problems lead to large flows of labor migration which is so far not being properly regulated on the legal level.



The labor migration problems in Kazakhstan and Central Asia are to not only to be considered as to how they correlate with economic issues but also in their regard to social, political and cultural aspects. According to the World Bank report, Kazakhstan is ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in the list of the countries receiving labor migrants.

The migration regulation in Kazakhstan is targeted to ensure sustainable social economic and demographic development, strengthen the national security, and meet the growing economy needs in labor force. This requires efficient control of the migration flows and rational placement of the migrants within the territory of the country, as well as the realization of their intellectual and labor potential. All this will be possible only by combining efforts and relying on the interstate bilateral and multilateral agreements between the neighboring countries.

Interethnic and interdenominational contradictions are another key regional problem. To date the threat for the regional and national security arising from interrelations between the different ethnic groups and religious trends has been localized but, given the historically diverse composition of the population in Central Asia, this issue remains very significant.

Along with political initiative and economic measures, Kazakhstan exercises significant efforts to promote tolerant attitudes between various peoples, cultures and religions. This approach has proved its efficiency in the process of development of our multicultural state. The permanent dialogue platform and public political institutions for representatives of all ethnic groups and persuasions have contributed to the high level of mutual understanding in Kazakh society.

Another serious issue for the region is the balanced use of trans-border water resources and preservation of the basin ecosystems. The solution of water management issues between Kazakhstan and Central Asian countries is a key objective for both today and in the longer term.

The above problems affecting the national and regional security clearly demonstrate that, given the increasing globalization and deepening of the international division of labor it would be inefficient to place weight only on the traditional policy of supporting the national economy of an individual country. It is getting more and more difficult to handle the severe competition of the global market alone.

To keep up with global development, Kazakhstan has been initiating regional integration projects during a number of years. Unfortunately the resultant regional structures (Central Asia Union, 1994; Central Asian Economic Forum, 2001; Organization for Central Asian Cooperation, 2002) have not brought about any positive outcomes.

Meanwhile, the Central Asian nations face the problems that need to be addressed jointly. Above all, these include neutralization of international terrorism, religious extremism, drug trafficking, transnational organized crime, illegal migration, and arms smuggling.

The external pressure upon the countries is getting more severe—a negative aftermath of rivalry for the influence between global and regional powers.

The need for integration of Central Asia is determined by the following factors:

1) Interdependency of Central Asian countries in creating external and internal conditions to preserve the sovereignty and stability. The region being a neighbor to

the current power centers determines its significance in the military and strategic, transport and communication respects. This fact explains the increased attention of the major world and regional powers to each country of Central Asia and to the entire region. With the raised competition of the external players in Central Asia becoming a potential destabilization factor, all the countries in the region should be interested in eliminating this threat.

2) The emerging challenges and threats such as transnational terrorism, religious extremism, drug and arms trafficking, and international crime, all having a trans-border nature, call for a coordinated response. The situation in Afghanistan is especially worrisome for Central Asia.

3) The interdependency of the economies and the need for unification of the water and energy resources. Over the decades a single energy system was applied in the region with hydropower sector being dominant for Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and gas supply for Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

4) Ensuring food security and, first of all, seeking mutual deliveries of agriculture products, primarily of crops, fruit and vegetables.

5) Organization of a single transport and communications system, and joint utilization of transit capacity.

6) Profound communication interdependency in accessing international markets. The internal Central Asian markets, taken separately, are too narrow to provide for normal economic growth and attract foreign investors (excepting investors' export interest as regards natural resources).

7) General transit-oriented nature of the countries' development, the need for stable political regimes, competitive economies, advanced research potential, and achievement of social and economic prosperity, and environmental well-being on this basis.

8) Environmental non-sustainability. As a result of extensive use, the reproduction potential of the natural resources has been considerably damaged. Additional security risks include the high seismic activity whose consequences can be managed only by joint forces.

9) Transboundary river resources management. The resolution of this problem is critical to the sustainable development of the region since the social and economic as well as environmental situation in Central Asia is largely dependent on the fair distribution and sustainable management of the water resources.

10) Fair and final settlement of controversial territory and border related issues;

Alongside this, one cannot help but notice the barriers to regional integration:

- different levels of social and economic development and economic modernization models;

- immaturity of infrastructure and weakness of economic ties;

- ambitious attitudes of the political elites, with the priorities given to the immediate interests, and inconsistent political modernization.

Due to these factors and despite the repeated high-level declarations of the countries' interest in the joint efforts in addressing regional issues, the region has not seen their practical implementation.

These factors, along with the failure to launch integration projects in Central Asia, bring the experts to doubt the adequacy of the countries' economic and political



development to the integration expectations. The uniqueness, rather than universality, of the European integration experience has been emphasized<sup>1</sup>. Therefore it is proposed to replace the integration ideology and develop new approaches and trends to create an integration complex with efficient international and supranational structures for interaction in different fields.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, the objectives that the Central Asian states are facing now are about development of an optimal system for regional integration.

In this respect the idea of the Central Asia Union put forward by the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev in his annual address to the people of Kazakhstan on February 18, 2005<sup>3</sup> looks promising. When laying out this initiative President Nazarbayev highlighted, "Now we have to make a choice: to remain an eternal raw resources appendix to the world economy and wait for the next empire to come, or venture upon the serious integration of the Central Asian region. I propose the latter. Our further integration is a way to stability and progress of the region, to the economic, military and political independence. Only in this way will the region gain the respect of the world. This is the only way for us to ensure security and efficiently counteract terrorism and extremism. Finally, this alliance would meet the interests of simple people living in our region."<sup>4</sup>

The proposed initiative to set up the Central Asia Union is justified by the following factors:

- geopolitical and geo-economic possibilities for the coordinated protection of common interests on the international level will increase. In principle it will pave the way for Central Asia to come to the global arena as an independent and self-sufficient actor;
- promoting Central Asian interests in the global and regional international association and organizations, such as the UN, OSCE, CIS, EurAsEC, SCTO, SCO, etc., as a result of a single view of the countries on issues;
- coordination of the efforts of the Central Asian states to jointly deal with the regional and national security issues, including non-conventional challenges (drugs and arms trafficking, illegal migration, human trafficking);
- possibility of addressing regional problems (water and energy related issues, setting-up complete technology cycles and externally competitive clusters) through development of intraregional cooperation, without or with minimum involvement of external actors;
- stable foreign policy at the borders of Central Asia will contribute to internal sustainable development;
- enhanced possibilities for the countries' economies through expanded transit potential, simplified access to the markets of South Asia and Middle East, elimination of labor deficit; and
- strengthening of energy, food, demographic and environmental security.

The fact that the Central Asia integration project is initiated by Kazakhstan is due to the following:

- high levels of openness in the Kazakh economy;
- thinness of the internal Kazakh market for further economic development;
- interest in securing water supply of the southern regions of the country;
- interest in securing national security primarily by stabilizing the social and political and economic situation in the neighboring countries; and
- lack of access to sea transport communications.

A trust mode between the states of Central Asia must serve as the crucial precondition for the regional integration. We are talking of the *integrofobia* which is the case for some political elites of some of the states of the region. It is necessary to convince them that the integration in no way threatens the national sovereignty and is aimed exclusively at achievement of mutual economic benefits. Furthermore, with the economies of the region interacting efficiently the political systems of the Central Asian states will grow more stable before the contemporary challenges and threats.

The idea of multi-speed integration into the union is the most practical direction towards implementing the Central Asia Union project as it will provide for the different degree of readiness of the Central Asian nations to accept the Kazakh initiative. The most optimal variant is conclusion of bilateral agreements between Kazakhstan and the countries of Central Asia with their further unification into a single multilateral treaty.

There has been a positive experience in this field already. During the last-year visits of the presidents of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to Bishkek and Astana respectively, the bilateral documents on formation of the Interstate Council and Council of Foreign Ministers of these countries were signed. President of Kyrgyzstan Kurmanbek Bakiyev announced his support to the CAU project while visiting Astana in April 2008.

On May 12, 2008, while making an official visit to Kazakhstan the President of Tajikistan Emomali Rakhmon and President Nazarbayev reached an agreement to set up the Interstate Coordination Council of Kazakhstan and Tajikistan as well as the Foreign Ministers Council. Nazarbayev and Rakhmon spoke in favor of the soonest adoption of the Blueprint for the Efficient Use of Water and Energy Resources of the Central Asia Region and establishing the water and energy consortium.

The countries' willingness to proceed to the creation of the Central Asian emergency prevention and recovery center is indicative of the converging positions of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. On February 26, 2008, the first meeting on the establishment of the center was held in Almaty with the support of the Regional UN Representative.

Just like the other Central Asian states Kazakhstan is interested in the development of a fair and efficient framework of international security. And here lies a need for international fora to determine the rules of the game in the changing international relations. For Central Asia such fora can be the various international regional organizations existing within the CIS and Central Asia, namely, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia (CICA). Though the scope of these regional entities normally comprises a variety of issues, the security aspects are an integral part of their activities, while being the priority ones for CSTO, SCO and CICA.

Being proactively involved in the international organizations fighting the traditional and global challenges, Kazakhstan stresses the need for regional and international cooperation. The international community positively responds to the initiatives of establishing permanent mechanisms for constraint and prevention of traditional and new threats, where Kazakhstan's contribution is not



a small one. The global community supported the Kazakh president's idea on convening the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia.

The Collective Security Treaty Organization is progressively assuming greater responsibility in conferring regional security. Within the CSTO, Russia and the countries of Central Asia pursue military and technical cooperation, military training and organize joint exercises for prevention of terrorist acts and armed gangs' intrusion.

Thus, attention is increasingly being focused on deepening of cooperation of CSTO, EurAsEC, SCO and CICA with other international organizations and communities such as the EU, OSCE and NATO. In this context the special EU strategy on Central Asia elaborated in Brussels in a partnership with the countries of the region can serve as a practical tool for development of cooperation with

the European Union. The strategy is targeted to step up the EU activities including in the field of security.

The close cooperation between the region and the European Union will contribute to qualitative changes in the regional security system. More specifically Kazakhstan's chairmanship in the OSCE in 2010 will enable us to draw the attention of the world community to those pressing problems that both Kazakhstan and whole Central Asia are facing now. The crucial points of the interregional interaction, through involvement of Kazakhstan in the all-European entities, implies attracting of the resources and best practices of the European countries in implementation of social reforms, economic and environmental programmes, as well as the optimal correlation of the political liberalization standards in the countries of Central Asia with the OSCE standards.

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# Current Tendencies in the Development of CICA

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In contemporary international relations the tendency towards globalization is becoming stronger, which brings about new forms of cooperation between countries. This is particularly true when the questions of ensuring of global security, of the struggle with international terrorism and extremism, prevention of the global ecological catastrophe and rational use of natural resources are concerned. The increasing interdependence between the subjects of global policy, the widening and deepening of mutual relations between various national and supranational institutions are dictated by the necessity to sustain a balance in the contemporary international system.

Globalization obliges the participants to act within the limits of a singular political, economic, informational and legal space. The aggravation of the most complex problems of today, which involve vital interests of individual countries and the whole international community, has become one of the negative results of this phenomenon [1]. In order to solve the emerging global problems, the leading regional states and world power centers must combine their efforts. Therefore, the implementation of such initiatives as the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) can stimulate the process of strengthening of stability and the process of elimination of today's challenges and threats.

The idea to convene a forum to discuss the issues of peace and security in Asia was first presented by Nursultan Nazarbayev, the President of Kazakhstan, at the 47<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly in October 1992. Dialogue and cooperation in a stable and safe environment is the only way that would allow the countries of the Asian region to take advantage of globalization. Therefore, the CICA's principal task is to create an Asian security system that would become universal for all the countries of the region [2].

The international community, as well as the member states of CICA, have strongly supported the initiative proposed by Kazakhstan. One of the reasons why it was universally approved is that no regional, religious, military or political principles and ambitions served as the basis for this forum. This broadens considerably the circle of questions for the subsequent cooperation between the members of the conference. In addition, it was stated that the norms of the UN and the principles of international law were strictly followed and voluntarily accomplished, which makes CICA a universally recognized structure.

That the organization could unite the countries having strong contradictions with one another is justly considered its special achievement. This enables CICA to act as a serious forum to make contacts between countries.

On its way to becoming an international structure CICA got through the stages of negotiations and preliminary work, from the annual meetings at the level of foreign policy office representatives in the format of Special Working Groups (SWG) and Senior Official Committees (SOC) to the First Ministerial Meeting of the conference member states that took place in Almaty on September 14, 1999. This ministerial meeting laid the foundation for the further development of the forum by approving the Declaration on the Principles Guiding Relations among the CICA Member States.

The first summit of the heads of states and governments of the CICA members that was held in Almaty on June 4, 2002, gave official birth to the organization. Delegations from 16 countries, including Russia, China, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, India, Israel, Palestine and the countries of Central Asia confirmed the aspiration for creating a multilateral forum aiming at a more profound cooperation to ensure peace, security and stability in Asia. The Almaty Act and the CICA Declaration on Eliminating Terrorism and Promoting Dialogue among Civilizations, which designated paramount questions of cooperation within the conference, resulted from the meeting. Having defined a range of responsibilities and priorities, the heads of states and governments showed their desire to further maintain political cooperation between the member states, as well as their economic integration. Thus, the forum united countries with different political and economic systems, civilizational structure and cultural traditions, as well as countries which were in the state of confrontation at that time.

The adoption of the CICA Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures (CBM Catalogue), which confirmed the principles of implementation of confidence-building measures (CBMs), has become a landmark in the process of formation of the foundation of the organization. The adoption of this document at the Second Ministerial Meeting in Almaty on October 22, 2004 showed that the states wanted to follow not only the traditional interpretation of CBMs in use since the time of the Cold War, but to broaden the limits of cooperation considerably.

It should be noted that the CBM Catalogue contains five dimensions for the implementation of CBMs: 1)



military and political; 2) resistance to new challenges and threats; 3) economic; 4) environmental; and 5) humanitarian [3]. Taking into account the specific character of contemporary international relations, combined social and economic efforts are no less important for the CICA members, than cooperation in the military and political field. Of the five dimensions developed under the CICA CBM Catalogue, the closest attention has been paid to the resistance to new challenges and threats, and to the environmental, social and humanitarian aspects. The diversity of the CICA members was the reason why these chosen areas were given top priority. That is why the strengthening of the relations between the forum member states has been developing in parallel with the application of CBMs in the social arena, where the problems have global significance.

From the moment it was launched, CICA has continued to create effective mechanisms for cooperation and the accomplishment of CBMs between the member states. The creation of the Conference Secretariat pursuant to the resolution adopted at the CICA Second Summit in June 2006 became an important event for the formation of the forum's legal framework. The Conference Secretariat received the status of a permanent administrative body and was accredited to Almaty. The creation of the governing institution of the organization allowed it to coordinate its members' actions for working out the mechanisms of implementation of CBMs. This was followed by the adoption of the Cooperative Approach to the Implementation of the CICA CBMs during the SOC conference in Bangkok, in March 2007.

The work of experts at the Special Meeting in Tehran in 2007 who developed the Concept Paper on Cooperation among CICA Member States in Combating Illicit Drug Production and Trafficking and Precursors was highly praised at the Third Ministerial Meeting of the CICA member states that was held in Almaty on August 25, 2008. In addition to the above work, the experts made conclusions related to ten themed pilot projects, as well as about the struggle with new challenges and threats, which were discussed at the meetings in Astana on June 27 and 28, 2007 and in Ankara on January 31 and February 1, 2008 respectively. These conclusions indicate that CICA has entered a new level of its development [5]. Currently, to create practical recommendation for accomplishing the principles laid in the basic documents of the forum is the most important task for the CICA member states.

At the present stage CICA has achieved a certain success in developing conceptual principles, legal basis and administrative procedures, which are necessary for the effective work of the forum. This allows the conference to enter the next stage of its evolution, which includes a direct implementation of CBMs, expressed in the CICA CBM Catalogue, in conformity with the principles stipulated in the Cooperative Approach to the Implementation of the CICA CBMs. The initiatives confirmed in the basic concepts of the activity of the organization will be carried out according to the developed and confirmed plans on each of the directions of the CBM implementation. It should be noted that by now the concept papers and action plans on the CICA CBM implementation in the humanitarian dimension presented by Kazakhstan have been adopted. Seven countries—Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Korea, Russia, Tajikistan and Turkey—which had earlier showed their goodwill to become coordinator states, made

presentations on the implementation of the CBMs they chose. India showed its desire to become coordinator together with the Republic of Korea and Azerbaijan in the implementation of CBMs on cooperation in the issues of energy security and development of safe and effective transport corridors accordingly. Iran and Afghanistan are working on the issues of drug control, as well as national control in case of emergencies. Israel proposed to share its advanced experience in administering water resources, agriculture, new technologies, control over natural catastrophes and crises. Israel also showed its readiness to hold seminars focused on one or several of the areas mentioned above [4]. The area of cooperation and development of small business is under the patronage of Russia and Israel. Mongolia is a coordinator of the issues of ecology, while Tajikistan chose cooperation in tourism as its principal field of activity.

At the present stage CICA is strengthening its positions in the global arena. It should be noted that the forum won recognition among the majority of the countries of the Asian continent. The idea of CICA has always been popular in Southeast Asia, where countries increasingly demonstrate their aspiration for economic and subsequent political integration through international unions. In 2004, at the Second Ministerial Meeting, Thailand joined CICA as a full member, Malaysia and Sri Lanka as observers, and in 2006, at the second summit of heads of states and governments the Republic of Korea joined the forum. These events are a visual proof that the countries of the Asia-Pacific region are interested in creating a single and integral space of security in Asia. In addition, the Middle East shows interest in the development of the CICA process. Thus, the United Arab Emirates and Jordan expressed their desire to join the conference as full members, and Qatar will be involved in the CICA process as an observer. The official entry of the new members took place at the Third Ministerial Meeting in August 2008.

