

Civil society in the Eastern Partnership

The second annual conference of the Civil Society Forum of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) took place in Berlin on 18-19 November, hosted by the German Foreign Office, and with the active participation of Commissioner Stefan Fuele, German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle, and Czech and Polish state secretaries. About 250 participants gathered together, mainly from EaP states, but also from the EU. The six EaP states were all fully represented by civil society organisations, including Belarus which is not a full participant in the European Neighbourhood Policy. The Forum is now structured with a Steering Committee, and thematic Working Groups, which mirror the four official thematic platforms of the EaP for (1) democracy, (2) economics, (3) energy and (4) people. Each has developed sub-groups on more precise topics such as for visa liberalisation, human rights, energy and environment etc. In addition 'National Platforms' have been set up in most states, bringing together around 50 to 100 organisations in each. The Steering Committee had proposed to the German Foreign Office to host the Forum to underline Berlin's commitment to the EU's Eastern policy, and was most appreciative that this was accepted, thus bringing its work into direct contact with policy makers. It is also excellent that the third Forum in 2011 will be in Poland, which has been one of the strongest promoters of the Eastern Partnership and will preside the EU Council of ministers in the second half of the year. To organize the Forum in the capitals of the EU member states increases its impact on European policy, which requires support in the governments of the member states.

So this mechanism is up and running. But what does it really do, or what can it be expected to do?

At the highest level this is meant to be one part of a transformative process, helping the EaP states move beyond the post-communist transition towards convergence on European standards – both for democracy, human rights and the rule of law, as well as more technical matters of economic regulation. In one word 'Europeanisation', but without the prospect of EU membership for the time being, notwithstanding the article in the treaty which makes any European democracy eligible to apply for membership – as Stefan Fuele reminded us. Even if the transformation has been making some progress overall, none of the countries is a full-fledged democracy, as the latest local election in Ukraine and parliamentary election in Azerbaijan have shown.

There have been many studies on the dynamics of this possible Europeanisation, summarised under the words socialisation versus conditionality. The Civil Society Forum is obviously an exercise in socialisation rather than conditionality, since the carrot of accession is not on the table. The process of socialisation is supposed to be between the EaP states and the EU, with the norms and values of the EU as its foundations. Yet the EaP is also an exercise in intra-EaP socialisation. This becomes an interesting point when observing the wide spectrum of political regimes, from the more or less democratic to the authoritarian. By contrast, there is much less difference of opinion between the civil society organisations of these countries, which generally aim at regular European standards of civil liberties.

For the European Commission in its dealings with the partner states there is still quite a lot of conditionality in the works. This is clearly so in the case of free trade negotiations (or for 'Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements' – DCFTA – to use the official language). The argument goes that the EaP states should adopt big parts of the EU market regulatory acquis, and in the case of Georgia this has even been made a precondition for the opening of free trade negotiations. Here the Commission needs to consider more thoroughly the costs and benefits for the partner states of what it is demanding, remembering the experience of the new member states who would not have been able to adopt much of the acquis without the financial and political incentives of the accession package. A second example is seen in the conditions for scrapping short-term visas. Here Ukraine got all the conditions laid out in an Action Plan adopted at the EU-Ukraine summit on 22 November, amounting to a huge long-term justice and home affairs reform agenda: biometric passports, upgrade of border management, migration management, public order and security, judicial cooperation, fundamental rights within Ukraine. But lacking is the prospect of tangible short-term benefits. In these free trade and visa affairs the conditionality currently pushed by the Commission is certainly heavy. How heavy is best? These are issues properly to be debated at the Civil Society Forum.

The full participation of Belarus in the Civil Society Forum stands in contrast with the sad fiasco of the EURONEST (standing for a parliamentary assembly of the European parliament and its counterparts in the Eastern neighbourhood), which was meant to be the European Parliament's part in the EaP process. The European Parliament sought to select the individuals who should

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come from Belarus, a condition that was unsurprisingly refused. Result: the EURONEST has not even begun. Civil society people in Berlin (from Belarus, other EaP states and the EU) felt that the European Parliament has got it badly wrong here, and maybe the issue could be revisited after the forthcoming Belarus elections if these show a modicum of correctness.

Now that the Civil Society Forum is fully institutionalised it now has to move on to the next step, namely to focus on substantive issues more sharply. The vast range of civil society organisations in play makes this no easy task. The Berlin Forum addressed an excessive number of issues and the recommendations of the four working groups were generally lacking in operational precision, and have not yet been brought together as agreed conclusions of the Forum as a whole. The Steering Committee and national coordinators are aware of this, and have to decide how to improve the output. This will require adjustment to the methods of work and uses of the substantial budget that the Forum receives from the Commission (EUR 635,000 in the current year). At present this is entirely spent on the logistics of bringing NGO representatives together, with no funds for the Steering Committee to commission policy oriented papers and no travel expenses for participants from EU countries. Attendance might for example be limited to 200 rather than 250 at the annual meeting, thus releasing resources for the Steering Committee and Working Groups to commission work on selected themes with a view to recommendations for the annual conference.

