



# ICBSS Black Sea Monitor

Issue No. 13, September 2009

ISSN 1791-664X

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## Focusing on the East

The European Union's eastern frontier comprising of Russia, Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Turkey, and further east, the Central Asian republics is one meriting comprehension, attention and concern. The concern is obvious as the relations between and among these states are more problematic today than they were even a year ago. The August 2008 conflict between Georgia and Russia awakened the rest of the world that the wider region is in need of remedies aimed at lessening tensions, enhancing regional cooperation and adapting some of the conditionalities closer relations with the European Union (EU) entails.

Let me explain. Beyond the deep crisis in Russia's relations with Georgia, the protracted conflicts of South Ossetia and Abkhazia with their political, social, economic and legal ramifications have moved way beyond their dormant stage to potentially destabilizing crises. While the rhetorical war between Moscow and Tbilisi ebbs and flows, nerves are tense on the ground as armed forces patrol on both sides of the dividing lines. *(continued on page 2)*

## THE BLACK SEA MONITOR

The ICBSS has identified the need for a special circular on developments in and around the Black Sea region that goes beyond the mere news brief format. Therefore, the Centre has set up an electronic review focused particularly on the Black Sea region, aiming to provide stakeholders and other interested parties around the globe with an exclusive information service. The Monitor offers brief commentaries and refers key documents, publications and events of interest that impact on the wider Black Sea region.

The issue of whether or not Abkhazia has territorial waters has practical implications as the spat in the detainment of vessels sailing to Abkhazia has blurred the line between de facto and de jure independence. Moldova and Ukraine for their part are in the midst of continuing domestic political and economic turmoil which do not help Chisinau overcome its sad ranking as Europe's poorest state and Kyiv to act analogous to its merited regional weight. Moldova's Transnistrian problem and Russia's disproportionate interest in Crimea and other regions of Ukraine compound the troubles for both Chisinau and Kyiv.

Even the dynamic process of Turkish-Armenian rapprochement might actually complicate the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh issue as Azerbaijan is uneasy with Ankara's and Yerevan's eventual establishment of diplomatic ties. The issues of energy and energy security remain high on the region's agenda as the trend of linking energy to a country's foreign policy is growing thereby raising concerns for consumer states in particular. Also the global financial crisis has affected rich and poor states across the board. For example, rising unemployment in Russia has led to a loss of jobs by workers from neighbouring states and reduced significantly the remittances they sent back home while the slowdown in tourism and the building sectors in EU member states has affected the income of migrant workers from Black Sea states among others.

As a result, the mental dividing lines have been rising and are getting difficult to tear down. This is especially true as the Euro-Atlantic perspectives from countries like Georgia and the Ukraine (or even Western Balkan states) has fewer supporters among EU member states than in the recent past. The European Union itself is projecting toward the region via the simultaneous promotion of two policies – the Black Sea Synergy and the Eastern Partnership – which are not complementary and rather confusing. Also, a longstanding concern has been the inability of the various regional cooperation schemes to have a significant

impact as most, except for the BSEC, are exclusive in their membership and seem at times to be antagonistic, even though since the end of the Cold War GDP trends and FDI inflows are upwards (at least before the appearance of the economic crisis).

In these uncertain times, the only certainty is the need for more dialogue, discussion, and debate between the peoples of the region in the eventuality that a better understanding of each other could help contribute to overcoming many of the regions shortcomings. It is in this vein that the International Centre for Black Sea Studies has recently held the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Black Sea Symposium whose objective was to discuss the state of play in the wider Black Sea Region between young professionals from the countries of the region.

**DIMITRIOS TRIANTAPHYLLOU**

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the  
Russian Federation, Press Release,  
Seventh Round of Geneva Discussions on  
Security and Stability in Transcaucasia  
(Moscow, 18 September 2009)**

The 7th meeting in the framework of international discussions on security and stability in Transcaucasia took place in Geneva on September 17. In attendance were delegations from the Republic of Abkhazia, Georgia, the Russian Federation, the United States, the Republic of South Ossetia and the representatives of EU, UN and OSCE. Deputy Foreign Minister/State Secretary Grigory Karasin headed the Russian delegation.