It should also be noted that the increase in the number of the participants has broadened the area for the implementation of the measures under the auspices of CICA. The SOC conference was held in Bangkok in March 2007, and the SWG meetings that followed it were held in Tehran and Ankara. These as well as SOC and SWG meetings held in Seoul in June 2008 indicate the increase in political weight of CICA. Previously Kazakhstan was the main organizer of all the regular meetings of the forum, but now the member states hold the CICA conferences in their own countries that correlate to the directions of CBM implementation they chose. Therefore, a circle of the most active conference participants has emerged. The circle unites the established forum project coordinators in the social and economic dimensions.

In the context of modern realities, it is clear that CICA has acquired a reputation as an authoritative dialogue forum in the international arena. Having passed the stage of formation, CICA has a primary task of continuing to work out normative and legal documents that would make it possible to activate mechanisms of implementation of CBMs, which are reflected in the CICA CBM Catalogue. Apart from the direct implementation of the forum's initiatives, CICA wants to broaden its relations with international organizations. Internationally recognized structures like the UN, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the League of Arab States are already acting as observers within CICA; and



at the 62<sup>nd</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly on November 12, 2007, it was decided to give the conference the status of observer under the UN. The necessity to further broaden the cooperation with international organizations was designated in the Guidelines for CICA's External Relations, which were adopted by the CICA SOC on March 14, 2007. Acting in accordance with the principles laid at the basis of this document, the CICA develops its international relations with a number of international and regional organizations and forums to strengthen the security, stability and peace in the geographical area of the conference.

Signing the memorandums of understanding with the Eurasian Economic Community (EURASEC), the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) at the Third Ministerial Meeting of the CICA member states held on August 25, 2008 was an important step in this direction. The memorandums of understanding with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) are currently under consideration. In the present conditions the conference organizes its political, economic and diplomatic resources so that it could complement the activity of international regional institutions similar in their purposes and tasks, such as the SCO, OSCE, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Asia Cooperation Dialogue and so on.

The creation of the CICA Secretariat in 2006 made it much more possible to organize and ensure regular meetings and political consultations, as well as other activities of the forum. Therefore, to make the work of the secretariat more effective is one of the conference's priorities at this stage of its evolution. To carry out the designated purpose, the member states of the CICA process will have to continue working on the documentary legalization of the secretariat officials' status, which must be defined by the Convention on the Legal Capacity of the CICA Secretariat, its Personnel and their Privileges and Immunities. In addition, at the last ministerial meeting, the CICA member states signed the Protocol Amending the Statute of the CICA Secretariat, which provided for moving the headquarters of the conference from Almaty to Astana. This was done to ensure more favorable conditions for the work of the Secretariat with the diplomatic missions and offices of international organizations, accredited in Kazakhstan [6]. As a result, the question is being raised about forming an annual budget of the CICA Secretariat and financing the whole organization, as, according to the Financial Rules of the CICA Secretariat, the financial support for the functioning of the structure involves voluntary contributions. Currently, the budget of the CICA Secretariat is formed by voluntary contributions from Azerbaijan, China, Iran, Israel, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Pakistan and Turkey. Attracting new countries to the budget forming process will make it possible to increase the potential of the administrative body of the conference.

Therefore, CICA enters the stage of transferring from creating an international legal base and basic norms of functioning of the forum to the practical implementation of the formed principles of cooperation between states, as well as CBMs worked out by coordinator states in the areas they had chosen.

However, together with the positive results CICA has achieved in its work, there still are a number of difficulties, which do not allow the organization to realize its full potential. Going forward from one stage of the conference formation to a next, the forum encounters various difficulties, both objective and inherent only in this structure. Thus, time factor should be treated as an objective problem, as the ideas of CBM Catalogue could be actually brought to life only after the Cooperative Approach to the Implementation of the CICA CBMs was adopted in 2007. In its turn, the forum's administrative body, the Secretariat, has been functioning since 2006. The time it has taken CICA to the practical accomplishment of the designed plans has been relatively short, which makes it difficult to talk about a full-scale achievement of definite results. In addition, the members of CICA are diverse; the differences in economic potential, social, cultural and civilization spheres of the member states lie in its basis. The CICA member states have different political priorities, which cannot help but influence the functionality of the forum in the end.

There are difficulties at the stage of transferring to the practical implementation of the adopted normative and legal documents, including concept papers and CBM action plans in various directions. This, together with the fact that the list of CBM project coordinators has not yet been finally drawn, makes the work of the conference ever more difficult. This fact indicates that CICA does not cover the full range of activities it is interested in and it can partly be explained by the lack of activity on the part of some members of the conference. The disproportionate representation of different member states in the CICA administrative body is a good evidence of this. The circle of representatives of the member states is confined to India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Russia and Turkey.

The tasks that CICA has begun to resolve are to be accomplished over a long period. However, they require regular consultations and high-level meetings between the member states of the forum. Nevertheless, intervals between the summits and ministerial meetings are four and two years respectively. This is a considerable pause in the process of forming the conference's normative and legal bases and it to some degree limits the ability to control the process of practical implementation of initiatives.

In general, it should be noted that the main task of CICA is to ensure dialogue and cooperation between the member states of the forum. The contemporary geopolitical picture of the world changes very rapidly. The existing trends clearly show that the process of creating a new world order is underway. Such changes cannot be strengthened by one global centre. In these conditions CICA is finding its second wind [7]. In the beginning, Kazakhstan was one of the main initiators of the development of the CICA process. But as the international interest in the forum grows, the share of responsibility of other member states of the conference is gradually increasing.

Thus, we may talk about the growth of the significance of the forum as a ground for a dialogue to carry out international cooperation, as well as to work upon the questions connected with the creation of uniform approaches and measures to ensure regional security. In addition to that, the CICA member states confirmed their intentions to develop cooperation with international structures by signing bilateral agreements with such organizations as the EURASEC, IOM, ECO and

by proposing an initiative to organize a joint conference with the participation of regional and sub-regional organizations in April-May 2009.

With the addition of the UAE and Jordan, the circle of countries involved in the CICA process increased, and the number of regular members of the organization reached 20. This resulted in the widening of the forum's area of responsibility. This event confirmed the aspiration of the member states of the conference for cooperation in the humanitarian area. The humanitarian area is the most favorable one for arranging constructive dialogue between the member states of the organization and is the

only bridge to bypass the implementation of military and political initiatives.

The CICA process has colossal potential, which may be realized by means of the member states' joint efforts to create an all-continent ground for a dialogue and to reach consensus on the questions of cooperation and accomplishment of CBMs for security in Asia. Currently, CICA's main priority is to search for additional effective ways of cooperation of its member states in the sphere of settling international conflicts and solving the problems that the international community is faced with.

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# Problems and Prospects of NATO's Central Asian Strategy: the Role of Kazakhstan

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Since the 1990s, Central Asia has been steadily moving into the limelight of world geopolitics because of its geostrategic and geo-economic potential. Political influence, economic interests, access to its considerable resource potential, promotion of religious and national ideas, as well as all aspects of regional security can be described as priorities. The region's geographic location is certainly advantageous: it is found, first, between two influential geopolitical forces and, second, between powerful industrial centers and large consumer markets of Europe and Asia. This means that the region's security and sustainable development are an indispensable condition for realizing all sorts of interests. It goes without saying that it is not easy, for several (including objective) reasons, to set up a system of regional security in Central Asia.

Today the regional security system has several levels; however, it lacks a more or less clear structure, while relative stability is maintained by bilateral military-political agreements between the Central Asian states and foreign power centers by the efforts of several international organizations. At the same time, the more active involvement of transnational security structures with different ideological platforms is introducing latent geopolitical tension and heating up rivalry among the large geopolitical players. The CSTO, SCO and NATO, all of them dynamically developing military-political alliances, are used as regional rivalry tools.

It should be said that the former two are present in the region for historical and geographic reasons, while the latter has come to stay. In the long-term perspective, therefore, its impact on the regional processes will become inevitable, while the efficiency of regional collective security efforts will largely depend on the format of relations between the Central Asian states and NATO, as well as on cooperation between NATO and Russia, China, the CSTO, and the SCO.

## NATO'S CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

Dynamic developments in the international security sphere have posed the question of the effectiveness of the transnational structures responsible for maintaining security throughout the world by collective efforts. For this reason, for the last fifteen years, NATO has been engaged in systemic

readjustment of its mechanisms and tools responsible for the security in the Euro-Atlantic zone. For many years now, the Alliance has been identifying and substantiating those missions that go beyond the limits of its functions in strategic documents. It is concentrating on dealing with the new tasks: the antiterrorist struggle; prevention of WMD proliferation; crisis settlement, peacekeeping efforts, and wider dialogs with the countries outside the organization, which envisages readjusting their combat-readiness and maintaining a high level of the armed forces' efficiency. Taken together, this is transforming NATO into a tool that promotes globalization by force; it can also be described as the force-based skeleton of the new world order.<sup>1</sup>

NATO is not merely actively involved in the conceptual readjustment of its collective security system and expanding its membership. It is widely using the new strategic ideas in practice. Today NATO is claiming a key role in the international security architecture. To be able to assume this role, however, it must change itself and its strategy. It is gradually enlarging by drawing in new members from Eastern and Central Europe and the Baltic area, which means that it is growing globally. Political science uses the term "NATO's eastward enlargement" to describe the process. The globalization process has taken NATO beyond its traditional responsibility zone, which, on the whole, can be explained by the upsurge of transnational security threats: international terrorism, the failed states, and proliferation of WMD. This explains why traditional "Euro-centrism" is no longer topical.

According to American experts: "With little fanfare—and even less notice—the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has gone global".<sup>2</sup> It should be said in all justice that the so-called globalization of NATO went through a long evolution process caused by a chain of internal crises and contradictions among the members, as well as several armed conflicts in which the Alliance took part (Yugoslavia in 1999, Afghanistan in 2001, and Iraq in 2003). This experience created the worldwide precedent of peace enforcement operations and humanitarian interventions outside the U.N. and endowed NATO with the ability to "project" military force beyond the traditional responsibility zone.

The same authors justify the expansion of NATO's involvement by the post-Cold War political situation: "Today,



terrorists born in Riyadh and trained in Kandahar hatch deadly plots in Hamburg to fly airplanes into buildings in New York. Such interconnection means that developments in one place affect the security, prosperity, and well-being of citizens everywhere. NATO has recognized that the best (and at times the only) defense against such remote dangers is to tackle them at their source.<sup>3</sup> Russian experts, in turn, have pointed out that the "idea of going beyond the traditional responsibility zone is nothing but a pretext for taking into account the 'global context' when ensuring the members' security".<sup>4</sup>

Today NATO is working on strategic plans aimed at drawing as many countries as possible into Western geopolitics. For this reason, the tactical or even strategic disagreements among the Alliance's leaders notwithstanding, NATO is building up its geopolitical presence in many corners of the world.<sup>5</sup>

At the 2006 Riga summit, the NATO countries agreed to intensify their cooperation with partners outside the Alliance (Australia, New Zealand, India, Brazil, and Japan), as well as with the Middle Eastern and Gulf countries. It is "planned to become more deeply involved in cooperation with other international players, such as the U.N., EU, G-8, and the World Bank, as well as NGOs",<sup>6</sup> for the sake of a comprehensive approach to the security issues.

The Mediterranean and the Middle East are two of NATO's priorities where it operates on the basis of Istanbul Cooperation Initiative adopted at the 2004 NATO summit in Istanbul. The document allows the interested states of the Greater Middle East to cooperate with the Alliance on the bilateral basis, starting with the individual members of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

In recent years, NATO set up institutional mechanisms of partnership with the Caucasian states that are functioning today. The Alliance is working with the states on an individual and parallel basis. The task is not an easy one: it has to establish cooperation within its programs between Armenia and Azerbaijan and Armenia and Turkey. So far, according to NATO sources, Georgia is the only local state that is actively and consistently moving toward the Alliance. Armenia and Azerbaijan have not yet raised the question of their NATO membership. The Alliance describes its policy in the Southern Caucasus as "spreading stability." Today NATO is just getting used to its role of the region's stabilizing force and is keeping away from the zones of conflict.<sup>7</sup>

In view of Central Asia's special strategic importance for NATO, Brussels is keeping its contacts with the local countries at the highest level; it is prepared to consistently strengthen its presence in the region.<sup>8</sup> America and the EU are very active in Central Asia: they are busy fortifying the West's military presence there through numerous bilateral and multilateral programs and agreements designed to tie the local states to NATO's policies. Cooperation among the Central Asian states and the North Atlantic Alliance has a fairly long history, but the stronger position of Russia and China achieved through the SCO, as well as forced evacuation of the American forces from Uzbekistan and the recurring contradictions between the United States and Kyrgyzstan, affect the military-political configuration in Central Asia.

#### NATO'S CENTRAL ASIAN DIPLOMACY

The dynamically globalizing Alliance is obviously seeking tighter control over the region through its integration into NATO's collective security system. It is pursuing several strategic tasks in line with the interests of the West and the United States as its part.

*First*, the Alliance wants to fortify its position directly in the region to acquire access to its energy resources and gain control over the transportation routes. It also wants to keep Russia and China "irritated" by remaining directly on their borders and in the zone of their natural interests. This will allow it, at least, to help the West implement its economic projects, while the attention of two large rivals will remain detracted from what NATO is doing globally. It will also retain a certain amount of control in the security sphere; it will oppose transnational threats to the Euro-Atlantic region born in Central Asia and Afghanistan and control the local states' policies. On top of this, Afghanistan plays an important role in the Alliance's military-political strategy as its first military operation under the cooperative conception of security "projection" to the source of threat outside the Euro-Atlantic zone. It was also the first test and the first taste of practical experience in a peacekeeping and anti-crisis operation carried out when the Alliance completed its systemic transformations. Finally, Afghanistan and the situation around it justified NATO's continued presence in Central Asia and its emergence outside the European zone.

*Second*, the NATO troops in Central Asia serve as a basis for the Alliance's continued control over the neighboring countries that threaten, to a certain extent, the West and its interests. The Alliance is consistently carrying out America's long-term project of geopolitical encirclement of Iran: military strikes on the country have been discussed for several years now. The fact that NATO and the United States managed to move their armed forces to the post-Soviet territory and Afghanistan created a very unfavorable geostrategic configuration around Iran. Indeed, the NATO Central Asian bases and the Caucasian partner-states (Georgia and Azerbaijan) have closed the circle around Iran: in the north there are bases in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan; in the northwest there are two pro-NATO states (Georgia and Azerbaijan); in the west, there are pro-American Israel and Saudi Arabia, Turkey (which is a NATO member), and American contingents in occupied Iraq; in the east, there are bases in Afghanistan and pro-Western Pakistan; and in the south pro-Western Kuwait, UAE, and Oman complete the circle. It looks as if America has carved out the foothold it needs to launch an attack on Iran (with possible NATO involvement). We can even say that Washington, which has been carefully weaving an anti-Iranian geopolitical plot for the last six years (since the counterterrorist operation of 2001), finally gained this foothold.<sup>9</sup>

The Alliance plays a much more important role in Western projects than meets the eye: it is helping to keep Russia, China, and Iran in check in the region, on the one hand, and is exerting ideological pressure on the Western regional partners, on the other. NATO is consistently carrying out very ambitious plans to become the key geopolitical and military operator in Central Asia. It has already laid several cornerstones: *first*, it relies on the smoothly functioning mechanisms of the Partnership for Peace and North Atlantic Partnership Council; *second*, its relations with the Central Asian countries rest on a legal and normative base; *third*, military-political cooperation and military training exercises are a regular feature in the region; *fourth*, NATO has its bases in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Afghanistan (the scene of the NATO-led counterterrorist operation).

NATO is pursuing its regional strategy through distancing and fragmentation, which allows the Alliance to rely on bilateral relations: there is no need to contact the rivaling regional security structures, such as the CSTO and SCO,



which limits Russia's and China's range of control over NATO-Central Asia relations.

At the same time, the bilateral format helps NATO to fragment the region by identifying and supporting the leader with a pro-NATO and pro-Western orientation; in this way, the country is opposed to countries with a pro-Russian foreign policy bias.<sup>10</sup> Bilateral relations simplify the task of putting political and ideological pressure on any of the regional partners.

The Alliance's rapidly progressing politicization inevitably affected its relations with the Central Asian countries. In 2004, NATO set up the post of NATO Secretary-General's Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia; Robert Simmons, the current representative, is a frequent visitor who is always ready for talks and consultations to keep his regular contacts at a government level.

NATO uses bilateral diplomacy to apply the "divide and rule" principle to the best possible effect by exploiting the obvious contradictions and latent rivalry among the local states (Uzbekistan and Tajikistan and partly Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan are such rivals, etc.).

All sorts of investment and economic programs carried out by international financial structures in the region make NATO even more attractive to the countries coping with financial and economic problems. This is true of nearly all the Central Asian countries and is especially true of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Financial aid to Uzbekistan was discontinued as soon as the U.S. and NATO pulled out of its territory. Kazakhstan moved away from the programs because of its dynamic economic growth. The Alliance, in turn, supports the Western businesses operating in Central Asia.

NATO is not only pursuing military-strategic interests in the oil- and gas-rich region: it is indirectly promoting the realization of Western energy-related interests. This was recently confirmed by an invitation to set up an "energy Alliance" by endowing NATO with the function of ensuring uninterrupted supply of energy resources to its member states. So far, the project's practical side remains vague.

NATO strategists hope that a system of bilateral relations rooted in all sorts of normative-legal acts that will take care of preferences and obligations will make it possible for the Alliance to narrow down the local countries' foreign policy leeway. There is any number of cooperation programs pushing the Central Asian countries toward greater dependence on NATO (Partnership for Peace, individual partnership plans, the Virtual Silk Road, etc.).<sup>11</sup>

It stands to reason that the Alliance's military presence and active political involvement have somewhat improved the regional security architecture: on the one hand, it added a certain amount of stability and strengthened the defense capability of some of the local states; on the other, however, it promotes rivalry among the key power centers, thus upsetting the balance and disintegrating the regional security system, the outlines of which have hardly begun to take shape.