Some precise recommendations on how to recalibrate the workings of the Civil Society Forum:

1/ In addition to the four thematic working groups there should be an overarching strategy tier to the activity, aiming at policy shaping on top level questions. An overall strengthening the mandate of the EU and EaP participants would facilitate their policy-shaping role, linking the tasks of transition and European cooperation.

2/ Output should consist of (a) monitoring and evaluation each year of a selection of projects and policy topics, (b) a final declaration adopted at the annual conference with policy recommendations, (c) representations to official meetings of the Eastern Partnership.

3/ The Steering Committee, together with the coordinators of the National Platforms and the four Working Groups, should develop this work during the year, and be entrusted with funds to make this possible.

This Civil Society Forum could be really valuable. But it could also degenerate into just a very large and woolly conference circuit, and a very expensive one. The first Forum in 2009 was very preliminary yet still published a final declaration. This second Forum saw top level political participation in plenary sessions, but at working group and sub-group levels it was often lacking in focus and professional content. The third Forum has to strive to overcome the weaknesses.

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Iris Kempe, member of the Steering Committee of the Civil Society Forum, Boell Stiftung, Tbilisi

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*EU-US Summit - Joint Statement*Lisbon 20 November 2010. [Link](#)

[Extracts]

We agreed on the need to confront major international issues and global challenges with a more comprehensive and strategic approach, and in a more concerted manner. In this regard, we welcomed the agreement in NATO's Strategic Concept on further strengthening the EU-NATO strategic partnership, and we reaffirmed our commitment to enhance EU-NATO cooperation in crisis management in the spirit of mutual reinforcement and with respect for their decision-making autonomy.

We also welcomed our deepening partnership on a wide range of trans-national security issues that affect the citizens of the European Union and the United States. This partnership is founded on our conviction that respect for fundamental rights and freedoms and joint efforts to strengthen security cooperation are mutually reinforcing. We agreed to work together to tackle new threats to the global networks upon which the security and prosperity of our free societies increasingly depend. Recognising this, as well as the growing challenge of cyber-security and cyber-crime, we established an EU-U.S. Working Group on Cyber-security and Cybercrime, which will address a number of specific priority areas and will report progress within a year. We welcomed the successful negotiation earlier this year of an agreement on the Terrorist Finance Tracking Programme. We aim to facilitate transatlantic travel for our citizens while pursuing the vital task of maintaining security, and now look forward to making good progress in our forthcoming negotiations on a Passenger Name Record agreement. We welcomed the inclusion of an additional EU Member State in the Visa Waiver Programme earlier this year, and we reaffirmed our desire to complete secure visa-free travel between the United States and the European Union as soon as possible. We will also continue our work towards negotiating a comprehensive agreement on data protection. We are also committed to extending our partnership on countering violent extremism, in particular by sharing research and good practice and by enhancing co-operation on assistance to third countries at risk. In this regard, we aim to deepen our cooperation with Yemen to help it develop its institutions and capabilities to cope with the challenges it faces, including violent extremism.

Finally, we also discussed our common efforts to promote security more broadly around the world, including the fight against proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, our joint efforts to support direct talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority with the aim of forging the framework of a final agreement within a year, to support the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, to seek engagement with Iran while maintaining pressure via sanctions, and to support stability in Afghanistan. We are working together with Pakistan's civilian government to help expand trade ties, bolster economic development, and combat violent extremism. We underlined the need for peace and stability in Sudan and will work to ensure that the upcoming referenda reflect the will of the populations concerned.

*NATO Lisbon Summit Declaration*Lisbon, 20 November 2010. [Link](#)

[Extracts]

We, the Heads of State and Government of the member countries of the North Atlantic Alliance, have gathered in Lisbon to chart NATO's future course. We reaffirm our commitment to the common vision and shared democratic values embodied in the Washington Treaty, and to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. Based on solidarity, Alliance cohesion and the indivisibility of our security, NATO remains the transatlantic framework for strong collective defence and the essential forum for security consultations and decisions among Allies. NATO's fundamental and enduring purpose is to safeguard the freedom and security of all its members by political and military means. The Alliance must and will continue fulfilling effectively, and always in accordance with international law, three essential core tasks – collective defence, crisis management, and cooperative security – all of which contribute to safeguarding Alliance members. We have adopted a new Strategic Concept that lays out our vision for the Alliance for the next decade: able to defend its members against the full range of threats; capable of managing even the most challenging crises; and better able to work with other organisations and nations to promote international stability. NATO will be more agile, more capable and more cost-effective, and it will continue to serve as an essential instrument for peace. In accordance with the detailed provisions of this Declaration, we have also:

- * decided to enhance NATO's contribution to a comprehensive approach to crisis management as part of the international community's effort and to improve NATO's ability to deliver stabilisation and reconstruction effects;
- * encouraged the Secretary General to continue to work with the European Union High Representative and to report to the Council on the ongoing efforts in time for the NATO Foreign Ministers' meeting in April 2011;
- * invited Russia to deepen its cooperation with us on the areas where we have common interests;
- * agreed to further enhance our existing partnerships and to develop new ones with interested countries and organisations;
- * agreed to continue to review NATO's overall defence and deterrence posture;
- * agreed that, consistent with the Strategic Concept and their commitments under existing arms control treaties and frameworks, Allies will continue to support arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation efforts;
- * decided to develop a missile defence capability to protect all NATO European populations, territory and forces, and invited Russia to cooperate with us;
- * agreed to enhance our cyber defence capabilities;
- * agreed an Action Plan to mainstream United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security into NATO-led operations and missions;
- * tasked the development of Political Guidance for the further improvement of our defence capabilities and the military implementation of the new Strategic Concept;
- * agreed the Lisbon package of the Alliance's most pressing capability needs;

* directed the implementation of a more effective, leaner and affordable Alliance Command Structure, and the consolidation of the NATO Agencies; and

* tasked the Secretary General and the Council to take forward the reform process in all necessary areas without delay.

[...]

Related Document:

NATO Strategic Concept. [Access here.](#)

NATO-Russia Council - Joint Statement

Lisbon, 20 November 2010. [Link](#)

We, the Heads of State and Government of the NATO-Russia Council, met today in Lisbon and affirmed that we have embarked on a new stage of cooperation towards a true strategic partnership.

Wereaffirmed all the goals, principles and commitments set forth in the Founding Act, the Rome Declaration and the OSCE 1999 Charter for European Security, including the 'Platform for Cooperative Security', and recognised that the security of all states in the Euro-Atlantic community is indivisible, and that the security of NATO and Russia is intertwined. We will work towards achieving a true strategic and modernised partnership based on the principles of reciprocal confidence, transparency, and predictability, with the aim of contributing to the creation of a common space of peace, security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. The NRC member states will refrain from the threat or use of force against each other as well as against any other state, its sovereignty, territorial integrity or political independence in any manner inconsistent with the United Nations Charter and with the Declaration of Principles Guiding Relations Between Participating States contained in the Helsinki Final Act.

The NRC member states are committed to working as 29 equal partners in order to fulfil the tremendous potential of the NATO-Russia Council through the continued development of their political dialogue and practical cooperation based on their shared interests. We underscore that the NRC is a forum for political dialogue at all times and on all issues, including where we disagree. We are determined to make full use of the NRC mechanism for consultation, consensus-building, cooperation, joint decision and joint action on a wide spectrum of security issues in the Euro-Atlantic region. We all agree that the NRC member states can benefit from visionary and transparent policies aiming at strengthening security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area, including through existing institutions and instruments. We strongly support the revitalisation and modernisation of the conventional arms control regime in Europe and are ready to continue dialogue on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation issues of interest to the NRC. We welcome the conclusion of the New START Treaty and look forward to its early ratification and entry into force. The NRC member states are resolved to seek a safer world for all and to create the conditions for a world without nuclear

weapons, in accordance with the goals of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), in a way that promotes international stability, and based on the principle of undiminished security for all.

Today, we have endorsed the Joint Review of 21st Century Common Security Challenges, which was launched a year ago. We share common important interests and face common challenges. On that basis, we have identified concrete practical cooperation activities.

We agreed to discuss pursuing missile defence cooperation. We agreed on a joint ballistic missile threat assessment and to continue dialogue in this area. The NRC will also resume Theatre Missile Defence Cooperation. We have tasked the NRC to develop a comprehensive Joint Analysis of the future framework for missile defence cooperation. The progress of this Analysis will be assessed at the June 2011 meeting of NRC Defence Ministers.