The Russian side briefed the partners in detail on efforts to bolster security in this troubled South Caucasus region, the stabilization measures on the borders of South Ossetia and Abkhazia with Georgia and the scale of the assistance being rendered to the young Transcaucasian states. It was stressed that an absolute security priority in Transcaucasia is to sign nonuse-of-force agreements between Georgia and Abkhazia and between Georgia and South Ossetia. International organizations could also contribute usefully to stabilizing the border situation – primarily UN, EU and OSCE, especially through constructive participation in activities of the joint incident prevention mechanisms.

The delegations of Abkhazia, Russia and South Ossetia also suggested concentrating on real work to help Georgian, Ossetian and Abkhaz refugees who had left their homes throughout the armed confrontation since 1989, and expressed the readiness to continue a joint search for ways to improve the humanitarian situation in the region.

The tense debate in the two working groups – on security issues and humanitarian themes – has shown that the Georgian side instead of constructive work prefers to pursue a futile politicized line, designed to forcibly regain the territorial integrity of Georgia lost as a result of its own aggression against South Ossetia in August 2008.

The next meeting in Geneva is tentatively slated for November 11.

**EU External Relations Council,  
Southern Caucasus  
(Brussels, 15 September 2009)**

[...]

The Council had an exchange of views on the strengthening of the EU's relations with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, within the framework of the EU's Eastern Partnership<sup>1</sup>.

The discussion focused on how to enhance bilateral relations with the three Southern Caucasian countries, including principles for enhancing those relations. In the light of the debate, the Commission announced that it would present draft negotiation directives for association agreements with the three countries in early November.

Existing relations between the EU and the three Southern Caucasian countries are based on partnership and cooperation agreements. These entered into force in 1999 for an initial period of ten years and will be from now on automatically extended on a yearly basis. With the creation of the Eastern Partnership, the EU has adopted a new vision for the development of its relations with these countries. The discussion in the Council helped to establish basic principles to guide deliberations in order to enhance the EU's relations with the three countries.

There will be meetings between the EU and the three countries in late September and Cooperation Council meetings in the margins of the General Affairs and External Relations Council on 26 and 27 October to further discuss this issue.

[...]

<sup>1</sup> With Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

**EU General Affairs Council,  
Conclusions on the Mechanism on  
Cooperation and Verification for  
Bulgaria and Romania  
(Brussels, 14 September 2009)**

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"Reaffirming its earlier conclusions the Council welcomes the Commission's reports on progress in Romania and Bulgaria under the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism. The Council commends the Commission on its work, on the methodology followed and fully shares the objective and balanced analysis contained in those reports. The Council notes the continued good level of co-operation of Bulgaria and Romania with the Commission and the other Member States.

Recalling the importance of the unequivocal political will and dedication for a more decisive, strategic approach in order to take the necessary steps, the Council welcomes the renewed commitment expressed by Bulgaria and Romania and acknowledges the efforts made by these two Member States to make the progress needed to meet the objectives set under the mechanism.

The Council calls on Bulgaria and Romania to intensify their efforts by taking all the necessary steps without delay and by demonstrating tangible and lasting results, especially in the areas highlighted in the reports. The Council concludes that the recommendations put forward in the reports will serve as a useful tool to further focus efforts towards meeting the benchmarks set. The existence in each Member State of an impartial, independent and effective administrative and judicial system, with sufficient resources, is indeed indispensable for enabling EU policies to function properly and for ensuring that citizens have access to all the benefits and opportunities offered by membership of the Union.

On the reform of the administrative and judicial system, the Council notes that Romania has taken a number of welcome steps and established a new momentum.