NATO's continued presence may split the region into pro- and anti-NATO groups of countries with great powers behind them. This is what is going on today in a format neither America, nor Russia, nor China expected to see: the situation has become vague. This can probably be explained by the fact that none of the states (Uzbekistan being the only exception) has openly joined one of the two military-political camps. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan are demonstrating their friendliness toward Russia, China, the CSTO, and SCO, as well as toward the United States, Western Europe, and NATO.

This policy has its specifics: Kazakhstan has officially registered its dual military-political course of cooperation with Russia and NATO; Kyrgyzstan is renting out part of its military infrastructure, while demonstratively moving closer to the CSTO and SCO; and Tajikistan, which remains in Russia's orbit, is moving toward NATO mostly in counterbalance to Uzbekistan, its regional opponent. Turkmenistan is continuing with its policy of equal distancing from all the power centers by switching cooperation to the economic sphere.

It seems that this tactic does not allow the two geopolitical groups to use the mechanisms at their disposal to influence the objects of their strategies. The Central Asian countries, in turn, are acquiring maneuverability by playing on the rivaling interests of the centers of power. It should be said that not all the local states have mastered this skill.

The regional geopolitical structure, which is changing in favor of Russia and China, is forcing NATO either to seek new regional allies or increase its cooperation with old partners. The situation in the region, however, is narrowing down its field of large-scale political moves and is not conducive to any important breakthroughs that might have strengthened its regional position.

It looks as if the bilateral format of relations with the local countries is an important *factor that limits* NATO's opportunity to increase its influence in the region. NATO prefers to stay away from the SCO and CSTO, which means that it cannot control them or influence, even to the slightest degree, the processes underway in these organizations. While the Russian Federation and NATO are cooperating in information exchange, albeit on a minimal scale, consultations, etc., the Alliance has no contacts at all with China, another influential SCO member seeking a stronger position in the region. By entering into cooperation with the CSTO and SCO, NATO would have been able to increase its role in Central Asian geopolitics and find the tools with which to influence the rivals in the future.

The distancing policy undermines the region's stability level and may even create so-called gray zones of instability in the security sectors more or less outside the influence of these organizations. The lower stability level will primarily damage the Alliance's image, which claims to be the guarantor of regional security. The level of confidence in NATO is dropping against the background of the ISAF's barely efficient military operation of the counterterrorist coalition in Afghanistan, the worsening domestic situation under the pressure of extremist forces, and the obvious increase in drug trafficking in the region.

The mounting dissatisfaction with NATO's presence in Central Asia is allowing Russia and China to increase pressure on the West in an effort to drive their geopolitical rival out of the region. Even if NATO preserves its military presence in Afghanistan, it will find it difficult, if not impossible, to carry on with the counterterrorist operation without the Central Asian infrastructure.

To sum up: after more than six years of its military presence in Central Asia, the North Atlantic Alliance failed to tap into the favorable geopolitical situation: it even lost some of its previous ground. Today, NATO has to follow the logic imposed on it by Russia and China, two countries actively (and fairly successfully) building up bilateral and multilateral relations with the Central Asian countries. The latter aware of their potential and interests are fortifying their position: they no longer want to remain targets of the diplomatic efforts of outside forces.



The region has acquired a hierarchy of local countries as far as their economic potential and foreign policy involvement are concerned. For objective reasons, Kazakhstan is at the very top of the pyramid, *first*, because it is the most developed country in the region with a fairly ramified foreign policy; *second*, Russia and China, as well as the United States and the European Union, want closer cooperation with Kazakhstan for different reasons; *third*, because Kazakhstan, an CSTO and SCO member, is developing its Partnership for Peace program with NATO and is an active member of all the regional integration initiatives. It has no conflicts either with its immediate neighbors or with distant countries; its authority and regional leadership are gaining momentum. Kazakhstan extends economic support to its Central Asian neighbors, which makes it a pillar of regional stability. Today we can safely say that continued military-political cooperation in Central Asia largely depends on the position and policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, a fact that Russia, China, and the West should take into account.

#### KAZAKHSTAN AND NATO: COOPERATION DYNAMICS

To fortify their position in the region, Western strategists are seeking deeper and wider cooperation between NATO and Kazakhstan. The latter, in turn, needs closer cooperation with the Alliance to upgrade its defense capability and acquire more levers in the joint struggle against today's threats and challenges. This means that cooperation with NATO gives Kazakhstan the opportunity to become involved in ensuring international security in the first place.

Relations between Kazakhstan and NATO passed through several stages during their onward and logical development. *The first stage began when the Soviet Union ceased to exist and ended in 1994.* The sides identified their priorities, interests, and possible cooperation spheres. It should be said that independence created a vast number of problems in the security sphere that called for an immediate solution. The newly independent state had no army, while its national security services and internal affairs agencies needed urgent reforming.<sup>12</sup> From the very first days of independence, President Nazarbayev was aware that his country's national security largely depended on the level of its interaction with international structures. He knew that the West had launched an active process aimed at building up new systems of international security which relied, in many respects, on NATO's resources and structures. This meant that Kazakhstan should establish constructive relations with this influential structure.

Their first contacts date to the very first days of independence. In December 1991, NATO set up the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) to develop contacts with former WTO members. On 10 March, 1992, Kazakhstan joined the NACC; since that time cooperation has been successfully unfolding within the Statement on Dialog, Partnership, and Cooperation which envisages meetings, seminars, and symposia on economic, defense, ecological, scientific, and many other issues.<sup>13</sup>

We all know that in the early 1990s Kazakhstan attracted the attention of NATO and the West as a whole as a country with the largest nuclear potential. From the very beginning, however, the country's leaders remained firm and absolutely clear: nuclear weapons are a destructive political factor unable to protect those who own them. They add to instability and interfere with good-neighborly relations with nearby states. Thanks to efficient diplomatic action, the country chose the right tone in its relations with NATO. Its well-balanced diplomatic practice allowed the republic not

only to acquire security guarantees from the nuclear powers; by abandoning its nuclear arsenal the republic boosted its international prestige. The regular and productive meetings between President Nazarbaev and NATO leaders made it possible to raise the format of bilateral relations to a new, more confidential level.

*The second cooperation stage began in 1994 and ended in September 2001.* This was a period of the sides' practical cooperation, which extended not only to the military-political sphere, but also to democracy and human rights, civil defense, liquidation of the effects of natural disasters, science and high technology.

In 1994, the Partnership for Peace Program appeared; in May of the same year, Kazakhstan signed its Framework Document to become its 19th participant. It drew up its Presentation Document, which outlined the cooperation priorities: planning and funding national defense; democratic control over the armed forces and training the military. The document was handed to the NATO Secretary-General at the regular meeting of the NACC foreign ministers that took place in December 1994.<sup>14</sup>

Kazakh experts are convinced that the Partnership for Peace Program offered Kazakhstan the most rational cooperation format.<sup>15</sup> NATO looks at the Program as a key factor promoting the relations between the Alliance and the Program members and adding vigor to their political and military cooperation. The Program is aimed at planning national defense; establishing democratic control over the armed forces, and training the army for peacekeeping operations. Effective cooperation within the Program considerably widened the field of practical cooperation, which in turn made it possible to launch several important initiatives, including Science for Peace and the Virtual Silk Road.

On 14 June, 2000, the president of Kazakhstan issued a decree that created the Kazakhstani Peacekeeping Battalion (Kazbat) to improve interoperability between the republic's army and NATO. This meant that Kazakhstan joined the ranks of the states that use their contingents for peacekeeping activities under the U.N. or NATO aegis, which naturally required new approaches to many important aspects. It was not enough for the Kazbat to master military skills; it needed good command of other things, including the English language, communication means, command and control systems, and decision-making procedures, as well as an understanding of how knowledge and experience are shared among contemporary armed forces. This means that thanks to cooperation with NATO, the republic's army upgraded its military potential and became involved in international peacekeeping operations.

It should be said that at all times Kazakhstan has been closely following the processes inside NATO and around it. The republic retained its constructive attitude toward NATO's eastward enlargement, mainly because the process could not be reversed. In fact, the process did not threaten Kazakhstan, although it was convinced that the "eastward enlargement" should not upset European stability and should take into account Russia's interests.

The 9/11 events changed forever the nature of international relations, particularly the format of international cooperation in the security sphere. *This ushered in the third stage of NATO-Kazakhstan cooperation, which lasted until early 2006 and was marked by much stronger partner-relations.*

In October 2001, the United States and its NATO allies launched a military operation against Afghanistan as the first



stage of the global counterterrorist campaign. The terrorist acts in the United States altered North-Atlantic strategic thinking: from that time on the Alliance needed much closer cooperation with its partner states. Kazakhstan offered considerable support to the coalition forces by letting them use its air space and allowing their aircraft to make emergency landings on its airfields. This naturally added a new quality to NATO-Kazakhstan relations. In 2002, Kazakhstan became the first Central Asian state to join NATO's Planning and Review Process. To improve their interoperability and defense activities (two cornerstones of the antiterrorist struggle on the republic's territory), NATO and Kazakhstan conducted military training exercises.<sup>16</sup>

The 2002 Prague summit adopted the project of a new NATO very different from the Cold War instrument, as far as its tasks, composition, and potential were concerned. The leaders of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPS) officially confirmed these obligations and agreed on the Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism. By signing the document, the EASP leaders recognized that all the states faced the same security challenges and that they should pool forces to confront them.

As for Kazakhstan as a NATO ally, the document extends its possibilities and serves as a mechanism for its involvement in the Alliance's counterterrorist struggle. Its contribution to the process will correspond to its international obligations in this sphere with due account of the republic's policy in the security and defense spheres. In July 2003, Kazakhstan and NATO signed an agreement with NATO's Maintenance and Supply Organization (NAMSO).

In 2003, systemic military cooperation between Kazakhstan and NATO began; the Steppe Eagle (tactical antiterrorist military exercises) that involved aeromobile troops of the U.K. and U.S. International exercises on the republic's territory allow the Kazakhstani army to improve its fighting skills by acting side by side with the military from other countries. From that time on, Steppe Eagle became an annual event. In February 2004, the republic joined NATO's Operational Capabilities Concept, the information and documentary center of which was opened in Astana. In the same year, Kazakhstan acquired observer status in NATO's Parliamentary Assembly.<sup>17</sup>

Brussels has obviously come to stay in Central Asia. I have already written that in 2004 it created the post of NATO Secretary-General's Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia and appointed Robert Simmons to it. He is keeping the contacts with the top regional leaders alive and is doing his best to promote NATO's interests.<sup>18</sup> He frequently visits Kazakhstan (as well as other Central Asian countries); his personal meetings with President Nazarbaev and the president's telephone talks with NATO leaders add vigor to the sides' cooperation for the sake of regional and international security.

*The highly dynamic interaction between Kazakhstan and NATO pushed their cooperation to a higher, fourth, level.* The new stage which began in 2006 is still going on: strategic cooperation became much closer. In January 2006, a meeting of the NATO-Kazakhstan Military-Political Committee held at NATO Headquarters discussed and prepared for final endorsement the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) that harmonized all aspects of practical cooperation and dialog between Kazakhstan and NATO. The Plan is designed to expand cooperation and create its new parameters in the NATO + 1 format: cooperation in the military sphere, in many sciences, the environment, and the system for preventing emergencies and liquidating their effects.<sup>19</sup>

The Plan enacted on 31 January, 2006 made Kazakhstan the first NATO Central Asian partner armed with new cooperation tools. This was a logical step for a country that had already joined NACC and Partnership for Peace Program, which fully corresponds to the ideology and aims of the political, economic, and democratic reforms underway in the country.

On the whole, Kazakhstan regards integration into global and regional security systems as a key element of its national security; this makes close and mutually advantageous partnership with the Alliance one of its foreign policy priorities. The republic is striving for mutually advantageous and equal cooperation in defense; reform and modernization of its armed forces; combating terrorism and drug trafficking; security on the borders; science; and the environment. We can safely say today that Kazakhstan's diplomacy is moving forward these aims.

Its interaction with NATO is of a multilevel nature and is being carried out in various formats, as well as within the framework of all sorts of military and non-military programs. The very fact that the NATO leaders describe Kazakhstan as the Alliance's key strategic Central Asian partner shows that cooperation has proven fairly effective. It is impossible to overestimate the republic's role in the Alliance's Central Asian strategy—today it is NATO's only pillar in the region. The Kazakh leaders take into account the republic's national interests in modernizing its military complex, as well as the fact that their balanced policy of drawing closer to NATO provides the latter with a relatively stable regional, albeit limited, position.

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Diplomatic rivalry between the West, on the one hand, and Russia and China, on the other, over special relations with Kazakhstan is going on unabated, with each of the sides trying to outdo the other in order to draw the republic into the CSTO, SCO, and NATO. Positive official rhetoric and all sorts of diplomatic maneuvers designed to flatter Kazakhstan, however, failed to successfully address the region's central issue—building an effective and balanced regional security system.

President Nazarbaev points out time and again that stronger and broader international cooperation in the struggle against security threats and challenges presupposes an integral approach. The country is working and will continue to work toward closer regional cooperation in order to meet today's challenges by taking part in joint military exercises within the CSTO and SCO and in NATO's counterterrorist initiatives and operations.<sup>20</sup>

It seems that Kazakhstan's active involvement in the CSTO and in the Alliance's programs has made it possible for the republic to set up an absolutely indispensable system of checks and balances in regional geopolitics. This largely meets the interests of all the Central Asian countries. On the other hand, the SCO's active policy (its Chinese element in particular) allows the region to avoid a CSTO-NATO confrontation and forces all those involved to seek constructive solutions to the region's central cooperation problems.

Balanced cooperation between the Central Asian republics and the CSTO and SCO, on the one hand, and between the Central Asian republics and NATO, on the other, presents a strategically consistent and rational course toward stability at the national and regional levels. An upsurge of rivalry between the two sides might negatively affect the local countries: control will be lost; challenges



and threats will become even more prominent, together with geopolitical disbalances; regional contradictions will become exacerbated; the rates of economic development will slow down, making the countries much less attractive to potential investors; and the local countries might even lose their foreign policy aims.

This means that it is highly important for Kazakhstan and the other Central Asian states in need of stability to build their cooperation with the above-mentioned structures on the basis of clear logic and strategy of action, as well as minimize the possibility of stiff rivalry among them. Kazakhstan, as a country devoted to balanced international military partnership, is in a position to start building a platform for constructive dialog, consultations, and interaction among the CSTO, SCO, and NATO to prevent a regional crisis. In the future, everything will be done to find a balance between

the Central Asian states' integration into the international and regional security structures and their independence in decision-making on all international issues that affect their national interests.

From the point of view of the local countries' interests, NATO is doing a lot to ensure regional security and help some of the local countries develop, modernize their armed forces, master the latest military technology, etc. Today's threats are equally dangerous for all sides, which means that it is the duty of all the key geopolitical players to maintain the balance; they should cooperate—otherwise regional tension will persist. NATO should revise its Central Asian policy to meet the changed geopolitical and strategic situation. The old tactics of distancing and fragmentation will merely allow the Alliance's rivals to squeeze its armed forces out of Central Asia.

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# Kazakhstan and Russia: Relations as Part of Russia's Central Asian Strategy

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In May 2008, new President came to power in Kremlin, which has been Dmitriy Medvedev. So, the new phase in Russian Foreign Policy has started. This factor is concerned Central Asia as well. The first external Medvedev's visit was targeted on Kazakhstan. Astana and Moscow have confirmed their "special relations". But the fundament of this very specific and important relationship was created in Putin's era. This article regards Russia's policy and strategy towards Central Asia and Kazakhstan under Vladimir Putin's presidency.

In 2006 and 2007, the geopolitical situation around Central Asia underwent changes, some of which were quite substantial. The great powers shifted their political accents and readjusted cooperation formats. Energy moved to the forefront to become one of the new issues and centerpiece of the EU strategy. The rapidly worsening relations between Russia and the West are another geopolitically important factor. Russia had a strong, though not always obvious, impact on the region's geopolitical context. In fact, the entire range of relations (transport, economy, energy, and the humanitarian issues) between the EU and Central Asia cannot be correctly assessed without taking into account the Russian Federation. Russia's presence in the region (either obvious or hidden from the eye) and the vector of its relations with Europe have put an energy alliance between Moscow, other important energy producers, and transit countries on the agenda.

The worsening relations between Russia and the West (particularly with the United States, the EU, NATO, and OSCE) are a fact, the nature and repercussions of which look long-term and varied. It has already spread to cooperation in the economic and energy spheres, military-strategic stability, the counterterrorist struggle, and geopolitical and geo-economic cooperation between Russia and the West in Asia, Latin America, the Balkans, Africa, and the Middle East and, most important, in the CIS.

The wave of Color Revolutions that swept the post-Soviet expanse in 2003-2005 was in fact the first (still latent) clash of Russian and Western interests. To keep up appearances, the sides refrained for a while from openly discussing their contradictions and problems. The West

interpreted the strengthening of the SCO as one of the first signs that its relations with Russia were going downhill: in 2005 this regional organization raised the question of the time limits of America's military presence in Central Asia. Since 2006 (Vice-President Cheney's speech in Lithuania), Washington has been criticizing Moscow quite openly.

Planned transportation routes and pipelines for the Central Asian and Caspian hydrocarbons have become a field of open clashes and geopolitical and geo-economic rivalry. The EU, with the United States by its side, is talking about "the diversification of energy deliveries" to its markets, an undisguised anti-Russian position. This and other factors, as well as the U.S. and NATO presence in the region, suggest that the rapidly worsening relations between Russia and the West will affect the Central Asian states' international and geopolitical situation.