We underlined the importance of international efforts in support of the Afghan Government and in promoting regional peace and stability. In that context, the revised arrangements aimed at further facilitating railway transit of non-lethal ISAF goods through Russian territory are of particular value. Building on the success generated by the NRC Project on Counter-Narcotics Training, we welcome the inclusion of Pakistan as a participant country along with Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, and we have agreed to expand the scope of the Project to provide further direct assistance to institutional capacity-building, in close consultation with the governments providing trainees. Additionally, with the aim of contributing to the ability of the Afghan Air Force to operate its helicopter fleet more efficiently, we have also tasked the development of an NRC Helicopter Maintenance Trust Fund in 2011.

On counter-terrorism, the NRC will strengthen its cooperation, including through jointly developing technology to detect explosives¹, countering terrorist threats to civil aviation and exchanging information on terrorism. The Russian Federation confirmed its interest in resuming its support to NATO's counter-terrorist operation "Active Endeavour" in the Mediterranean Sea.

As piracy and armed robbery at sea continue to pose a significant and growing threat to maritime security, the NRC member states will expand existing tactical level co-operation, including through joint training and exercises.

We will build on our improved relations to help solve the issues where our views differ. Based upon our joint cooperation agenda, we, the NRC Heads of State and Government, have agreed to further broaden and deepen NATO-Russia dialogue and practical cooperation and bolster a NATO-Russia partnership that enhances security for all in the Euro-Atlantic area and beyond.

*President Obama on NATO Summit and New START Treaty*Lisbon, 19 November 2010. [Link](#)

[Extracts]

We head into tomorrow's meeting with an alliance that is fully aligned in its vision and approach to collective security for the 21st century. After a year of discussions -- and sometimes debate -- the new Strategic Concept that we are embracing shows that NATO is fully united about the way forward and committing to addressing the full range of security challenges of this century.

Our Article 5 commitment remains the center of our approach, of course -- an attack on one NATO member is an attack on all. And just as we will always back up that commitment with the conventional and nuclear strength that is necessary to defend our allies, we are now backing up that commitment with new capabilities as well.

That's why I'm pleased to announce that -- for the first time -- we've agreed to develop missile defense capability that is strong enough to cover all NATO European territory and populations, as well as the United States. This important step forward builds on the new phased adaptive approach to missile defense that I announced for the United States last year. It offers a role for all of our allies. It responds to the threats of our times. It shows our determination to protect our citizens from the threat of ballistic missiles. And tomorrow, we look forward to working with Russia to build our cooperation with them in this area as well, recognizing that we share many of the same threats.

[...]

Finally, let me say a few words about the need to ratify the New START treaty. As I've said, this is a national security imperative for the United States. We need to ratify New START to put in place on-the-ground inspections of Russian nuclear arsenals, to reduce our deployed weapons and launchers, and to build on our cooperation with Russia -- which has helped us put pressure on Iran and helped us to equip our mission in Afghanistan.

But just as this is a national security priority for the United States, the message that I've received since I've arrived from my fellow leaders here at NATO could not be clearer -- New START will strengthen our alliance and it will strengthen European security.

Nobody is aware -- nobody is more aware of the need for a strong, secure and democratic Europe than our Eastern and Central European allies. And my friend, the Foreign Minister of Poland, Radoslaw Sikorski, put it well when he said that New START will -- and I quote -- "bolster our country's security, and that of Europe as a whole."

On the other hand, we know that failure to ratify and move forward with New START will put at risk the substantial progress that has been made in advancing our nuclear security and our partnership with Russia on behalf of global security.

*G-20 Leader's Declaration*Seoul, 11-12 November 2010. [Link](#)

[Extract]

9. Today, the Seoul Summit delivers:

- the Seoul Action Plan composed of comprehensive, cooperative and country-specific policy actions to move closer to our shared objective. The Plan includes our commitment to:

- undertake macroeconomic policies, including fiscal consolidation where necessary, to ensure ongoing recovery and sustainable growth and enhance the stability of financial markets, in particular moving toward more market-determined exchange rate systems, enhancing exchange rate flexibility to reflect underlying economic fundamentals, and refraining from competitive devaluation of currencies. Advanced economies, including those with reserve currencies, will be vigilant against excess volatility and disorderly movements in exchange rates. These actions will help mitigate the risk of excessive volatility in capital flows facing some emerging countries;

- implement a range of structural reforms that boost and sustain global demand, foster job creation, and increase the potential for growth; and

- enhance the Mutual Assessment Process (MAP) to promote external sustainability. We will strengthen multilateral cooperation to promote external sustainability and pursue the full range of policies conducive to reducing excessive imbalances and maintaining current account imbalances at sustainable levels. Persistently large imbalances, assessed against indicative guidelines to be agreed by our Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors, warrant an assessment of their nature and the root causes of impediments to adjustment as part of the MAP, recognizing the need to take into account national or regional circumstances, including large commodity producers.