Romania has adopted new Criminal and Civil Codes and the positive track record of the prosecution is starting to be complemented by action of the judiciary. However, the positive changes remain fragmented and have not yet produced practical results for Romanian citizens. In order for Romania to be able to demonstrate sustained progress, a broad political consensus has to be forged to allow the judicial system to work efficiently and independently, and to strengthen the fight against corruption. This will enable Romania to achieve results which are more convincing and more firmly rooted, and demonstrate that the judicial system can function effectively in all areas, in the interest of the Romanian people.

The Council notes a new momentum in Bulgaria's efforts to improve the judiciary and combat corruption and organised crime. It recognises steps undertaken in response to the Commission's assessment of July 2008 to tackle persisting problems. However, these steps were confined to the technical level and had limited impact. In this light, the Council stresses the need for more substantial results in investigating, prosecuting and judging cases of high-level corruption and organised crime in order to secure lasting change in Bulgaria. The Council reiterates the need for unequivocal political commitment in Bulgaria in order to start profound reform of the judiciary. This will allow Bulgaria to achieve substantial and convincing results, thus enabling Bulgaria's citizens to take full advantage of the assistance provided by the EU.

In cooperation with Bulgaria and Romania, the other Member States are ready to continue to grant every necessary assistance in order to meet as soon as possible the objectives set under the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism.

Recalling that the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism has now entered its third year, the Council notes that it is an appropriate tool, and that it will remain in place pending the results expected in this framework. In this context, the Council recalls that the Mechanism underpins Bulgaria's and Romania's efforts to fully

implement EU policies. The Council will continue to pay careful attention to developments in this area."

**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the Situation in Georgia (Brussels, 4 August 2009)**

The European Union notes with concern the recent accusations of shellings and other incidents on both sides of the South Ossetian administrative boundary line. The European Union Monitoring Mission patrols on the ground in Georgia have seen no evidence so far to confirm mutual accusations of shellings.

The EU urges all sides to refrain from any statement or action that may lead to increased tensions at this particularly sensitive time.

The EU reaffirms the importance it attaches to all sides participating fully in the framework of the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) and calls on all parties to cooperate fully with the IPRM in clarifying incidents, including those over the past few days. The EU further calls on all sides to give the EUMM unrestricted access to both sides of the South Ossetian administrative boundary line. The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia\* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this declaration.

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

**EU External Relations Council, Conclusions on Georgia (Brussels, 27 July 2009)**



The Council had an exchange of views on the situation in Georgia and agreed to revert to this issue during the Autumn.

After the discussion, the Council adopted the following conclusions:

"1. The Council has decided to extend the mandate of the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM) for another 12 months until 14 September 2010.

2. The rapid deployment of the mission following the conflict between Georgia and Russia in August 2008 showed the EU's willingness and ability to act resolutely to promote peace and stability. The deployment of EU monitors has contributed to creating the necessary conditions for the implementation of the agreements of 12 August and 8 September, 2008. In this context, the Council called again on all parties to fully comply with their commitments, including the withdrawal of all military forces to the positions held prior to the outbreak of hostilities. The Council further recalled that EUMM Georgia has a country-wide mandate and called for unhindered access of EUMM to Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which has so far been denied. The Council deplored the attack on EUMM on 21 June and called on all parties to ensure a secure environment for the mission.

3. The Council welcomed the achievements of EUMM Georgia, in particular in the areas of stabilisation, normalisation, and confidence building. The mission's presence on the ground remains a key stabilizing factor. EUMM Georgia has monitored the partial withdrawal of Russian troops and the return of Georgian police to areas adjacent to the administrative boundary lines. The mission has reported on several serious incidents, and on the situation of internally displaced persons, the respect of the rule of law, violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. The Council encouraged the mission to continue its efforts, including to take part in the



implementation of different confidence building measures.