On the whole, Russia's elites are fully aware of the fact that the relations with the CIS members are their country's absolute foreign policy priority. It is in this sphere that Russia's main economic interests and security concerns are concentrated and it is this sphere that creates the most serious threats. Russian political analysts and politicians agree that the country should retain its main role on the post-Soviet expanse and should prevent its "erosion" caused by the gradually increasing involvement of the West and its institutions. It is commonly believed that in Central Asia Russia should fully tap the possibilities offered by the CSTO, EurAsEC, and SCO. To achieve this, Russia should offer attractive, competitive, and realistic prospects for both the political elites and the public at large.

## **RUSSIA'S FOREIGN POLICY STRATEGY UNDER VLADIMIR PUTIN**

Today, President Putin's foreign policy strategy has become clear enough and can be discussed in detail. On the whole pragmatic (though there are exceptions), it takes into account Russia's geopolitical and economic resources and its real possibilities.<sup>1</sup>

There is the opinion that the Russian leadership is divided into two blocs conventionally described as military



and economic (or those who favor the use of force and the pragmatists) and that the former is much more influential than the latter. This inevitably affects the country's foreign policy course. On the other hand, Russia's foreign policy is also affected by all sorts of ministries and departments with inevitably different, or at least specific, approaches and interests. Today, the Presidential Administration, as well as the Foreign Ministry of Russia, the Defense Ministry, and Gazprom (the structures which are able to directly influence the process) have their own ideas about Russia's policy in the CIS. As distinct from Yeltsin's times, under Vladimir Putin Russia's foreign policy became much more consolidated, which means that all the departments and ministries are obliged to promote national interests.

From the very beginning, President Putin concentrated on establishing pragmatic relations with the West and succeeded: Russia became a nearly fully-fledged G-8 member; it improved its relations with the U.S. and the EU, intensified its relations with NATO on an equal basis and, on the whole, balanced between the United States and the European Union while maintaining predominantly political relations with the former and predominantly economic cooperation with the latter.

Moscow has managed to turn the economy, or rather cooperation in the energy sphere, into a powerful foreign policy tool. This was true of its contacts with the West and with China and Japan in the East. The newly found energy strategy loomed prominently in Russia's relations with the CIS countries; it became a geopolitical tool, a fact that directly affects the Republic of Kazakhstan's national, economic, and energy interests. On the other hand, Russia displayed a lot of ingenuity in using its relations with the Asian countries, particularly China, as a counterweight to the West. Recently, the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China have become unprecedentedly close, especially in the military-political and military-strategic spheres; the SCO is helping them realize their shared geopolitical ambitions.

While maintaining close relations with China, Russia is working toward a higher level of relations with Japan by playing on its contradictions with China, among other things; Russia wants to remain the mediator on the Korean Peninsula; it is rebuilding its strategic cooperation with India; and it is making advances to Southeastern Asia and the Muslim world through the OIC.

The post-Soviet expanse remains the main target of Moscow's geopolitical efforts. President Putin's doctrine rests on his firm conviction that to regain its place among the leading geopolitical actors Russia should restore its influence in the traditional spheres of its domination: the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the CIS as a whole.

To achieve this remote goal, Russia put forward, more than two years ago, an economic (geopolitical in its essence) project of the Single Economic Space (SES). The Ukrainian events forced Moscow to shelve the project and revive the EurAsEC, the project's earlier version. Both projects are intended to establish extensive economic integration as the cornerstone of political integration, that is, to rebuild in Eurasia a certain geopolitical unit with imperial hues under Russia's aegis (a Liberal Empire).

The nuances and interpretations may vary (a Eurasian alliance, a confederation, etc.), but President Putin's main idea remained the same: if the post-Soviet expanse (or its part) remains disunited, neither Russia nor other CIS countries would be able to set up an effective political

and economic union able to compete on the world scene. The geographic and geopolitical factors confirm this in the same way as it is suggested by the shared economic, transportation, and communication systems inherited from the past, historical and cultural associations, etc. Moscow is convinced that Russia's restored economic and political might will help its integration allies (Kazakhstan being one of them) to surge forward.

Large oil and gas companies either controlled by the state or closely connected with it have become the main vehicles of Russia's strategy. The 2005 events around the North European gas pipeline and the gas-related disagreements with Ukraine threw into bolder relief the fact that "gas" politics and Gazprom have become foreign policy tools.

Since 2000, when he became president, Vladimir Putin has been demonstrating pragmatic approaches to foreign policy: being aware of Russia's limited resources, he dropped the Great Power rhetoric and intentions and concentrated on pooling forces to achieve modernization at home. High-flown deliberations about the multipolar world were replaced with the thesis of a multi-vector foreign policy of a country seeking closer relations with Europe, more effective counterterrorist cooperation with the United States, strategic partnership with China and India, and a single economic space with the CIS countries (with the emphasis on Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine).

At all times President Putin demonstrated that his country was prepared to cooperate and work together with the West. At the early stages of his presidency he readjusted the previous course; in actual fact he not only stemmed mounting disagreements between his country and the West (particularly the United States), but also increased confidence in Russia in the West. This greatly improved the external context for the reforms and modernization.

From the very beginning, however, President Putin demonstrated firmness and unwillingness to accept compromises his country did not need; and he was prepared to defend the most important national interests. By the beginning of his second term, his foreign policy resource began melting away.

During Putin's first years the two different ideas about Russia's strategies and its national interests inherited from the previous period were still competing, neither of them gaining priority. I have in mind the so-called Westerners and Realists. The former were convinced that Russia should replace China as Washington's most important strategic ally; it should stop flirting with Europe exploiting anti-American sentiments; act together with the United States in the world's key strategic regions; cooperate with it in modernizing the backward regions (the post-Soviet expanse); coordinate efforts in the sphere of strategic weapons, etc. By 2006-2007, this group lost nearly all of its former influence.

The Realists argue that in the last two years the external threat became even greater: they are convinced that Russia could be attacked by the United States from Afghanistan, Central Asia, and the Caucasus; destabilization on the Korean Peninsula and deployment of American armed forces there also cause concern. The Russian strategists do not exclude the fact that America could attack Iran and increase geopolitical tension in the Middle East and elsewhere, including in Xinjiang. They



also expect that in the near future American actions in Afghanistan and Iraq will not defuse the threat of Islamic fundamentalism and that this threat will increase. The Russian strategists see radical Islam as the greatest threat to Russia's continued existence.

Russia postponed its decision to build up its military presence in Central Asia until the U.S. made an attempt to expand its military presence in the region. Meanwhile, the Russian generals were determined to push the president toward even more active rivalry with Washington in the region. The Realists were convinced that a multipolar world could be created if the Russian Federation cooperated more closely with the EU and Germany, if it worked together with France and China in the U.N. Security Council, strengthened the SCO, and remained firm in the face of America's efforts to infringe on its interests.

The Westerners and the Realists agreed that Russia should preserve its nuclear potential as the cornerstone of its security. As for China, the Realists believe that the strategic partnership with this country enforced by circumstances should be preserved for the simple reason that both countries are objectively the subjects of the United States' so-called containment strategy. Late in April 2002, Russia made a strategically important step by setting up the Collective Security Treaty Organization; it was obviously resolved to stay in the zone of its traditional domination in the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Russia did not intend to limit its military cooperation within the CSTO; it was building up its cooperation within the EurAsEC to bring its allies closer through economic instruments. This means that the Kremlin had finally formulated a complete strategy in the CIS; part of it envisaged coordinated WTO membership for the EurAsEC members. The weakest point in this strategy was the fact that Russia, a former great power, failed to grasp the full extent of its economic, demographic, and domestic weakness.

Russia's present geopolitical situation, therefore, can be described as very difficult, while its possibilities for expanding its geopolitical influence are very limited. Russia has been pursuing a moderate and cautious policy in Afghanistan. The West and the Northern Alliance regularly invited Russia to join the international coalition, but never succeeded. Russia was determined to stay outside. At the same time, it is interested in the Afghan issue for several reasons: it needed stabilization and guarantees that in future the country would not become a source of terrorism; it wants to stem the flow of drugs, and it intends to support the Northern Alliance, its military-political client. To a certain extent, the Central Asian states have similar interests in Afghanistan. On the whole, Russia's interests in Afghanistan can be divided into political, military-strategic, and economic.<sup>2</sup> In December 2004, Moscow confirmed its position on the Afghan issue at an informal meeting of the defense ministers of Russia and NATO in Poiana Brasov, Romania.

Drugs are the worst problem created by Afghanistan. The Russian Federation intends to invite the EU and NATO to coordinate anti-drug efforts. The Russian side is convinced that this cooperation can proceed through CSTO-NATO and NATO-SCO. This means that Russia and the Central Asian states have a common Afghanistan-related agenda based on their natural desire to preserve regional security and stability and prevent another wave of militant Islam.

### RUSSIA'S POLICY IN THE CIS

The Russian Federation regards its relations with Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan as a priority; and it is closely monitoring the South Caucasian developments too. Russia and the West find themselves on opposite sides in Belarus, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. Moscow regards the West's political favorites in these republics as anti-Russian politicians.

Several years ago the Russian leaders showed concern over the future of the Commonwealth of Independent States: the Russian side wondered why integration in the CIS was moving ahead with such difficulty; it tried to find ways and means to accelerate it and impart it with positive dynamics.<sup>3</sup> Moscow posed itself the following tasks: the CIS should become a clear priority of Russia's foreign policy; Russia should treat its national security as another priority; it should exercise a pragmatic and differentiated approach to its partners depending on their willingness to take Russia's interests into account; it should add life to economic cooperation, promote Russian business, add vigor to bilateral cooperation, and readjust integration priorities to shift the accent from the multisided CIS to specialized units: the Belarus-Russia Union, EurAsEC, and CSTO.

Russia hoped to regain the position it had lost in the post-Soviet expanse through the gradually developing SES. The Kremlin retreated on many points, which allowed its partners to exploit the still non-existent integration project in their interests. Some Russian strategists believed that the Caucasus, particularly Georgia and its policy, was still a factor that could undermine Russia's authority and the authority of the CIS as a whole. Moscow was apprehensive about a possible aggravation of the military situation around South Ossetia and Abkhazia, which might force Russia to distance itself from it and cause Georgia's obvious progress in at least one of the two seats of conflict. Such developments might jolt Baku into using force in Karabakh. Moscow was openly negative about the planned Democratic Choice Community project. In 2005, the crisis in the CIS made itself felt: Turkmenistan left the CIS to become its associate member, while Russia tried to squeeze Georgia out of the structure. Ukraine and Moldova announced that they would either leave the CIS altogether or freeze their membership in it.

In 2006 and 2007, Moscow faced a hard choice: either continue integration across the CIS (SES, EurAsEC, and the union with Belarus), or go on with its integration into the world economy through WTO membership. The SES and Russia's membership in the WTO would be compatible if other SES members (Belarus, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan) joined the WTO in turn.

Early in October 2005, St. Petersburg hosted a meeting of heads of state of the Central Asian Cooperation Organization, which Kazakhstan also attended. It was decided to unite this structure with the Eurasian Economic Community. In view of the shared strategic aims and tasks of the two organizations and taking into consideration that the practical tasks of creating an integrated market, water and energy programs, as well as programs in transport, foodstuffs, and other spheres the CACO is dealing with are being successfully carried out within the EurAsEC, the heads of the CACO members decided to accept the Republic of Uzbekistan as another member of EurAsEC at its request; Russia's position proved to be the key one.



Russia's political elite is concentrated on integration of the Four (Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine), expecting that the other CIS countries will also be attracted. Turkmenistan is left outside the integration project, however, it may join the Eurasian Gas Consortium now being built. Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan may be tempted to join the integration process later. Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, two EurAsEC members, will also join the SES; Moldova and Armenia are still pondering on the subject.

So far, however, Russia has not yet formulated an integrated and strategically substantiated policy in relation to the CIS countries for several serious reasons. First, the centrifugal trends are too strong; it is impossible to apply the same pattern to states that have already moved away from one another during the independence years. This explains the RF's intention to concentrate on bilateral relations. The Russian political elite is disunited over Moscow's CIS policy: while the military establishment is resolved to restore the country's position based on force by resorting to all sorts of legal means and methods (from military-technical cooperation to artificially fanning these countries' concerns over the threat of international terrorism, extremism, and drug-related crime), other political forces are convinced that Russia should get rid of its so-called Central Asian underbelly.

On the whole, Russia's national interests in the CIS can be reduced to the following key positions: stability across the post-Soviet expanse; unhampered use of the CIS members' transit potential; preservation of a single economic space; Moscow's greater role in the use of hydropower and mineral resources (particularly in Central Asia); and international recognition (by the West, China, etc.) of Russia's special role in the CIS, which should take the form of consultations on all important decisions that might affect conflict settlement and the geopolitical context.

Russia was determined to increase the effectiveness of the already functioning mechanisms: the CIS, the Union of Belarus and Russia, CSTO, EurAsEC, and SCO, and to set up new structures: the SES (which was frozen because of the Ukrainian developments). The union with Belarus was suspended because of the crisis in the two countries bilateral relations in the late 2006 and early 2007.

#### KAZAKHSTANI-RUSSIAN RELATIONS

During the past decade and a half, relations between the two countries have been generally good and friendly despite certain unsettled issues. Spurred on by Russia's recent increased attention toward Central Asia, relations between Kazakhstan and Russia became more dynamic. As a geopolitical neighbor with considerable international weight, and because of its economic potential and several other factors, Russia moved high up the list of Kazakhstan's foreign policy priorities.

In the far from simple conditions of 2004 and 2005 when the threat of interference in the republic's domestic affairs became very real, Moscow stood staunchly by Astana's side. Their active concerted efforts defused the threat of another Color Revolution, this time in Kazakhstan.

In turn, Kazakhstan fully supported Russia's integration efforts and remained a loyal ally in the CIS, SCO, CSTO, EurAsEC, and SES even though this might have

damaged Kazakhstan's bilateral relations with some of the countries both in Near and Far abroad and even its own economic interests.

At the new stage of their bilateral relations, Astana has to decide for itself how close it is prepared to approach Russia and how deep their integration should be in order not to impair Kazakhstan's national sovereignty. The following questions had to be answered: What did President Putin have in mind? And might Moscow subject Kazakhstan to the pressure it had already used elsewhere?

Kazakhstani-Russian relations are commonly divided into four stages: (1) 1991-1992, when the legal basis of inter-state relations was formed; (2) 1992-1994, when the main trends and forms of bilateral cooperation in the political, economic, and military spheres became obvious; (3) 1995-2000, when bilateral cooperation was extended and deepened within the integration processes in the CIS; and (4) 2001 to the present, when the two countries have been cooperating in the bilateral rather than multilateral format.<sup>4</sup>

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, relations between the two countries, and Russia's Central Asian strategy for that matter, entered a new phase. This coincided with two events: first, much more obvious security threats emanating from Afghanistan and incursions of IMU fighters into some of the Central Asian republics; second, Vladimir Putin became the president of the Russian Federation, which meant changes at Russia's highest political level. This obviously affected the dynamics of the two countries' bilateral relations.

By that time, relations between America and Kazakhstan had developed into an irritant that strongly affected bilateral relations between Moscow and Astana. Russia closely followed and continues to follow Washington's rising pressure on Kazakhstan. It is especially irritated by the fact that the sharpest criticism of the Republic of Kazakhstan and its leaders coming from across the ocean coincided with another period of closer relations between Kazakhstan and Russia. This was especially obvious between the late 1990s and early 2000s. Few in Russia doubted that America intended to keep the country away from the integration processes that involved Russia and prevent its drawing closer to Moscow.

Early this decade, foreign experts concluded that Moscow was acting much faster on the Caspian thanks to the already existing long-term agreements between Russia and Kazakhstan and between Russia and Turkmenistan on gas and oil transit, as well as to the highly attractive Baltic pipelines which would move gas condensate from the Karachaganak gas field.

Moscow and the West could not agree on how the Kashagan oil should reach the markets. Russia tried to block the use of oil tankers and the intention to build an underwater pipeline across the Caspian. Many in the West were convinced that Moscow wanted to move Russian and Caspian oil in a single flow under its own control in order to gain economic advantages and acquire new levers of pressure on the European customers. Russia's pipelines, however, are depleted, while their load-carrying capacities are relatively small.

On the whole, under Putin, Moscow expected that Astana would remain a loyal ally on all strategic issues of their bilateral relations. Indeed, had Kazakhstan chosen to remove itself from the sphere of the Kremlin's strategic interests, Central Asia would have been lost; Russia's



economic interests and geopolitical status would have been damaged beyond repair, while its military security would have been threatened.

Kazakhstan's relations with the West on many issues aroused concern in Moscow; the republic's dependence on Russia in the military-technical sphere could no longer be taken for granted. Astana was actively developing its relations with the West (within NATO and on a bilateral basis). Moscow and Beijing (Kazakhstan's SCO partners) did not like the fact that several countries (the U.S., Germany, and the U.K.) were invited to modernize Kazakhstan's air defense system.

Russia, which in the past had been more or less indifferent to Kazakhstan's (so far abstract) statements about its potential involvement in the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline, displayed much more concern as the intention began gradually developing into a firm decision. The Kremlin is sometimes puzzled by Astana's stand on certain international issues, the Iraqi issue among them, in which it apparently counted on Astana's support. The Caspian problem can be described as a far from simple challenge to Kazakhstan's future. It will affect its relations with all the geopolitical actors (Russia, the U.S., China, Iran, and the European Union).