These indicative guidelines composed of a range of indicators would serve as a mechanism to facilitate timely identification of large imbalances that require preventive and corrective actions to be taken. To support our efforts toward meeting these commitments, we call on our Framework Working Group, with technical support from the IMF and other international organizations, to develop these indicative guidelines, with progress to be discussed by our Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors in the first half of 2011; and, in Gyeongju, our Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors called on the IMF to provide an assessment as part of the MAP on the progress toward external sustainability and the consistency of fiscal, monetary, financial sector, structural, exchange rate and other policies. In light of this, the first such assessment, to be based on the above mentioned indicative guidelines, will be initiated and undertaken in due course under the French Presidency.

- a modernized IMF that better reflects the changes in the world economy through greater representation of dynamic emerging markets and developing countries. These comprehensive quota and governance reforms, as outlined in the Seoul Summit

Document, will enhance the IMF's legitimacy, credibility and effectiveness, making it an even stronger institution for promoting global financial stability and growth.

- instruments to strengthen global financial safety nets, which help countries cope with financial volatility by providing them with practical tools to overcome sudden reversals of international capital flows.

- core elements of a new financial regulatory framework, including bank capital and liquidity standards, as well as measures to better regulate and effectively resolve systemically important financial institutions, complemented by more effective oversight and supervision. This new framework, complemented by other achievements as outlined in the Seoul Summit Document, will ensure a more resilient financial system by reining in the past excesses of the financial sector and better serving the needs of our economies.

- the Seoul Development Consensus for Shared Growth that sets out our commitment to work in partnership with other developing countries, and LICs in particular, to help them build the capacity to achieve and maximize their growth potential, thereby contributing to global rebalancing. The Seoul Consensus complements our commitment to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and focuses on concrete measures as summarized in our Multi-Year Action Plan on Development to make a tangible and significant difference in people's lives, including in particular through the development of infrastructure in developing countries.

- the Financial Inclusion Action Plan, the Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion and a flexible SME Finance Framework, all of which will significantly contribute to improving access to financial services and expanding opportunities for poor households and small and medium enterprises.

- our strong commitment to direct our negotiators to engage in across-the-board negotiations to promptly bring the Doha Development Round to a successful, ambitious, comprehensive, and balanced conclusion consistent with the mandate of the Doha Development Round and built on the progress already achieved. We recognize that 2011 is a critical window of opportunity, albeit narrow, and that engagement among our representatives must intensify and expand. We now need to complete the end game. Once such an outcome is reached, we commit to seek ratification, where necessary, in our respective systems. We are also committed to resisting all forms of protectionist measures.

[...]

Related Documents:

- G-20 Seoul Summit Document. [Access here.](#)

- Joint statement of European Commission President Barroso and European Council President Van Rompuy at the end of the G20 summit in Seoul. [Access here.](#)

- Joint letter of EU President Van Rompuy and EC President Barroso on the G20 Summit in Seoul. [Access here.](#)

Joint EU-Russia statement on Russia's WTO accession

EU press release

Brussels, 24 November 2010. [Link](#)

The negotiators of the Russian Federation and of the European Commission have concluded the bilateral talks on key outstanding elements in the accession of the Russian Federation to the WTO. The reached understanding complements the results of the bilateral negotiations concluded in 2004 with regard to important aspects of Russia's export duty regime and railway fees. The negotiations resulted in a balanced outcome on all the issues concerned by these bilateral talks, in a spirit of taking into account mutual interests.

Both sides are confident that this agreement will greatly facilitate the overall process of accession of Russia to the WTO, and they re-affirm their shared commitment to continue working in a constructive and co-operative spirit on the remaining questions in this multilateral process to achieve this goal as soon as possible. They are aware of the remaining multilateral issues to be resolved in such areas as agricultural trade, technical regulations, including sanitary and phyto-sanitary rules, and the investment regime in the automotive sector, in order to complete this process. They express their confidence, however, on swift progress on this path.

Both sides stressed their strong expectation that the rapid accession of Russia to the WTO will greatly contribute to the opening of new opportunities to do business with and in Russia and strengthen the international competitiveness of the Russian economy by harmonising its economic regime with global trading rules. They agreed to conduct their current trade relations in a manner reflecting the spirit of the agreements reached between the EU and Russia in the context of Russia's WTO accession negotiations.

Gazprom, South Stream and Bulgaria

Gazprom press release

Sofia, 13 November 2010. [Link](#)

Gazprom and the Bulgarian Energy Holding EAD have signed Shareholder Agreement and Charter on the joint project company South Stream Bulgaria AD.