4. The Council noted with deep regret and concern that agreement has not been reached on the future of the UN and OSCE monitoring missions in Georgia. This development further underscores the crucial role of EUMM Georgia. The EU will continue its close cooperation with the UN and the OSCE in all matters pertaining to Georgia. The Council reaffirmed its full commitment to the Geneva talks and the continued co-chairmanship of this forum by the EU, UN and OSCE.

5. The Council recalled its conclusions from 13 October 2008 and those of the European Council from 1 September 2008 and reiterated its firm support for the security and stability of Georgia, based on full respect for the principles of independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity recognised by international law, including the Helsinki Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and United Nations Security Council resolutions.”

## Recent Publications on the Black Sea Region

*The following are selected recent publications pertinent to the Black Sea region*

1. Special Issue: The Security Context in the Black Sea Region. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 9, no. 3 (2009). Includes articles by:
  - Dimitrios Triantaphyllou, “The ‘security paradoxes’ of the Black Sea region”,
  - Yannis Tsantoulis, “Geopolitics, (sub)regionalism, discourse and a troubled ‘power triangle’ in the Black Sea”,
  - Oksana Antonenko, “Towards a comprehensive regional security framework in the Black Sea region after the Russia–Georgia war”,
  - Mustafa Aydın, “Geographical blessing versus geopolitical curse: great power security agendas for the Black Sea region and a Turkish alternative”,
  - Nadia Alexandrova-Arbatova, “The impact of the Caucasus crisis on regional and European security”,
  - F. Stephen Larrabee, “The United States and security in the Black Sea region”,
  - Andrew Wilson; Nicu Popescu, “Russian and European neighbourhood policies compared”,
  - Sabine Fischer, “The European Union and security in the Black Sea region after the Georgia crisis”,
  - Sergii Glebov, “Black Sea security as a regional concern for the Black Sea states and the global powers”,
  - Jeffrey Simon, “Ukraine needs to decide its strategic alignment”.
2. Fean, Dominic. “Making Good Use of the EU in Georgia: the ‘Eastern Partnership’ and Conflict Policy”. *Russie.Nei. Visions*, no. 44. Paris: IFRI, September 2009.
3. “President Medvedev's First Year-Expectations and Progress”. *The EU-Russia Centre Review* 10. Moscow: EU-Russia Centre, September 2009.
4. Independent Commission on Turkey. *Turkey in Europe: Breaking the vicious circle*. Second Report of the Independent Commission on Turkey, 7 September 2009.
5. Nikoghosyan, Hovhannes. “Desiring to establish good neighborly relations”. Yerevan: “Professionals” Public Policy Institution, 1 September 2009.
6. Christie, Edward Hunter. “Energy Vulnerability and EU-Russia Energy Relations”. *Journal of Contemporary European Research* 5, no 2 (2009).
7. Mitchell, Lincoln. “Georgia's Story: Competing Narratives since the War”. *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy* 51, no. 4 (August–September 2009): 87–100.
8. Quinn-Judge, Paul. “Russia's Brutal Guerrilla War”. *Foreign Policy*, 31 August 2009.