We can say that, on the whole, relations between Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation remained stable throughout the entire period of independence when both countries demonstrated their readiness to cooperate. A solid legal, economic, political, and cultural basis has formed under this cooperation. When shaping its relations with Russia, Kazakhstan proceeded from the fact that Russia was one of the key partners in all spheres of possible cooperation. At the same time, Russia never betrayed its intention to influence Kazakhstan's foreign policy or interfere in its relations with third countries. There is every reason to believe that in the 21st century the two countries will remain good neighbors and will maintain stable relations on the bilateral and multilateral levels.

Throughout 2004 and 2005, the situation in the CIS developed under the strong influence of the Georgian, Ukrainian, and partly Moldavian events: rapid regime changes, the new regimes' Western orientation, and the West's obvious intention to export Color Revolutions to other CIS countries. Throughout 2005 and 2006, Russia and Kazakhstan found it much harder to pursue their joint policies in the CIS and other integration structures. The crisis in the CIS forced Kazakhstan to step up its involvement in the post-Soviet expanse and, at the same time, shift its interests to smaller integration units (the EurAsEC and SES). Strange as it may seem, in 2005 Kazakhstan intensified its contacts with the "revolutionary" republics—Georgia, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan—even though Astana remained firmly pro-Russian and condemned the "revolutionary" practices. These republics, in turn, wanted cooperation, particularly in the energy sphere.

In the very complex situation of 2004-2006, Kazakhstan sided with Russia, which wanted to preserve, at least formally, the CIS in the near future as a guarantee of a certain amount of political stability across the post-Soviet expanse. On the other hand, in 2006 Astana and Moscow launched unofficial and hardly publicized consultations on setting up a new integration organization as an alternative to the CIS. It was to be more compact and more effective in the military-strategic and economic fields. In the fall of 2006, Kazakhstan submitted its suggestions.

It proceeded from the conviction that the ideology and conception of the CIS should be changed rather than merely transformed to develop the CIS into an effective structure of economic integration. An analysis of the key aspects of the new independent states' development patterns suggests that the post-Soviet expanse lacks an adequate basis for synchronized multisided integration for the simple reason that the social, economic, political and general development levels of its states are very different.

Russia's interests in Kazakhstan are not limited to close economic ties and humanitarian cooperation. They also extend to the national security sphere for the simple reason that part of its strategic infrastructure is located in Kazakhstan; the two countries are tied together by all sorts of agreements in the security sphere within the CSTO and on a bilateral basis; military industries and the armies of the two states are closely connected; Russia has geopolitical interests in the part of the Republic of Kazakhstan that borders on Russia (the Caspian being one such place). And, what is even more important, the bulk of Russia's nuclear and strategic potential is deployed very close to Kazakhstan's border.

This means that Russia will never permit any unfriendly or even inadequately loyal regime in Kazakhstan. In 2004 and 2005 Russia threw its political weight into stabilization of the situation around Kazakhstan at the far from simple time of the parliamentary and presidential elections. By demonstrating his support of the president of Kazakhstan on the eve of elections, President Putin attracted the votes of the Russian-speaking population. Moscow used its own channels to inform the most active geopolitical actors in Central Asia that Russia would never permit a repetition of the Ukrainian alternative.

Astana cherished its cooperation with Moscow as its main partner in the military-technical sphere. Kazakhstan and Russia share a normative-legal base of military-technical cooperation, which includes bilateral agreements and involvement in multisided structures (the CSTO and SCO).

The present strategic situation in the world and the region, as well as Russia's real potential mostly concentrated in the military-political sphere and science allow Kazakhstan to channel military-technical cooperation with Russia in the desired direction. Moscow, always ready to fortify its regional position, is prepared to meet Astana halfway on many issues to keep Washington, another factor of influence, away from Kazakhstan—the republic is too close a neighbor to tolerate this.

Bilateral cooperation in the security sphere was confirmed by the agreements on deliveries of weapons and military equipment on easy terms. The documents, which are in effect over a long-term period, not only allow Kazakhstan to consistently develop its army, but also impose certain obligations on Russia.

In 2005-2006, military-technical cooperation was marred by Astana's vague stance on the air defense complexes. Russia expected Kazakhstan to buy its modified S-300 complex in accordance with the corresponding documents on military-technical cooperation and the 2003 agreement. For several reasons, primarily financial reasons, Kazakhstan decided to buy air defense systems from NATO countries and entered into negotiations with some of them, thus creating tension between the two countries in the military-technical sphere.



Early in 2006, however, strategic cooperation between them was crowned with the launching of KazSat, Kazakhstan's first satellite. Russia and Kazakhstan worked together on the Bayterek carrier rocket. Related to peaceful space activities, these achievements objectively strengthen both countries' strategic potential.

In the strained security situation, the CSTO will prove its usefulness for Kazakhstan. Russia, the structure's centerpiece, makes it even stronger, which explains why Astana was willing to specify the points that guaranteed the members' security (patterned on similar NATO clauses, the central points of the Alliance's constituent documents). This was done when the CST was transformed into the CSTO in 2002.

The geopolitical collisions of the latter half of the 1990s created a fairly unexpected structure – the Shanghai Cooperation Organization – with two heavyweights (Russia and China) and Kazakhstan as an active member. For ten years now this organization has been an important factor of Kazakhstan's international status and of the regional geopolitical situation.

Today, this is one of the world's most contradictory structures: it is neither a military-strategic alliance, nor a fully-fledged economic union, nor a political structure in the traditional (geographic, culture, civilizational, etc.) respect. Still, it holds an important place in Astana's foreign policy merely because Russia and China (two powers that Kazakhstan cannot ignore for geographic and geopolitical reasons) are SCO members. On the other hand, the SCO plays on the Central Asian field, which means that Astana cannot stay away from it either.

The SCO has created certain foreign policy advantages for Kazakhstan, as well as certain risks. The country is firmly resolved to pursue a multi-vector foreign policy; as a SCO member it acquires better chances to balance its relations with the West. But every time Kazakhstan has to shoulder new excessive responsibilities suggested or imposed either by China or Russia within the SCO, it creates new problems for itself. Its involvement in the SCO makes it harder to balance between Moscow and China; it is very possible that in the future it will be forced to take sides.

SCO membership is part, but not the most important part, of Kazakhstani-Russian relations. The Kremlin is much less jealous of Astana's contacts with Beijing than of its Washington connections. There is no doubt, however, that relations between Kazakhstan and China do affect Kazakhstan's relations with Russia. Neither the RF nor China has so far formulated the SCO's final goals and its immediate tasks—this is the organization's greatest mystery. SCO membership poses an element of uncertainty: neither Kazakhstan nor the other Central Asian members know how any of the SCO countries will respond to each other's unilateral steps; and whether they are prepared to jointly respond to certain steps of the Central Asian countries in relation to one of them or in relation to the geopolitical forces outside the SCO.

In 2005, the Chinese suggested that the political structure should become an economic one. Moscow and Astana's response was cool: if realized the SCO would have to run the risk of turning into a Chinese "economic protectorate".

This threat is very real with respect to Moscow and Astana, which are seen from China as potential raw material suppliers and China's energy-rich rear. This means

that its strategic interests in Central Asia and its SCO involvement deserve close scrutiny.

Russia's strategic community is in two minds about the growing energy cooperation between Kazakhstan and China. The new actor (Kazakhstan) added certain new dimensions to the energy-related contexts, but experts refuse to describe the developments as negative.<sup>5</sup> Russian specialists believe that China's willingness to pay for the pipeline to bring fuel from Kazakhstan should be interpreted as a demonstration of alternatives and a response to those in Russia who obviously bided for time before coming to a final decision about the route.

Russian analysts came to the conclusion that, political ambitions apart, Kazakhstan had no economic potential to compete with Russia when it came to energy-related contacts with China. What is more, it does not need this rivalry. In fact, Russia might shift energy cooperation with Astana to the strategic level: the pipeline to China will make it possible to move oil along the idling Omsk-Pavlodar-Chimkent pipeline and then along the Kazakhstan-China pipeline.

Russian companies find Kazakhstan, a country rich in mineral resources that needs foreign investments and is one of the Kremlin's important partners in the post-Soviet expanse, a most attractive target of investments. Gazprom plans to buy shares of its gas transportation system if and when it is put on the market.

Russia is resolved to help preserve Kazakhstan's domestic and foreign policy stability, its social and economic health, and its freedom to pursue an independent policy while remaining Russia's good neighbor. Kazakhstan is Russia's most important partner in its system of geopolitical and geostrategic priorities in Central Asia. In the future, Moscow will preserve its active position in its relations with Astana.

#### THE FUTURE OF KAZAKHSTAN-RUSSIA BILATERAL RELATIONS

The following questions will dominate the joint geopolitical agenda in the next few decades: How will their relations develop? Will the two states become the core of a new integration structure in Eurasia, or will the inertia of disintegration spurred on by their national interests and geopolitical pressure from the outside force them to choose their own routes? The answers call for a detailed investigation of the future of economic integration, the degree of mutual dependence and mutual interest, and the potential of bilateral cooperation.

Globalization is one of the most important factors which will strongly affect the economies of Kazakhstan and Russia in the near future and has already created a paradox. Moscow and Astana are developing into allies and rivals; they are already involved in rivalry over the European and world markets of hydrocarbons, steel, rolled metal, ores, uranium, grain, etc. For many years their rivalry was contained by objective circumstances: the situation on the world markets, the EU's tariff policies (the main trade partner of both countries), Kazakhstan's dependence on Russia in the sphere of transportation, and their bilateral and multilateral agreements (Tariff Agreements, EurAsEC, and others) determined the volume and structure of exports. The leaders' political will and political understanding played an even more important part.



This means that their relations were regulated not so much by economic as by the political mechanisms created by the need for mutual support and continued positive bilateral contacts. Eurasian integration, at least its Kazakhstani-Russian sector, is not limited to economic considerations – it is suggested by political considerations as well.

The Russian expert community believes that Moscow does not want the Kazakhstani elite's "special" political orientations (including an independent foreign policy) to become a stumbling block on the road to closer economic cooperation. Mutually advantageous economic relations and successful bilateral integration projects are expected to introduce more trust and efficiency into the political relations between the two countries.

In 2007, we watched a unique political situation take shape: Astana was concerned with who would replace Putin as Russia's president, while Moscow was following the Astana developments with the same feelings. This created a field of uncertainty and made outside interference probable. 2008 might produce unexpected risks.

Strange as it may seem, Russia, Kazakhstan's closest ally, is also a potential source of very serious challenges to its future development. Moscow might try to bring integration to its logical end and shift it from the economic to the political sphere, while Astana cannot cut its full-fledged cooperation with the West, which is very much needed for the country's future advance. This calls for maximum flexibility and inordinate diplomatic skills. Political independence and close military-technical cooperation and economic integration are two main conditions of continued allied relations between the two countries and of the entire range of their development for that matter.

We all know that the Republic of Kazakhstan needs real – military-strategic – security guarantees; allied relations with Russia are undoubtedly the weightiest of such guarantees. Throughout the post-Soviet period Kazakhstan's CSTO membership and its bilateral agreements with Russia in the defense sphere have remained the most reliable guarantee of the country's military-strategic and political security.

It should be said that Astana would like to see Putin as Russia's leader. On the whole, seen from Astana, his two terms as the president can be described as positive: he always took Kazakhstan's justified interests into account, he was always prepared to seek compromises, and he valued strategic partnership and allied relations with Kazakhstan. There is only one thing that causes concern in Astana: it is unclear how far Moscow is prepared to go in its efforts to integrate the post-Soviet expanse around itself.

#### CONCLUSION

When President Putin agreed to deploy the forces of the counterterrorist coalition in Central Asia, many believed that the previous axiom of Central Asia being the sphere of Russia's vital interests, which Moscow would not abandon at any cost, was disproved.

Obviously, throughout the 1990s, the Russian factor dominated in Kazakhstan's national security sphere. It rested on bilateral relations and on the countries' cooperation within multisided structures (the CIS, CST, and EurAsEC). It should be said that there were practically

no serious contradictions between Kazakhstan and Russia in the military-political and strategic spheres. Their disagreements were limited mostly to the economic sphere and were consistently removed (the agreement on the legal status of the Caspian can serve as an example). In fact, both countries have always been prepared to reach compromises and to achieve mutual understanding. Those Western and Kazakhstani analysts who were convinced that Moscow would threaten Kazakhstan's state sovereignty or try to bring the region back into the sphere of its influence were proved wrong.

In 2001 and 2002, the situation changed to the extent that it seemed that Russia was losing its role as the region's security guarantor. In 2002, however, the Russian Federation restored some of its former military-political presence in the region and in Kyrgyzstan as its part. In late 2002, Moscow more clearly formulated its aims and tasks within its Central Asian strategy; it separated its military-political contacts from its economic ties with the local republics and identified the means and methods to be used in both fields. The Kremlin took into account Washington's possible opposition to its plans, as well as the opposition of part of the local political elite. Even though Moscow might lose a large part of its former regional influence, the Russian factor will still be prominent in the region and in Kazakhstan for a long time to come.

The Caspian issue presents the greatest problem and the greatest challenge: in the future, it may affect the republic's relations with almost all the geopolitical actors of importance, such as Russia, the United States, China, Iran, and the European Union. The relevance of the Caspian issue to the relations between Russia and Kazakhstan is not limited to the oil component.

In the long run, a Eurasian Confederation of five to ten states might appear on the CIS's territory with Russia and Kazakhstan as the main centripetal force, of which the EurAsEC/SES/CSTO chain may serve as a prototype. If realized, the Confederation will be able to claim the role of a geopolitical force of the first order.

Any changes, to the best or worst, in Moscow's relations with Washington and Brussels will inevitably affect, to one degree or another, the situation in Central Asia and Kazakhstan's international status and security. The main actors (Russia, the U.S., and the EU) never lose sight of the region as a sphere of their strategic interests.

To sum up. By 2007, the Russian Federation had not acquired clear ideas about the future of the post-Soviet expanse as a whole and of Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus in particular. When formulating its foreign policy strategy in its southern "soft underbelly," Russia should keep in mind that, first, the Soviet Union cannot be revived for economic, political, ideological, and other reasons. Second, the political and economic processes in the region are going in different directions, thus adding to the contradictions among the CIS members. This means that Russia should devise highly discriminatory approaches.

Kazakhstan and its close ally Kyrgyzstan are two Central Asian countries with which Russia can establish closer integration based on the already accomplished economic reforms. A single energy market within the EurAsEC is one of Russia's foremost aims; it perfectly fits what is known as Putin's Doctrine and is, in fact, its starting point. Russia is working hard to restore its former influence in the region. Alarmed by China's growing po-



litical and economic presence in the region, it is stepping up its involvement in the SCO.

The above suggests that the situation has been developing stably in the past few years; the potential Color Revolutions in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan were nipped in the bud, so to speak. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan remained in Russia's and the CIS's orbit; until President Niyazov's death Turkmenistan remained faithful to its obligations to Gazprom. The Russian Federation still dominates the sphere of hydrocarbon transportation to the outside markets. The region seems to confirm that President Putin's decision to make an "energy superpower" out of his country and a club of energy producers and energy transporters under Moscow's chairmanship out of the EurAsEC countries was the right one.

At the same time, it is fraught with conflicts: today Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan sell their gas under bilateral agreements each of them has with Russia

and lose part of potential incomes on Russia's transit. Fully aware of this, Russia's Central Asian partners are looking for alternative routes bypassing Russian territory.

Realizing this, the West has stepped up its contacts with the Caspian-Central Asian countries in the sphere of hydrocarbon production and transportation. Undaunted by Russia's potentially sharp responses (Moscow regards the region as its natural monopoly), the West has moved forward in the conviction that the time has come to lay new pipelines (particularly gas pipelines) to leave Russia out in the cold. This move is expected to kill two birds with one stone: Europe will be relieved of its excessive energy dependence on Russia, while the West will widen its sphere of influence in the region. The Western capitals are pursuing an even more ambitious aim: to undermine Putin's Doctrine designed to reintegrate the post-Soviet expanse.

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# Information in War and Political Conflicts: a Historical Overview

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The earliest evidence of the use of information to exert destructive influence on the enemy can be found in historical chronicles. Writing about Xerxes' campaign against Greece, Herodotus notes that, in an attempt to demoralize the enemy, Xerxes spread hyperbolized rumors that "if all the Persian warriors shot forth their arrows the sun would be darkened by their multitude".

In 1241, the Mongol troops led by Batu Khan invaded Hungary. They defeated the Hungarians at the Sajó River and won, among other trophies, the name seal of the Hungarian King Béla. Batu ordered that literate people be found among the captive Hungarians to write a letter on behalf of Béla instructing subjects to stop the resistance. Copies of this letter, with the King's seal on them, were sent to all garrisons in the country.

Middle-age conflicts between Christianity and Islam are also a vivid example of manipulation of information. The Pope said that the main goal of the crusades was to free the Tomb of Christ, which remained in Jerusalem, although the real goals were quite different.

A new age of information warfare came with the mass development of printing. When this came about, literacy was not a decisive factor as often images – drawings and caricatures – were used to distribute information.

Napoleon, who widened the boundaries of France under plausible excuses, was a real master of information manipulation. His campaign against Russia was explained by a desire to depose the Czarist rule and abolish serfdom. Information was distributed through printed orders, manifests, appeals and open letters. In his words, "Four newspapers are to be feared more than a thousand bayonets". [1] It is no accident that his army had a field printing shop. Napoleon was one of the first to make a distinction between internal and external propaganda. In France, the number of newspapers was cut from 73 to 13, with strict censorship imposed on the remaining ones. At the same time, he tried to approach the editors of English newspapers. Yefim Chernyak thinks that "In [Napoleon's propaganda], it is easy to find more or less manifest traits of psychological warfare. These are the statements about unity in his own camp and discord among the enemy; the differentiated approach to various groups; concealment of bad news and advertisement of the good news, even if they were of low importance; making

conclusions based on fake facts; promotion of slogans that were easy to understand; reiteration of useful and convenient propositions, including those that were obvious fakes; misstatement of facts and arguments presented in the enemy's press; relentless efforts to ridicule the enemy; blaming the enemy on his own crimes or on actions, for which both sides were equally responsible". [2]

By the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the use of information to impact the enemy and preserve and solidify a country's own security achieved a new scale. During the two world wars and the subsequent Cold War, the role of information in the confrontation between the sides multiplied.