Today, in Sofia (Bulgaria) in the presence of Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borisov, Alexey Miller, Chairman of Gazprom's Management Committee, and Maya Hristova and Jordan Georgiev, Executive Directors of Bulgarian Energy Holding EAD, signed the Shareholders' Agreement and the Articles of Association for the South Stream Bulgaria AD joint project company established on a parity basis for the South Stream project implementation in the Republic of Bulgaria. The formal registration of the company will be completed before the end of November 2010.

South Stream Bulgaria AD will engage in implementing the pre-investment stage of the project as well as financing, constructing and operating the gas pipeline on the Bulgarian territory.

"Today's signing of the documents with our Bulgarian partners confirms the mutual interest of the parties in meeting the growing needs of continental Europe for natural gas. Participation of Bulgaria in the South Stream project proves it is timely and necessary to create additional infrastructure of a trans-European scale," Alexey Miller noted.

"South Stream project is of utmost importance for Bulgaria as well as for the European energy market in view of route diversification for natural gas supplies and increase of European energy security. The project itself with no doubt will have a positive effect on end users not only in Bulgaria but in Europe as well," said Maya Hristova, Executive Director of Bulgarian Energy Holding.

"By the signed today Agreement for the South Stream project an important step has been taken towards the project execution and heading towards the intensive development phase. The project will precondition energy security increase, will ensure reliability and continuity of energy supplies to Europe and Bulgaria in particular," said Jordan Georgiev, Executive Director of Bulgarian Energy Holding.

Declaration of EU HR Ashton on violence against journalists in the Russian Federation

EU press release

Brussels, 17 November 2010. [Link](#)

The European Union condemns the brutal attack on Russian journalist Oleg Kashin of Kommersant on 6 November 2010, and on the activist for the preservation of the Khimki forest Konstantin Fetissov on 4 November 2010.

The EU welcomes the prompt reaction by President Medvedev to these attacks.

The attacks against Mr Kashin and Mr. Fetissow are the most recent cases in a highly worrying trend of violence, intimidation and insecurity faced by journalists, bloggers and activists in the Russian Federation.

The EU urges the Russian authorities to thoroughly and effectively investigate these as well as other cases of aggression against journalists and human rights defenders, to do everything in their power to ensure their protection, and to bring those responsible to justice. It welcomes the announcement of the head of the investigative committee to reopen unaccounted cases of attacks like the one on the journalist Mikhail Beketov of Chimkinskaya Pravda from November 2008.

These attacks highlight the necessity to guarantee effectively the respect for freedom of expression in Russia, in line with her multilateral obligations, notably as Party to the European Convention of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and as Participating State in the OSCE.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Iceland, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and the EFTA countries Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the Republic of Moldova and Georgia align themselves with this declaration.

EU-Ukraine Summit - Joint Statement

14th EU-Ukraine Summit

Brussels, 22 November 2010. [Link](#)

1. The 14th EU-Ukraine Summit took place in Brussels on 22 November, 2010. The European Union (EU) was represented by Mr Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council and Mr José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission. Ukraine was represented by President Viktor Yanukovich.
2. The leaders recalled that EU-Ukraine relations are based on common values and a common history and that the EU has acknowledged Ukraine's European aspirations and welcomed its European choice. They noted that the depth of the EU-Ukraine relationship will be determined by the implementation of reforms and by further consolidation of common values.
3. The parties discussed the issue of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, democratic values and the rule of law based on an independent and impartial judiciary. They stressed in particular the importance of a free media. Following the recent local elections, the leaders recalled the need for further strengthening of democratic development in Ukraine in particular the electoral framework.
4. The leaders took note of the recent constitutional developments in Ukraine. The EU side encouraged the

Ukrainian authorities to undertake constitutional reform in an inclusive and comprehensive manner in close cooperation with the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe.

5. The leaders expressed their satisfaction at the progress achieved in EU-Ukraine relations. In this regard they stressed the importance of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement which is currently being negotiated. They reiterated their common commitment to establishing a deep and comprehensive free trade area between Ukraine and the EU with a view to providing for gradual integration of Ukraine's into the EU's internal market. They looked forward to the conclusion of negotiations as soon as possible while retaining the quality and viability of the Association Agreement.

6. The leaders welcomed important reforms taken by Ukraine notably in the economic sphere to ensure an early return to growth and competitiveness. They heralded the agreement reached with the IMF on a Standby Loan for Ukraine based upon a macro-economic stability programme. For its part, the Ukrainian side welcomed the EU's commitment to provide additional support through a macro-financial assistance package of EUR 610 million. Both sides expressed their commitment to a swift conclusion of negotiations on the associated Memorandum of Understanding. The leaders also stressed the importance of further efforts to combat corruption and to improve the business and investment climate. They noted the key role the Public Procurement Law, adopted earlier in the year, could play in this regard. The EU will continue to support Ukraine in advancing its reform agenda.