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9. Zaman, Amberin. "Turkey and Armenia: Soccer Diplomacy Shifting Rules are Creating a Zero-Sum Game". *On Turkey*. Washington D.C.: The German Marshall Fund of the US, 31 August 2009.
  10. Plater-Zyberk, Henry. *US – Russia Strategic Relations: Obama and Biden Visit Moscow, Tbilisi and Kiev – Planned Contradictions?* Research & Assessment Branch Russia Series, no. 10. Shrivenham: Defence Academy of the UK, 28 August 2009.
  11. Hug, Adam, ed. *Spotlight on Georgia*. London: The Foreign Policy Centre, 2009.
  12. Roth, Mathias. "Bilateral Disputes between EU Member States and Russia". *CEPS Working Document*, no. 319. Brussels: CEPS, August 2009.
  13. Marinov, Aleksandar. "Peacekeeping in the Black-Sea Region". Sofia: Institute for Regional and International Studies (IRIS), 2009.
  14. Schäffer, Sebastian, Dominik Tolksdorf, eds. "The EU member states and the Eastern Neighbourhood – From composite to consistent EU foreign policy? *CAP Policy Analysis*, no. 1. Munich: Center for Applied Policy Research (CAP), August 2009.
  15. Tardieu, Jean-Philippe. "Russia and the 'Eastern Partnership' after the War in Georgia". *Russie.Nei. Visions*, no. 43. Paris: IFRI, August 2009.
  16. Akça, Melek and Hovhannes Nikoghosyan. "Nagorno Karabakh: Digging for a common ground". Yerevan: "Professionals" Public Policy Institution, 20 July 2009.
  17. Ebel, Robert E. *The Geopolitics of Russian Energy: Looking Back, Looking Forward*. Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, July 2009.
  18. "EU – Ukraine Relations: In search the 'Eastern Partnership'". *International Review*, no.2 (10). Foreign Policy Research Institute and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, July 2009.
  19. Sandschneider, Eberhard. "Crisis in Russia-EU energy relationship". *DGAPaktuell*, no. 4. Berlin: DGAP, June 2009.
  20. Heinrich, Hans-Georg, and Kirill Tanaev. "Georgia & Russia: Contradictory Media Coverage of the August War". *Caucasian Review of International Affairs* 3, no. 3 (Summer 2009): 244-260.



## NEWS and EVENTS

### ICBSS AND ISTANBUL BILGI UNIVERSITY



The ICBSS has concluded a Memorandum of Understanding with the European Institute, Division of Turkish–Greek Studies of Istanbul Bilgi University. The two Centres committed to collaborate closely in a variety of areas including research, education and events

### PHOTO EXHIBITION: “FACES FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN”

*The International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) invites you to the photo exhibition of Eleni Fotiou entitled “Faces from the Mediterranean”. The opening will take place on Wednesday 14 October 2009 at 20:00 at the Hellenic Photoaraphic Societv. 61. Patission & Aahiou Meletiou str. Broadwav Arcade.*

FACES FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN



### ICBSS ANNUAL LECTURE

This year’s ICBSS Annual Lecture will be delivered by Professor **Sir Basil Markesinis** on “**A Study in Parallel of the Economies of Russia and the USA**”. The lecture will be held in Greek with simultaneous interpretation to English and will take place **on Monday, 2 November 2009, at 19:00h** at the King George Palace Hotel (Syntagma Sq.). More information on the event will be available soon on our website.

*Professor Sir Basil Markesinis is One of Her Majesty’s Counsel in the Law, Fellow of the British Academy and a Foreign or Corresponding Member of the Academies of France, Rome (Lincolni), Athens, the Netherlands and Belgium. He is also a Member of the American Law Institute and a Bencher of Gray’s Inn.*

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Ετήσια Διάλεξη 2009 · Annual Lecture 2009

Annual Lecture 2009

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- Council of the European Union, Presidency Conclusions (Brussels, 18-19 June 2009)
- EU/Belarus Human Rights Dialogue (Prague, 16-17 June 2009)
- EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council Thirteenth Meeting (Luxembourg, 16 June 2009)
- Joint Statement by the Group of Friends of the UN Secretary General on the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia Resolution (Washington, D.C., 16 June 2009)
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- Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union – Report on the Council of Europe and the Conflict in Georgia (Strasbourg, 28 May 2009)
- Joint US-EU Statement on Georgia (Brussels, 25 May 2009)
- News Conference Following Russia-EU Summit (Khabarovsk, 22 May 2009)
- Joint Declaration of the Prague Eastern Partnership Summit (Prague, 7 May 2009)
- EU Presidency Statement on the Signature of the Agreements of the Joint Protection of Borders between Russia and Separatist Region of Abkhazia and South Ossetia (1 May 2009)
- Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council on the Implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2008 [COM (2009) 188/3] (Brussels, 23 April 2009)
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