During WWI, the practice of information warfare became systemic and consistent and was backed with theory. In the opinion of L. John Martin, an American expert on propaganda, "It was then discovered that total war could be fought only by attacking the minds as well as the bodies of men". [3] Russian experts agree with him: "In its essence, WWI was warfare where for the first time printed media were used on a wide scale to affect the enemy. It was this war that used the means and techniques of psychological warfare instigated by the imperial coalitions". [4] Talking about the role of mass media during the Cold War, the Kazakh researcher Galiya Ibrayeva notes that, "After WWII, the Marshall Plan emerged. It was an extensive program for the expansion of American ideas. This required a cardinal change in the work of mass media". [5]

Special divisions began to appear in the armed forces of the contending states, who were now responsible for the informational and psychological influence on the army and civilian population of the enemy. The first such division—the War Propaganda Bureau under the supervision of the Foreign Office – appeared in Britain. Later it was reorganized into the Ministry of Information. In France, propaganda and agitation were the functions of the War Propaganda Service that was a part of the Defense Ministry's General Staff. The U.S. set up a propaganda section at the American Expeditionary Forces staff headquarters.

Germany joined information and psychological warfare at the end of WWI. This was due to the then existing prohibition of the publishing and distribution of propaganda materials that contradicted, in the opinion of the German leaders, the laws of war. By the time when the German bureaucracy abolished prohibition on information and psy-



chological operations, the Germans began to drop leaflets on the English and French positions on the Eastern Front, but they had already missed their chance.

The rapid development of printing explained the prevalence of information and propaganda (leaflets, brochures, newspapers, letters from prisoners of war, documents, orders, posters) over other methods of influencing the enemy. The main media to deliver such materials were the press, aviation (transport aircraft, air balloons, airships) and rumors. At the end of the war, England used, for the first time ever, propaganda leaflet shells and mines.

The genres used in information warfare were rather diverse. Another form of propaganda was letters from prisoners of war. In particular, German soldiers taken captive by the English were provided an official opportunity to write letters to their relatives and friends. But only those letters were sent, in which prisoners wrote about good conditions in camps and no prospects for the Kaiser's troops. Besides, the English established special 'demonstrational' camps, the conditions in which were much better than those in general. They also used fake letters from German prisoners of war. Thanks to the offset printing, the quality of these fakes was so high that German soldiers believed they were original and sent them to the families of prisoners.

The most popular medium of propaganda on the fronts were leaflets. There were two types of leaflets: those addressed to the enemy and to the own troops. Their content varied depending on the audience.

The leaflets dropped by the Germans on the Russian positions on the Eastern Front misinformed that the English and French troops in the west had been defeated and the Russians would have suffered the same fate if they had not laid down arms to "avoid meaningless bloodshed".

The French, in their turn, dropped 29 million leaflets on the German positions and in the rear and the English distributed up to 1 million leaflets daily.

German General Erich Ludendorff wrote in his memoirs about propaganda disseminated "with such cleverness, and on such a large scale that many people could no longer distinguish between enemy propaganda and their own sentiment". [6]

The leaflets 'for own consumption' contained useful information for soldiers, information about situation on the fronts and in the rear and post-war rebuilding, as well as funny stories and jokes. Illustrated leaflets were especially popular with soldiers. Also widely used were leaflets with the text duplicated in several languages. Such leaflets were extensively produced by the Italians who confronted the multinational Austrian and Hungarian troops.

Another medium of informational and psychological influence, front newspapers, also appeared during WWI. As with leaflets, they were differentiated by audience. Fake newspapers, with the authorship attributed to the enemy, were used on a wide scale. A classic example of their use was the information and psychological operation of the Austrian and Hungarian troops against the Italians in 1917. Antiwar social demonstrations broke out in northern Italy at that time. In Turin, several dozens of people were killed when breaking up the demonstrators and their names became known to the enemy intelligence services. Austria printed several issues of the longest-run Italian newspapers, the design of which was identical to the original ones. These fake newspapers reported about the disorder and published the lists of victims. Then aviation disseminated them among the Italian units with the highest percentage of natives of northern Italy. Many

soldiers, who have read those newspapers, left positions and decided to return home. The next date the front line in this section was broken. The Italian losses were 500,000 killed, wounded and missing.

When the war ended, the practical experience in the use of information during warfare became a subject of studies and analyses. An expert in psychological warfare P. Warburton summarized the opinions of researchers as follows: "Today, the main task of warfare is not to destroy the armed forces of the enemy, as earlier, but to undermine the morale of people in the enemy country as a whole, to such an extent that they force their government to make peace. An armed confrontation between armies is just one of the media of attaining this goal". [7]

During WWII all the theoretical and practical achievements of information warfare were once again tested in practice.

The forms of informational and psychological influence on the enemy changed with the development of communications. In addition to printed media, radio was widely used during WWII. Graphics (posters, caricatures, etc.) also remained very popular.

Almost all countries that took part in the war had special divisions and services responsible for information and psychological operations. The USSR had the Soviet Information Bureau (established on the basis of the War and Political Propaganda Bureau), Germany the Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, UK the Political Warfare Executive, and the US the Office of War Information.

Now we observe another burst of interest to the role of information in WWII, especially in the Third Reich. This interest is healthy and rather natural. What happened in Nazi Germany was not only a demonstration of crowd psychology on the scale of a state, but a phenomenon that lasted for more than ten years. According to some authoritative opinions, the Nazis could ensure this 'achievement,' which had no parallel in history, thanks to the mass media they had at their disposal for the first time. In particular, radio allowed the Nazi propaganda to penetrate millions of houses. It could be suggested that Nazi Germany was the beginning of what was later called 'mass society,' a symbiosis of the media influence and group thinking.

An interesting book in this context is Robert Edwin Herzstein's *The War That Hitler Won*. Despite the disputable conclusion stated as title of the book, the author provides a broad picture of how the fascist propaganda formed and functioned and how it made the antihuman fascist philosophy attractive for the huge population of Germany. The importance of propaganda in the Third Reich is confirmed by the following fact. During the Congress of the national socialists in Nuremberg, there was a slogan in the hall: "Propaganda helped us to come to power; propaganda helps us to keep power; propaganda will help us to conquer the world". [8]

With this slogan, in the end of the 1930s the Nazi Party established the Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda. The First Department of the Propaganda Ministry was charged with administrative tasks; the Second Department was responsible for the promotion of the party's policy, it was a 'brain center' that generated propagandistic campaigns to be implemented by other ministries. Other departments were in charge of film and theatre productions, literature, fine arts, and music. There was also a separate department responsible for radio broadcasting.

The Wehrmacht also had a propaganda department. While the ministry was charged with strategic tasks (propa-



ganda in the country, foreign political propaganda, disinformation), the Propaganda Department had tactical ones. The latter included propaganda among the Wehrmacht soldiers, propaganda in the immediate battle areas and propaganda among the enemy troops. To this end, propaganda companies were set up. "By June 22, there were a total of 19 propaganda companies (12 in the army forces, four in the air forces, three in the navy, and six platoons of war correspondents in SS troops). In addition, each of the three army groups (North, Center, and South) had a propaganda battalion, which published newspapers, conducted radio propaganda and distributed films." Researchers estimate that by 1943, the population of propaganda troops had reached 15,000 and that each company had 115 soldiers. [9]

In addition to the Wehrmacht, SS, the Ministry of Enlightenment and Propaganda and the Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories, the Soviet population was targeted by higher school institutions (Ministry of Culture), Foreign Policy Office of NSDAP, the East Research Institute, and other organizations. All these institutions were tied in a complicated subordination scheme, yet they were rather effective.

The transformation of the image of the Soviet Union in German propaganda is of special interest. Before 1933, the USSR was presented as a focus of universal evil. Between 1933 and 1941—to conceal the aggressive plans against the USSR—the tone of information changed. It became more loyal, although the uncertainty about the plans of the fascist Germany remained. Joseph Goebbels wrote in his diary on June 5, 1941: "Guidelines for propaganda aimed at R[ussia]: no anti-socialism; no return to Czarism; no open admission that the country will be divided up, or we shall lose all chance with the army, which is great Russian in feeling; against Stalin and Jewish masters; land for the peasants, but the collectives to be maintained for the present so that the harvest can be saved". [10] One can suggest that the change of tone in regard to the USSR was a part of the information plan to conceal war preparations.

On June 22, 1941, preliminary bombardment began which delivered leaflets to the Red Army soldiers and their commanders. The leaflets called to lay down arms, give in or join the fascist troops. Experts believe that during June and July 1941 some 200 million leaflets in 30 languages of the Soviet peoples were distributed. This is how the Germans launched their information and psychological campaign.

The USSR took certain measures to localize and remedy the effects of German propaganda, on the one hand, and to mobilize the Soviet people, on the other. In June 1941, the Soviet War and Political Propaganda Bureau was set up. Its task was to determine the contents, forms and methods of propaganda among the enemy troops and population. In July 1941, as many as 18 newspapers in foreign languages, including ten in German, were published. Periodic radio broadcasts were launched in German, Finnish and Romanian. Leaflets titled 'What Happens in Germany' or 'How Prisoners of War Live in Soviet Russia' were printed. Yet, the efficiency of these measures was poor because there was no single authority, which would be responsible for informational and psychological resistance to Germany. This task was implemented simultaneously by special propaganda services and political instructors in troops. In other words, until the middle of 1942 this work was not systemic. Another cause of the low efficiency of propaganda was, in the opinion of experts, poor knowledge of the enemy. To fix this problem, the propaganda bodies hired many Germanists specializing in various fields.

The propagandistic materials targeted on both the enemy and the Soviet population began to use new approaches such as appeals to the opinion leaders. For example, they cited Friedrich II: "Any hostile army that would dare invade Russia and move farther than Smolensk would definitely find their graves in those steppes". Another leaflet cited Otto von Bismarck's words about inadmissibility of the war with Russia.

However, the main task of the information and propaganda campaign – to mobilize all the Soviet people to fight against the fascist Germany – was fulfilled. In the summer of 1942, the War and Political Propaganda Council was set up under the Main Political Departments of the Soviet Army and Navy, which worked as departments of the Communist Party. The council was responsible for the information support of warfare. The initial main thesis of propaganda 'Everything for the front! Everything for the Victory!' was changed to 'For the full expulsion of German fascist invaders from our Motherland!' The main media of the informational and psychological influence within the USSR were the press (newspapers and magazines), graphic arts (posters and caricatures), films and oral agitation (lectures, speeches and conversations).

It is no wonder that wartime changed the structure of the Soviet press seriously, in the rear also. In particular, in the Kazakh SSR the informational space was deeply reformatted. According to Khalizhan Bekkhozhin, "With the beginning of the war, the republican periodicals had to make significant changes in the organization of the work. They needed to save efforts and money, suspend publication of sectoral newspapers and magazines in the interests of the system of war newspapers, and focus all their efforts on the party newspapers. From July 1941, the following periodicals were suspended in the republic: the newspapers *Leninshil Zhas*, *Leninskaya Smena*, *Pioner Kazakhstana*, *Oktyabr Balalary*, Komsomol newspapers in five oblasts, the magazines *Communist*, *Zhaz Bolshevik*, *Pioner*, *Vozhatyiga Komekshi*, *Stalin Zholy*, *Narodnoye Khozyaistvo Kazakhstana*, *Kazakstan Kolkhoz-Sovkhozday*, *Literatura i Iskusstvo Kazakhstana*, *Khalyk Mugalimi*, and *Adibiet zhane Iskusstvo*.

"During wartime, the tasks of these newspapers and magazines were vested with the republican newspapers *Sotsialistik Kazakhstan* and *Kazakhstanskaya Pravda*, as well as oblast and regional newspapers. To save paper and money, the number of copies and personnel of *Sotsialistik Kazakhstan* and *Kazakhstanskaya Pravda* was reduced. From July 25, 1941, oblast newspapers were printed on only two pages.

"The number of oblast newspapers did not shrink too much; only four newspapers were suspended. In Karaganda, East Kazakhstan and South Kazakhstan Oblasts, instead of two separate newspapers in Russian and Kazakh, one bilingual newspaper was put in circulation.

"Conversely, the number of district newspapers grew. The Communist Party valued their role in the political and patriotic upbringing of people. At the beginning of the war, the number of district newspapers reached 196". [11]

Radio was used on a wide scale. Reports by the Soviet Information Bureau attracted great attention. Sagymbai Kozybayev wrote: "The advantages of radio such as mass coverage, a wide range of operation, efficiency, flexibility, ability to transmit 'live' speech to long distances, and strong emotional impact of the sounding words and music were its exclusive capabilities in war circumstances". [12]

In the spring of 1943, the information and psychological campaign acquired a systematic, extensive and consistent



nature. "The Main Political Departments took a number of measures to improve the party's political work. On April 12-13, 1943, an All-Army Conference of Komsomol Workers was held... The same month an All-Army Conference of Agitators was organized. The best propagandists delivered lectures and speeches on the international and internal position of the Soviet Union, the successes of the field forces, the skills of an agitator in war circumstances, and other topics... The *Agitator's Notepad* was printed in multiple copies to help agitators. To strengthen mass agitation among soldiers of non-Russian ethnic origin, the Party's Central Committee ordered to significantly expand the number of the Red Army newspapers in ethnic languages. By the beginning of 1943, the Red Army printed fifty newspapers in the languages of the Soviet peoples. The Main Political Department of the Red Army organized systematic publication of brochures, posters, leaflets and slogans in ethnic languages". [13] Propaganda was systematized and used scientific approaches to the organization of information and propaganda campaigns. The flows of information were differentiated by target groups: propaganda for the Soviet armed forces, propaganda in the rear and temporarily occupied Soviet territories, and propaganda among the army and population of the enemy and allies. The systematization of the informational and propaganda work raised its efficiency. Experts say that, "In 1944, the term 'propaganda operation' was coined, which meant a set of propagandistic actions in the sphere of printed and oral propaganda, graphic agitation, the use of prisoners of war, including 'back releases,' etc. All these actions concentrated on one idea and were subjected to the nature of warfare and the plans and tasks of the command. In 1944-1945, 27 propaganda operations were undertaken". [14]

In 1944, when the victory of the USSR became inevitable, the morale of the Red Army and Soviet population improved significantly. This entailed changes in the information and propaganda tactics. Two tasks became paramount: to explain to the Red Army why they should go and liberate an alien country and to explain to the people living in Eastern Europe why the Soviet army should be present in their territories. The latter was more difficult because of the negative image of the USSR that had been created by the enemy for several years. These two tasks were entrusted to the political departments of armies and troops, which had 87,000 people on service on January 1, 1945. Information campaigns were managed by the Propaganda Department (later Information Department) of the Soviet Military Administration in Germany. The formerly underground antifascist groups and resistance movements, as well as the troops of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary, who fought together with the Red Army, were all involved in the informational and propaganda work. The printed media was used in addition to oral agitation. From September 1944 to May 1945, 8.7 million leaflets with the appeals of the Soviet command to the Czechs and Slovaks were distributed in Czechoslovakia alone. Newspapers were also widely used: *Nowe Życie*, *Wolność* and *Wolna Polska* in Poland; *Cuvântul Liber* in Romania; *Új Szó* in Hungary; *Österreichische Zeitung* in Austria; *Täglichen Rundschau* and *Deutsche Zeitung* in Germany. In addition to this, the propaganda forces exerted constant informational pressure on the enemy to persuade them that resistance was meaningless.

During WWII, the Soviet Union gained serious experience in ideological warfare, which was later analyzed by

researchers and applied in the course of the global confrontation between the USSR and the U.S., the so-called Cold War.

Many experts agree that the USSR's defeat in the Cold War and its subsequent breakdown were caused, to a significant extent, by its inability to confront information attacks of the West. Information warfare reached its peak by the beginning of the 1980s, when the function of informational and psychological influence in the U.S. national security system surged up. The new 'master' of the White House, Ronald Reagan, offered a new national security strategy, which comprised, in addition to diplomatic and economic mechanisms, an information component. "In January 1983, Ronald Reagan signed National Security Decision Directive NSDD-77, 'Management of Public Diplomacy Relative to National Security.' This directive provided a wider definition of public diplomacy, stating that it 'is comprised of those actions of the U.S. Government designed to generate support for our national security objectives.' This definition also implied organization and implementation of a wide range of informational and cultural tasks. The directive was intended to provide a planning and coordination mechanism for the public, informational and political activities of the U.S. administration, as well as issues related to TV and radio broadcasting." [15] The author believes that with Reagan's coming to power, the mechanisms of informational influence attracted significant attention. "An era of global fight for public conscience began with the help of cutting-edge information technologies, against the background of coordinated actions of all the government and commercial structures as well as the special services of the U.S." [16] The U.S. National Security Council (NSC), tied to the State Department, Pentagon, CIA and USIA, became the core of information operations.

Recently, there arose many opinions on information warfare between the U.S. and USSR. Below is what sociologist Alexander Zinoviev thought on the algorithm of information warfare against the USSR, cited from his book *The Russian Experiment*:

"1. To understand the individual peculiarities of the Soviet political elite there emerged a whole new science called '*kremlenology*.' In the U.S. alone, over 170 universities and research centers studied the USSR. Fifty universities and research centers had those studies as their permanent research activities.

2. *Kremlenologists* studied the Central Committee's apparatus in the most meticulous way. But they did not only study, they exerted influence on the party's leaders. How did they? Through mass media. Through assistants and advisers. Through diplomats, journalists and KGB agents... We should accept the fact that in the 1980s the West began to manipulate the top Soviet leaders with an increasing effect."