7. The leaders warmly welcomed the Action Plan towards visa liberalisation for Ukraine. The Action Plan sets out all technical conditions to be met by Ukraine in order to progress towards the establishment of a visa free regime as a long term perspective for short stay travel for Ukrainian citizens. Its implementation will start now and will be systematically monitored by both sides.

8. The EU heralded Ukraine's signature of the accession Protocol to the Energy Community following the adoption of a law on the Principles of Functioning of the Natural Gas Market and looked forward to its imminent accession to that body. The leaders expressed their confidence that the reforms required by the Energy Community Treaty would significantly strengthen the transparency, competitiveness and sustainability of the sector. The EU will continue to support Ukraine in enhancing energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources, implementing the necessary reforms to modernize its energy sector in line with its commitments under the Energy Community Treaty as well as the conditions envisaged in the Joint Declaration of the EU-Ukraine international conference on modernisation of Ukraine's gas transit system of March, 2009.

9. The leaders welcomed the initiative of the President of Ukraine to hold the international conference on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl catastrophe in Kyiv in spring 2011 in order to mobilize support for the completion of the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant projects.

10. The leaders also welcomed signature at the Summit of a Protocol allowing Ukraine to participate in EU programmes

which will further support regulatory and administrative reform, thereby promoting sectoral integration through convergence of Ukrainian policies with EU norms, standards and best practices. The Protocol paves the way for participation in EU programmes in areas such as business and entrepreneurship, energy and information, communication and technology.

11. The leaders discussed the EU's continuing support for Ukraine in particular through the Eastern Partnership and welcomed Ukraine's active engagement in this initiative. They looked forward in particular to the start of Comprehensive Institution Building support to assist Ukraine in public administration reform and notably in the areas of state aids control, sanitary and phyto-sanitary control, migration and coordination of the legislative programme in Ukraine. They also discussed the preparation of the forthcoming Eastern Partnership Summit in May in Budapest.

12. The leaders discussed international and regional issues of common interest, in particular relations with Belarus, Russia as well as the Transnistria settlement in the Republic of Moldova. As partners in the 5 + 2 Transnistria settlement format, they agreed to continue their close co-operation underlining that the unconditional resumption of formal 5 + 2 talks remained a shared goal for both. They expect progress on this matter on the occasion of the OSCE Summit in Astana on 1-2 December 2010. The leaders agreed to strengthen cooperation in fighting against the acts of piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia. In this regard, the EU welcomed the participation of Ukraine in the EU NAVFOR Somalia – Operation Atalanta and looked forward to its further contribution.

Related Document:

Factsheet on EU-Ukraine relations. [Access here.](#)

Georgian President Saakashvili address at EP Strasbourg, 23 November 2010. [Link](#)

[Extract]

And so I came here to announce a new step in our policy of constructive unilateralism.

I am here to take an initiative that, I hope and with your help, will defuse the tensions and allow serious negotiations to start.

Before coming, I reflected a lot and also consulted with our European and American allies.

The Georgian government already considers itself bound by the August 12th ceasefire agreement and has always understood that this ceasefire clearly prohibits the use of force.

But in order to prove that Georgia is definitively committed to a peaceful resolution of its conflict with the Russian Federation—we take today the unilateral initiative to declare that Georgia will never use force to restore its territorial

integrity and sovereignty, that it will only resort to peaceful means in its quest for de-occupation and reunification.

Even if the Russian Federation refuses to withdraw its occupation forces, even if its proxy militias multiply their human rights violations, Georgia will only retain the right to self-defense in the case of new attacks and invasion of the 80% of the Georgian territory that remains under control of the Georgian government.

I will address the relevant letters to the Secretary General of the United Nations, the Secretary General of the OSCE, and the leadership of the European Union, stating clearly that we commit ourselves not to use force in order to reunite our illegally divided country, neither against the occupation forces, nor against their proxies, even though the UN Charter could allow us to do so.

My pledge here, in front of you, constitutes a unilateral declaration of a state under international law.

This initiative, Ladies and gentlemen, is far from an easy one for a country that is partially occupied and that counts 500 000 IDPs and refugees.

It continues and expands our policy of “constructive unilateralism.”

I am, ladies and gentlemen, ready for a deep and comprehensive dialogue with my Russian counterpart.

We will of course continue to participate in the Geneva talks, hoping that our pledge today will persuade the Russian Federation to stop blocking these discussions.

But we need the political dialogue to start as well.

And for this to occur, the international community must make clear to the Russian leaders that the situation today is totally irregular and unsustainable.