Many experts believe that it was glasnost, a component of Gorbachev's perestroika, which speeded up the collapse of the USSR. "Glasnost was possibly the main cause of the final breakdown of the Soviet Union. It was Gorbachev's idea... When Gorbachev came to power in 1985, no one expected that the end of the era of communism was so close." [17] Glasnost and perestroika destroyed the authority of the Communist Party. In a totalitarian state, the fall of the main political force means its political non-viability.

'Ideological capitulation' became an important factor in the breakdown of the USSR. The so-called 'new political thinking,' which rejected a fundamental proposition that the



modern world is divided into two antagonistic public and political systems – a socialistic and a capitalistic one – also played a significant role. The Soviet power, with the help of the media, also promoted the idealistic theses of the integrity and indivisibility of the world, insisted on the impossibility of solving global problems with the methods of force, and declared that the universal way to solve the global issue was not the balance of the two systems, but the balance of their interests.

Glasnost instigated, to a significant extent, an increase in the number of the media. In 1987, the country had over 7,500 newspapers, including some 1,000 central, republican, *krai* and oblast periodicals, and over 2,500 magazines. The party committees supervised 114 printing houses. *Pravda* circulated in more than 11 million copies, *Trud* over 18 million, *Izvestiya* 8 million, and *Komsomolskaya Pravda* 17 million. [19]

Perestroika strengthened the authority of the media. In 1989, the country's press included 8,800 newspapers with a one-off circulation of 230 million copies and 1,629 magazines with a circulation of 220 million copies. In a year, the circulation of newspapers went up by 4.6% and magazines 4.3%.

Despite the deformation of interethnic relationships, the structural nature of the Soviet journalism remained multiethnic. In 1989, newspapers were published in 55 languages. The circulation of republican newspapers grew by 1,200,000 copies, oblast 700,000, and district and municipal 1,700,000 copies each.

Heading for perestroika, democratization and glasnost resulted in abolition of the conventional one-party system and transition to a new one, democratic and multiparty. Under public pressure, an article of the Soviet Constitution was changed in March 1990, which entrusted the Communist Party with the management of the Soviet society. This liquidated the Communist Party's monopolistic right to publish periodicals.

In June 1990, the Law *On the Press and Other Mass Media* was adopted in the USSR. This law abolished censorship, provided extensive rights to set up printed and other media and set forth registration requirements for them. This was perceived as a sign of building new principles of journalism in a democratic society. According to the State Press Committee of the former USSR, as of March 15, 1991, the country had some 1,800 registered newspapers and magazines with the all-Union audience. About 850 newspapers were new, of which 233 were owned by editorial offices and publishers, 291 by public organizations, 124 by associations, 99 by cooperatives, 55 by joint ventures, 24 by party organizations, 25 by joint-stock companies, and 19 by religious organizations.

The first 'information volleys' were fired on the most recent past, which was, in the Soviet ideology, a basement that united people into a more or less integrated community. "Reportage and problematic series such as the *Prozhektor Perestroiki* (*The Spotlight of Perestroika*), *V Silu Slozhivshikhsya Obstoyatelstv* (*Due to the Circumstances*), *V Fokuse Problema* (*Problem in Focus*), *Dlya Vsekh i Kazhdogo* (*For All and Everyone*), *O Problemakh Sotsialnoi Spravedlivosti* (*On the Problems of Social Justice*) and others were of special interest to viewers. The publicist programs *Vzlyad* (*Viewpoint*) and *Pozitsiya* (*Position*) had a huge audience."

The prospects for the reorganization of the economy were widely covered by radio. The All-Union Radio

broadcasted the *Radioanketa Perestroiki* (*The Radio Questionnaire of Perestroika*) and developed new genres such as *Aktualnoye Interview* (*Topical Interview*) or *Radioperekhlichka* (*Radio Roll Call*). Radio programs *Contact* and the publicist *Signal*, which was to some extent similar to the *Prozhektor Perestroiki*, were especially popular with listeners.

A new achievement of television was invitation of professional journalists, in addition to broadcasters. Journalists got an opportunity to declare their position. A number of non-conventional and interesting shows appeared such as the *Pyatoye Koleso* (*The Fifth Wheel*), *120 Minut* (*120 Minutes*), *600 Sekund* (*600 Seconds*), *TSN*, *ATV* (*Author Television*), the weekly *7 Dnei* (*7 Days*), *DVM* (*Good Evening, Moscow*). Most of these programs were live.

The above media targeted the party apparatus and the historical past of the country. Criticism began from the unmasking of the repressive Stalin's regime and continued with the implemented socialistic model. The former Soviet leaders were the first to be criticized. The press and television exhibited them as bloody tyrants and executioners (Joseph Stalin), impetuous and ill-mannered persons (Nikita Khrushchev), or old dotards (Leonid Brezhnev). An 'ideological revision' of the USSR's achievements in the production and scientific fields began: Gagarin's first flight into space was called in question; the Virgin Lands campaign was presented as Khrushchev's gamble, and industrialization of the Soviet republics as the colonialist policy of the Soviet Russia. The country's economic system became subject of tough, although not always fair, criticism. As a result, a consumer of information faced polyphony of opinions: "Economic programs were presented in the press by Leonid Abalkin, Abel Aganbegyan, Yegor Gaidar, Stanislav Shatalin, Nikolai Shmelyov, Grigory Yavlinsky, and others. Nikolai Ryzhkov proclaimed the state economic reformation program".

"Discussions in the media focused on a question of principle: whether to build new socialism on a market basis or whether the market will inevitably lead to capitalism as a mode of production. In the context of glasnost and pluralism, answers to these questions were quite different. Alongside categorical statements that the market and socialism are incompatible, many newspapers and magazines had the opposite opinion. Discussions went on, but attempts to reform the economy with the widely advertised acceleration and other new economic approaches did not bring about the expected results." [20]

The thesis on the colonialist policy of Russia was actualized for the first time in the Baltic republics and then in the majority of the Soviet republics. This proposition was proactively used to destroy the territorial integrity of the USSR and provoke ethnic conflicts. "In a new political situation, the press could not conceal that the republics still promoted ethnic, cultural and social derogation of other ethnic groups, who lived there. In June 1989 *Izvestiya* wrote that even the party leaders in some republics had to acknowledge the existence of deformations in interethnic relationships in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Uzbekistan, Moldavia, and Tajikistan.

"The press, television and radio conducted a serious discussion about historical memory. It was tied with the history of the national statehood and disputes over the historical geography; it was seen as a subject of ethnic oppression, a source for the formation of an 'image of the enemy.'" [21] An uncontrolled flow of information fostered escalation of



interethnic conflicts and destabilization of the situation in the country. Therefore, democratization and glasnost, which became reality for the media in mid-1980s, turned into a serious factor of the USSR collapse.

Western experts suggested that, "The U.S.' victory in the Cold War was a result of its determined, systematic and all-round strategy, to destruct the Soviet Union. Reagan's strategic directives predestined the historical events. Ultimately, the secret war against the USSR created conditions to defeat it." [22]

An analysis of information and ideological warfare between the USSR and the U.S. at the level of national 'brain centers' resulted in a review of the conceptual frameworks of the state management systems in these two countries, both of which claimed to become the world power. For example, the U.S.' aspiration to maintain global leadership forced it to reconsider its approach to foreign and domestic policy in the late 1990s.

The main developer of new approaches was the so-called 'brain center' of the U.S., the RAND Corporation. This is a structure that works on the assignments of the American government institutions and conducts researches into national security from military and technical, and strategic aspects. This institution played a noticeable part in the global confrontation of the USSR and the U.S. Experts note that, "In the framework of RAND, researches into the development of military strategies, doctrines and systems of the USSR were conducted. At the request of the U.S. Air Force, the Soviet economy, foreign policies and research and technology programs, as well as many other topics related to the Soviet Union, were analyzed." [23]

The results of the recent five-year studies stated in RAND's Report MR-1033-OSD *The Emergence of Noopolitik: Toward an American Information Strategy* [24] suggest that the traditional strategy is undergoing material and deep changes. Until recently, experts in national security forecasted the potential of the opponent states in a space that comprised three dimensions: political, economic and military capabilities of the states. Today, thanks to the 'digital revolution,' they witness the birth of a new sphere—'information strategy.' Although this direction has not fully formed yet, it is already obvious that it will provoke a significant reconsideration of the main concepts in the traditional dimensions. Moreover, the authors believe that these changes will result in creation of the fourth, 'information,' dimension, which will combine technical communications and conceptual content. The RAND experts think that, "In this emerging world, the key to success will likely lie in managing informational capabilities and resources skillfully—i.e., strategically." [25]

This approach makes the creation of a government system to support information and manage information flows one of the most important tasks.

This is to emphasize again that information and communications were always important to a strategy, but today their role has significantly expanded for several reasons.

The first reason is technological revolution in the area of communications, which include not only the Internet, but also cable networks and cell phones, i.e. interactive means of communication.

The second reason is the rapid expansion of the new forms of interaction, which are characterized by the rapid exchange of information between government and non-government institutions.

The third one is the integration of the notions of information and power and the priority of the so-called 'soft power' over the traditional, material 'hard power'.

The research revealed the following key peculiarities of strategic information warfare (SIW): low cost of implementation of SIW means; wreck of traditional frontiers during preparation and implementation of information operations; strengthening of the role of perception management through the manipulation of information; change in the priorities of the strategic intelligence services, which become oriented to the conquest and maintenance of informational supremacy; complicated detection of the beginning of an information operation; complicated process of forming coalitions against the aggressor, who have instigated information warfare; and potential threats to the U.S. territory.

The RAND experts believe that, at present, the main provisions of the U.S.' national military strategy are inadequate to meet the threats emerging in the course of SIW. Based on this conclusion, they make the following recommendations: a coordination center to counter information threats should be set up in close proximity to the president, because it is the only way to ensure the necessary coordination of all ministries and departments; vulnerability of the key elements of the national information infrastructure should be assessed; the government's dominant role in the coordination of counter-threat activities in the information sphere should be ensured; and, finally, changes are needed in the national security strategy and national military strategy that would reflect the changes in SIW.

The key idea suggested by Report MR-964-OSD is the classification of SIW into the first and second generations. The first-generation SIW is reviewed together with the traditional means of warfare: nuclear, chemical, biological and other forms of physical action. It is emphasized that the first-generation SIW is mostly oriented to disorganize the work of management systems and to support the operations of the traditional forces and means. The authors note that **this perception of information warfare is typical of the initial stage of understanding the problem.**

Deeper understanding of the issue gave birth to the notion of the **second-generation SIW**. The report defines it as a **"fundamentally new type of strategic warfare spawned by the Information Revolution, possibly implemented in newly prominent strategic warfare arenas (for example, economic) and on time lines (for example, years versus days, weeks, or months)"**. The authors note that the development and improvement of approaches to the second-generation SIW will result in the full rejection of the use of force, because coordinated information campaigns will simply not allow exerting it. They also emphasize that if the consequences of the first-generation SIW can be predicted with the use of the existing techniques, the second-generation SIW is still hard to formalize and the existing forecast techniques can be applied to analyze its consequences to a certain extent only.

The most serious—in terms of their consequences—tasks, which are resolved with the help of the second-generation information weapons, include the following:

- Creation of an impression of poor culture and moral, a negative attitude to the cultural heritage of the enemy;
- Manipulation of public conscience and political orientation of social groups in a country to provoke political tension and chaos;
- Destabilization of political relationships between parties, associations and movements to provoke conflicts,



mistrust, suspiciousness, political fights, repressions against opposition and mutual destruction;

- Reduction in informational support to government and administrative bodies, incitation of erroneous management decisions;

- Disinformation of people about the work of government bodies, disruption of their authority, discrediting of administrative bodies;

- Instigation of social, political, ethnic and religious confrontation;

- Instigation of lockouts, mass disorder and other economic protest actions;

- Obstruction of important decision-making processes in administrative bodies;

- Disruption of the international authority of a country and its cooperation with other countries; and

- Causing damage to the vitally important interests of a country in the political, economic, defense and other spheres.

To summarize the above, we can say that today the main object of propaganda is the public and that informational influence is aimed to distort the perception of reality.

In this context, Kazakhstan should pay close attention to the condition of its information space and the processes that happen in it.

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# GUAM and the EuraSEC: Main Goals and Prospects

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The GUAM integration organization was created in November 1997 when the foreign ministers of four countries—Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova—signed a Protocol declaring the creation of this new structure.

Uzbekistan officially joined this organization in April 1999. But in 2002, it suspended its participation in this organization.

#### Box 1

"Tashkent has never tried to conceal the fact that GUUAM appeals to it from an exclusively 'transport' or 'transport-energy' standpoint and that it is not at all interested in it as a geopolitical group. Uzbekistan explained its decision to withdraw from GUUAM by the fact that it did not feel the need for political or military integration. Then, largely under the pressure of the U.S., Uzbekistan halted the withdrawal procedure, although it essentially does not participate in any of the organization's official undertakings."

Source: [http://www.gazeta.kg/print.php?i=8788]

At the beginning of May 2005, Uzbekistan made a decision to withdraw from this regional organization. According to many experts, Tashkent was cautioned by the initiative put forward at the GUUAM summit held in Chisinau in 2005 to create a Black Sea-Baltic arc of democracy and stability.<sup>1</sup> It is obvious that Karimov's support of Yushchenko and Saakashvili might have given a new boost to the activity of the Uzbek opposition. In addition, GUUAM was initially pro-American and anti-Russian in orientation. While Uzbekistan's policy focused more on intensifying political and economic cooperation with the Russian Federation, which to a certain extent was related to the events in Andijan. So the Uzbek president's decision to withdraw the republic from GUUAM was understandable. Since then, the organization has received its old name—GUAM.

When this integration group was created, great importance, in addition to geopolitical considerations, was given to the oil factor and communication integration. In particular, *cooperation focuses on drawing up and implementing the TRACECA global European-Caucasian-Asian transport-communication project*, on the basis of which it is hoped to integrate the Central Asian and South Caucasian states into the global economic system and reduce energy dependence on Russia.

The establishment and efficient use of oil transportation routes via the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and Odessa-Brody

pipelines and transit freight delivery along the port Turkmenbashi (Turkmenistan)-Caspian Sea-Baku-Georgian ports-Black Sea-Rumanian and Bulgarian ports corridor form the fulcrum of cooperation within GUAM.

In order to implement the former project, the sides worked to create a corresponding regulatory legal base that determined the conditions for transporting Kazakh oil from Aktau to Baku and on via the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, as well as via other export routes that begin in Azerbaijan. As we know, the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline went into operation in May 2006.

As for the latter project, many experts do not believe it is very efficient.

#### Box 2

"A transportation corridor that has to repeatedly reload carriages and containers or simply load freight from rail to sea transport and cross two seas is unlikely to be more advantageous than pure rail routes bypassing the seas from the north (via Russia) and the south (via Iran and Turkey).

"It would be much more advantageous for the Caucasian states to restore the once intensively used railroads along the eastern coast of the Black Sea and western coast of the Caspian Sea on the North-South transit route from Eastern Europe and Russia to the Middle East."

Source: N. Isingarin, *10 let CNG. Problemy, poiski, reshenia*, Public Fund "BIS," Almaty, 2001. 400 pages.

*GUAM is distinguished by its active approachment with European states and the U.S.* In particular, in cooperation with the United States, *framework programs on trade and transport assistance, on border and customs control, and on combating terrorism, organized crime, illicit circulation of drugs and weapons was adopted.*

However, it is the U.S.'s own geopolitical interests that are motivating it to support GUAM's activity. These include controlling the energy resources of the Caspian region and the oil and gas transport infrastructure, increasing the export of hydrocarbons to the world markets (primarily to the United States), strengthening the energy security of the Western countries, and reducing Russia's influence on the Caucasus.

Placing exclusive emphasis on intensifying the oil factor in cooperation between America and GUAM will have certain repercussions. It will cause deformations in the economic development of the Caucasian states and lead to their transformation into the West's raw material appendix.



Many experts are criticizing the GUAM states for formulating their policy in keeping with the U.S.'s interests and the implementation of its intentions in the region.

## Box 3

In his interview with *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, Viacheslav Trubnikov, first deputy foreign minister of the Russian Federation and former head of the Foreign Intelligence Service, called GUUAM an "absolutely artificial organization pumped full of American money," which was formed "only to prevent Russia from being able to manifest its neo-imperial strivings." The United States does indeed render GUUAM all kinds of assistance, including financial (from 2001 to 2004, the U.S. allotted the GUUAM countries approximately two billion dollars). However, it is not a matter of money, but of the fact that GUUAM is being morally and politically encouraged by the West, without which this structure would most likely not have appeared, let alone survived.

Source: [<http://www.gazeta.kg/print.php?i=6768>]

However, the GUAM integration organization has achieved certain progress during its existence:

1. A regulatory legal base of GUAM's activity has been created.

In 2001, the GUUAM Charter was adopted, which registered this formation as an international organization (in particular, it acquired the status of observer in the U.N.). According to its founding document, the organization's goals are promoting the social and economic development of its member states, expanding their trade and economic relations, developing transport-communication routes, strengthening regional security, joining efforts to combat international terrorism, organized crime, and the drug business, and encouraging humanitarian cooperation. The annual summit of the member states is declared GUUAM's highest structure, foreign ministers' meetings (twice a year) is the executive structure, and the committee of national coordinators (it meets once a quarter) is the working structure.

*On 20 July, 2002, an Agreement on Creating a Free Trade Area among the GUUAM Member States was adopted to expand the economic trade relations of the GUUAM states, which was signed by the presidents of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. In keeping with this document, the GUUAM countries are exempt from the payment of duties, taxes, and fees with equivalent action, as well as from reciprocal trade quotas. Execution of this Agreement based on GATT/WTO regulations and principles presumes the creation and development of an efficient system of mutual settlements concerning trade and other operations and harmonization of the legislation of the contracting parties to the extent that this is necessary for efficient functioning of the free trade area. In keeping with the decisions adopted at the interstate level, in 2004 there were plans to carry out mutual liberalization of trade conditions and remove the barriers that hinder free movement of goods and services.*

*With respect to strengthening security in the GUUAM states, a corresponding Agreement on Combating International Terrorism, Aggressive Separatism, Illicit Circulation of Drugs, and Organized Crime was adopted, the execution of which will help to stabilize the political situation in the region and create conditions for the sustainable economic development of these countries.*

On 23 May, 2006, at the GUAM Kiev summit, this integration organization changed its status to become the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development—GUAM, and its Charter was signed. In addition to promoting democracy and strengthening international and regional security, the organization declared its specific goal to be establishing a dialog in the energy (the transportation of energy resources from the Caspian region to Europe), transport (a bridge between Europe and Asia), and scientific and technical and humanitarian spheres.

2. Measures were undertaken to develop cooperation among the customs and border departments of the GUAM states.

In order to enhance reciprocal trade in the GUAM states and strengthen their security, the governments of these countries reached the following agreements on unifying national legislation in the customs and border spheres and creating a single customs control system. The adoption of the indicated measures will help to develop integration cooperation among the GUAM states in all the spheres of the economy.

3. Implementation of the GUAM-U.S. Framework Program of Trade and Transport Facilitation.

In order to implement this Program, corresponding agreements were reached with the EU European Commission on support of the Eurasian oil transportation corridor project and close ties were established with a cooperation initiative for the Southeast European countries. In keeping with the Ukraine-NATO Target Plan for 2003, the continuous exchange of information on cooperation among the Caucasus' partner states is ensured between Ukraine and the North Atlantic Alliance in peacekeeping activity. In addition, a special NATO project called the Virtual Silk Road has been introduced, which is a satellite system of electronic information exchange for the Caucasian countries and assists them in developing national research and education networks.<sup>2</sup>

4. Organizational structures for strengthening integration cooperation among the GUAM states.

With financial support from the U.S., the GUAM Center of Law Enforcement which unites the police, border, and customs structures of the member states has begun functioning, and a project to create a GUAM Virtual Law Enforcement Center for combating terrorism, organized crime, drug circulation, and other crimes and an Interstate Information-Analytical System is being implemented.

A GUAM Secretariat was also created in 2006 to ensure the Organization's efficient functioning, the main task of which is to cooperate with GUAM's administration structures to draw up corresponding documents to be presented at the intergovernmental and interstate level.

5. Questions relating to energy cooperation among the GUAM states are being processed.

At the GUAM summit in Kiev in May 2006, the possibility of creating a fuel and energy council within the framework of this organization was announced. It is presumed that the main task of this Council would be re-



solving questions relating to the use of energy resources, creating energy-generating capacities, developing transit potential, and implementing a project to pump oil through the Odessa-Brody pipeline.

There can be no doubt that the creation of this Council will enhance energy cooperation among the GUAM states.

However, even though the GUAM states have many interests in common, there are also factors that hinder this organization's activity:

1. The weak mechanism for implementing the decisions adopted.

The GUAM countries have a very weak mechanism for implementing the agreements reached. *In particular, free trade conditions essentially do not function in GUAM (the corresponding Agreement was adopted on 20 July, 2002).* For the moment, the sides are limiting themselves to various intermediate documents that have almost no effect on the efficient development of economic trade cooperation. In particular, the volume of the GUAM member states reciprocal trade turnover remains low. Georgia's and Azerbaijan's share account on average for no more than 2% of the total volume of Moldova's export and import. Ukraine's share in Moldovan export amounts to 6.57% and in import to 24.6%, respectively. By way of comparison, the indices for Russia, with which Moldova traditionally has a positive trade balance, amounted to 35.8% and 12.9%, respectively.

As for the GUAM-U.S. Framework Program of Trade and Transport Facilitation, according to experts, it has been possible to fulfill only 14 of the 70 provisions completely, and 38 partially. It stands to reason that this situation with respect to executing the decisions adopted does not help to develop the integration processes in GUAM and requires political and organizational support in order to solve the designated tasks.

2. The different foreign policy priorities of the GUAM states.

One of the main problems in developing integration within GUAM is the difference in foreign policy priorities of the member states.

**Box 4**

"Ukraine is still trying to integrate into Europe while retaining its strategic partnership with Russia and the U.S. The South Caucasian countries are looking for cooperation both with the Euro-Atlantic countries and with their geopolitical neighbors—Turkey and Iran. After its presidential election, Moldova has been striving for more active cooperation with Russia and the Eurasian Economic Community."

Source: E. Bagramov, "Postsovetskaia integratsiia—realnost' ili mirazh, *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 16 March, 2003.

Nor is it entirely clear how GUAM's economic component is being realized. For Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova, this, as we know, is the transportation and delivery of Caspian oil. But Azerbaijan is playing its own game, and it is not entirely clear whether it will carry out a project designed to deliver oil to Europe (and not to Turkey).

*In this way, the GUAM states' different ideas about the foreign policy cooperation priorities are significantly hindering the development of mutually advantageous cooperation among these countries, particularly in the economy.*

3. The low level of economic development of the GUAM states.

According to world standards, GUAM represents a union of states with a low human development potential, which is a decisive factor of competitiveness and dynamic development in today's globalizing economic life. According to experts, GUAM holds 89th place in the world in terms of the average human development index, after the Maldives, and 145th in terms of per capita GDP, after Honduras and Guyana.

The rates of economic development of the GUAM states are still low.

For example, in Georgia, the volume of GDP in the 1990s dropped approximately by 60%, and the volume of industrial project by 80%. The per capita GDP is currently approximately 700 USD.

**Box 5**

"The lag is particularly noticeable in those spheres that have the greatest influence on the level of development. For example, per capita consumption of electric power in Georgia is currently 60% of the world level, whereas with respect to the level of the developed countries, it is 18%. It should be noted that education and public health in Georgia remains at the level of the medium-developed countries, but this is due to past achievements. There are almost no significant investments in education, science, public health, or culture, and the lag in these spheres is having an extremely negative effect on long-term development..."

"According to the data for 1991-2001, Georgia exceeds the critical parameters of economic security with respect to all the main indicators and criteria of social life. It is impossible for society to develop normally in such circumstances. The state administration system becomes impotent and leaves everything to be desired with respect to protecting society or individuals from domestic and foreign threats."

Source: M. Kvaratskhelia, "Ekonomicheskaia bezopasnost' i problemy formirovaniia natsionalnoi ekonomiki Gruzii," available at [<http://www.shkolny.com/ekonomicheskaya-bezopasnost-i-problemy-formirovaniia-natsionalnoy-ekonomiki-gruzii/>].

A trend is seen toward an increase in external threats to Georgia's economic security. "In particular, the country is becoming more dependent on the import of many strategic resources, including energy resources and food; foreign countries are implementing an expansive economic policy toward Georgia; the state has a large foreign debt that continues to grow, and, finally, the levers of integrated economic management are being violated as a result of the violation of the country's territorial integrity and the threat of its collapse".<sup>3</sup>

It goes without saying that these factors have a negative effect on this country's sustainable development.

There are also problems in the Ukrainian economy. Despite the positive GDP growth rates, negative trends are seen in foreign trade. For example, the foreign trade transaction balance is increasingly in the red. During the first quarter of 2007, this index reached 2.2 billion dollars (by way of comparison, in January-March 2006, it was 1.7 billion dollars). The World Bank forecasts a continuing downtrend in current transactions in Ukraine for 2007-2009 to 5.1-5.2% of the GDP (in 2006, it was only 1.7%).



## Box 6

"Economic and tax-budget policy have never been priorities of the Yanukovich government, but today's political turbulence will, in all likelihood, lead to a decrease in the reform ambitions, which are modest anyway. If pre-term elections are indeed held, they will most likely not lead to the formation of a government oriented toward reforms and the market, especially if opposition leader Yulia Tymoshenko returns to power. This could accelerate the current gradual increase in the price of gas imported from Russia, which, in turn, will deal a blow to Ukraine's highly energy-intensive economy. Ukraine still has a relatively low level of prosperity, which distinguishes it from states with higher credit ratings. The rapidly increasing credit financing of the private sector, as well as the increasing foreign debt of the banking sector (banks are mainly owned by Ukrainian proprietors), are making the Ukrainian economy more vulnerable to unfavorable changes (foreign or political)."

Source: [www.kommersant.ua]

The level of competitiveness of the Ukrainian economy is low. According to many experts, obsolete (by international standards) technological equipment and production account for more than 99% of the Ukrainian economy.

Azerbaijan's GDP is mainly formed by oil revenue. Azerbaijan's economy still largely depends on the production of energy resources, and its diversification is a task, which if solved, will ensure its long-term sustainable development. Due to the rapidly growing revenues from oil export and the insufficient monetary instruments at the government's disposal, control over inflation and preventing the manat from becoming too strong in real terms are becoming the country's most important tasks.

The level of corruption in Azerbaijan remains high, which is having a negative effect on the country's business climate.

## Box 7

"According to the EBRD, the complicated tax-customs system, bureaucratic red tape, and the high level of corruption are the main obstacles hindering the development of private enterprises in Azerbaijan, particularly in the non-oil related industries. The investors' trust was also undermined by the expropriation of investments conducted by the country's government in branches of the economy not related to oil. Even though an anti-corruption law came into force in January 2005, it is slow to be applied. Two state banks still predominate in the country's banking system—the International Bank of Azerbaijan (IBA) and Kapital-bank. Despite the attempts being made to revive privatization, as of September 2006, no significant results had been attained."

Source: [http://www.day.az/news/politics/15977.html]

Moldova is currently undergoing an industrial slump. In particular, according to the 2006 results, the drop in industrial production amounted to 5%, which is primarily related to problems of exporting Moldovan wines to Russia. The inflation rates remain high. According to the 2006 results, the consumer price index amounted to 113%.

So the GUAM state economies are still facing serious problems, which is having a negative effect on integration within this regional union.

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*An analysis of GUAM's activity makes it possible to conclude that integration cooperation among the states within this union is still rather feeble.* And the main reasons for this are the lack of coordination among the foreign policy actions of the member states, the essential absence of a mechanism for implementing the decisions adopted, and the difficult political and economic situation in the states involved.

The leaders of the GUAM countries believed that activation of their economic trade relations on the basis of gradual trade liberalization, coordination of principles of structural development of the national economies, and implementation of projects for creating transportation corridors to link the Caspian region with Georgia, Ukraine, and Moldova would make it possible to significantly lower their dependence on Russia (particularly in the sphere of energy). But these projects are still at the discussion and coordination stage. And an important reason for this is the difficult economic situation in the GUAM countries. In particular, the project for transporting Caspian oil via the Odessa-Brody pipeline, which at present is only operating in reverse for the transit of Russian oil, has not been implemented since the sides involved have been unable to reach a coordinated position.

What is more, the Western countries are currently giving more attention to the possibility of transporting Caspian oil via Turkey (the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan project). So Ukraine and Moldova are temporarily excluded from the transit countries, that is, *the main significance of economic cooperation among the GUAM countries – to form and develop a Eurasian oil transportation corridor to cover its own oil needs and deliver supplies to Europe – has been lost.*

Thus, *Uzbekistan*, which regarded GUAM mainly as a way to implement energy transportation projects, was very disappointed in the economic cooperation of the states within this union and left it in 2005, *after evaluating this structure as an organization with dull prospects.*

Georgia, in turn, can also influence GUAM's activity, which is primarily due to the domestic political processes in this state and the risk of intensified separatist moods in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Many experts also have doubts about how realistic GUAM's enlargement is. "Since the time this organization was created, trends have been developing not toward its enlargement, but, on the contrary, toward a reduction in the number of member states, since the extreme politicized nature of the bloc does not permit countries that are currently in conflict to join GUAM. The disagreements between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Armenia and Turkey, and Georgia and Russia are making it impossible to expand its activity in the Black Sea-Caspian Region".<sup>4</sup>

*So GUAM cannot be considered a vital factor in the development of integration in the post-Soviet expanse.* The differences in foreign policy priorities of these states and the discrepancies among the sides with respect to strategic issues in the activity of this union, the difficult domestic political situation in these countries, and the different levels of market reform in the economies of these states are quite pronounced.

Today, the Eurasian Economic Community holds the absolute leadership among the regional unions in the post-Soviet space. This organization has achieved the highest level of coordination in its financial and economic policy. Moreover, the states belonging to this integration project



are carrying out a common task to form a single economic space. An organizational-legal mechanism has been created in the EurAsEC for implementing the decisions being adopted. This means that if a document is signed, the sides are obligated to exert every effort to execute it.

Kazakhstan's initiatives played an important role in creating the EurAsEC. President Nursultan Nazarbaev repeatedly emphasized the pertinence of developing integration cooperation among the Commonwealth states in all spheres of the economy and particularly in its real sector: "I don't think anyone will disagree that the EurAsEC encompasses the most energy-intensive territory on the planet. In this respect, I think it can only be compared with the Middle East... But in order to activate this enormous potential, it is extremely urgent for us to jointly draw up and consistently carry out an integrated policy that is advantageous to everyone for gaining access to the world markets. ...One of our indisputable advantages is our powerful transit potential, which makes it possible for us to assume the role of an efficient trade agent between Europe and Asia. According to the experts, the flow of freight between these parts of the world is already close to one hundred million tons and will continue to rise. In this sphere, a strong coordinated policy that is advantageous to everyone is needed in order to draw most of this flow in our direction".<sup>5</sup>

The enlargement of the EurAsEC and Uzbekistan's membership in it are making it possible to more efficiently solve the tasks aimed at forming a common energy market and Transport Union, intensifying cooperation in industry and agriculture, and conducting a coordinated social policy.

Uzbekistan's membership in the EurAsEC, in our opinion, will make it possible to comprehensively resolve questions relating to the development of the oil and gas transport infrastructure. In particular, there are greater possibilities for adopting joint measures to modernize the Central Asia-Center and Bukhara-Tashkent-Almaty gas transport systems, which will promote efficient use of the transit potential of the EurAsEC states and cover the need of the southern regions of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan for gas.

Enlargement of the EurAsEC will also help to efficiently resolve questions relating to the rational use of hydropower resources, the creation of new transportation corridors, and the formation of international cotton clusters.

One of the most important tasks facing the Community today is development of the economic component of integration, which will become an important factor in raising the level of competitiveness of the economies of the EurAsEC states, ensuring their security, and opposing the globalization threats.

Implementing the Priority Vectors of EurAsEC Development for 2003-2006 and subsequent years approved by the EurAsEC Interstate Council on 9 February, 2004 is of extreme importance in this respect. This document

was drawn up on the basis of Nursultan Nazarbaev's report on the State of Affairs in the Eurasian Economic Community and Proposals for Accelerating Integration Cooperation and the speeches of the government leaders of the EurAsEC states at the First Economic Forum held on 19-20 February, 2003.

The document set forth such priority vectors of EurAsEC development as forming a customs union, carrying out a coordinated economic policy, cooperation in the real sector of the economy, creation of a common market of energy resources and a Transport Union, development of currency integration, and cooperation in the social-humanitarian sphere and migration policy.

Execution of this document will make it possible to accelerate the formation of a Single Economic Space with the use of new and promising forms and mechanisms of cooperation; develop the Community's common market by uniting the national markets; ensure joint protection from possible economic damage inflicted by third countries; increase the potential for opposing common economic threats due to intensified international competition; and create favorable conditions for the free movement of goods, services, capital, and labor.

Today, active measures are being taken to implement the EurAsEC's priority vectors. In particular, in August 2006, a decision was made at the interstate level to form a Customs Union, which at the initial stage will unite three states—Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia. These countries have largely coordinated the customs policy principles and reached sustainable rates of economic growth. Other states (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan) will join the Customs Union as their economies reach the necessary level.

At the meeting of the EurAsEC's Interstate Council held in October 2007 in Dushanbe, the heads of state signed the basic documents for forming a single customs space and Customs Union. Formation of the legal base of the Customs Union should be completed by 2010.

In January 2008, agreements were adopted at the intergovernmental level stating that the countries of the Customs Union would carry out a coordinated trade policy. Kazakhstan Prime Minister K. Masimov, who spoke at the meeting of the Interstate Council, emphasized the need for the EurAsEC countries to step up their efforts to form the Customs Union and develop the integration processes: "Kazakhstan has increased its investments in the economies of all the neighboring countries and in the future intends to intensify its investment policy as well as strengthen regional ties. Kazakhstan supports the integration processes and will try to intensify and expand them".<sup>6</sup>

Kazakhstan's initiative set forth in the document on Ten Simple Steps to Accommodate the People is acquiring importance in the social sphere. It focuses on developing social aspects of the Community's states and creating conditions for the citizens of the EurAsEC member states to enjoy free movement throughout their territory, choose



their place of permanent or temporary residence, find a job, and obtain an education.

Several documents have been adopted within the Community (the Agreement on Mutual Recognition and Equivalence of Education Certificates, Diplomas, and Titles; the Agreement on the Creation of Favorable Conditions for Broadcasting Television and Radio Programs in the EurAsEC States; the Interstate Program on Coordinated Social Policy of the EurAsEC Member States, and others) to achieve these goals. The execution of these agreements will become an important factor in accelerating integration among the Community's states in the social sphere, ensuring equal social and labor rights of the citizens of

the EurAsEC states, and forming a common labor market and single education space within the Community.

"Today it can be stated that the EurAsEC has become an important tool of regional cooperation and a vital element for forming a system that ensures stability in the region and expands economic cooperation".

Therefore, a comparison of GUAM and the EurAsEC indicates beyond a doubt that integration is developing more efficiently within the latter. The states that belong to the EurAsEC have common goals and tasks and are gradually moving toward the formation of a Single Economic Space, which is something that cannot yet be said of GUAM.

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