In order to push them to discuss a compromise, it is essential to clearly state the reality of the situation on the ground.

This is why we are asking that the Russian military buildup within the international borders of Georgia be qualified as an illegal occupation of a sovereign territory. Many European nations, as well as the United States, already have done so.

Equally, the brutal campaigns that have expelled hundreds of thousands of Georgian citizens from the occupied territories should be qualified as illegal acts of ethnic cleansing.

If we fail to denounce this ethnic cleansing, why would the occupiers ever even consider allowing them to return to their homes and villages?

Ladies and gentlemen, if the first victim of war is always the truth, the truth is always the most solid foundation of peace.

Our constructive unilateralism and the pledge I have just made will not have the expected impact if our European friends do not speak out the truth-if you do not speak out the truth.

I came here today, humbly, to tell you that we depend on you.

EU HR Ashton statement on the non-use of force commitment announced by Georgian President Saakashvili

EU press release

Brussels, 25 November 2010. [Link](#)

I welcome the non-use of force commitment announced by the Georgian President Saakashvili during his speech made on 23 November before the European Parliament in Strasbourg. I see it as a constructive step and positive contribution to ongoing efforts towards a peaceful and lasting solution to the conflict.

In this regard, I underline the importance of the Geneva International Discussions, where the issue of non-use of force is at the centre of the agenda.

We are looking forward to further steps, as announced by President Saakashvili in his speech, and stand ready to continue the active engagement of the EU in the conflict resolution efforts in Georgia.

Azerbaijan: Journalists Facing Violence and Prosecution

Human Rights Watch, press release

26 October 2010. [Link](#)

[Extract]

(Baku) - The Azerbaijani government is using criminal laws and violent attacks to silence dissenting journalists, Human Rights Watch said in a report released today. Dozens of journalists have been prosecuted on criminal and civil defamation and other criminal charges. Police have carried out physical attacks on journalists, deliberately interfering with their efforts to investigate issues of public interest.

The 94-page report, “Beaten, Blacklisted, and Behind Bars: The Vanishing Space for Freedom of Expression in Azerbaijan,” documents the government’s efforts to limit freedom of expression. The government should free imprisoned journalists and repeal criminal libel laws that allow public officials and others to bring criminal charges against journalists and activists, Human Rights Watch said. It also should prosecute violence or threats against reporters, which now go unpunished. The attacks on free speech threaten to undermine the legitimacy of parliamentary elections scheduled for November 7, 2010, Human Rights Watch said.

“A vibrant public debate is crucial to free and fair elections,” said Giorgi Gogia, South Caucasus researcher at Human Rights Watch and author of the report. “But you can’t have a free and fair vote when the people who report the news are in jail or have been harassed into silence.”

[...]

Related Documents:
 - Human Rights Watch report on freedom of expression in Azerbaijan. [Access here.](#)
 - Statement by the Spokesperson of EU HR Ashton on the release of bloggers in Azerbaijan. [Access here.](#)

EU HR Ashton statement on the Parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan
 EU press release
 Brussels, 8 November 2010. [Link](#)

I take note of the preliminary findings and conclusions of the International Election Observation Mission stating that the parliamentary elections in the Republic of Azerbaijan were characterized by a peaceful atmosphere and that all opposition parties participated in the political process, but that the conduct of these elections overall was not sufficient to constitute meaningful progress in the democratic development of the country.

I call on the Azerbaijani authorities to address these shortcomings as well as the problematic issues identified by OSCE/ODIHR in the course of the electoral process.

I also encourage the Azerbaijani authorities to enhance their efforts to honour their international commitments regarding democratic principles and human rights, and in particular with regard to ensuring and strengthening democratic pluralism, media freedom, and freedom of assembly.

Azerbaijan is a key partner for the EU, and we stand ready to continue our support to the implementation of further political reforms, including in the framework of the Eastern Partnership.

Statement by EU HR Ashton and Commissioner Füle on parliamentary elections in Moldova
 EU press release
 Brussels, 30 November 2010. [Link](#)

We welcome the conduct of the parliamentary elections in the Republic of Moldova on 28 November 2010, which met most international standards for democratic elections, and congratulate the citizens of the Republic of Moldova on the high level of turnout. The Republic of Moldova has made significant efforts during the past year to strengthen democracy and implement structural reforms. We note that these elections have taken the country further on this path and give an opportunity to consolidate political stability.

We call upon all political forces represented in the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova to engage in open and constructive

dialogue paving the way for the formation of a governing coalition as well as the election of the President of the Republic, which, together, should be able to tackle the priority reforms that will shape the country's future.

The European Union is committed to deepening its relations with the Republic of Moldova and supporting it in implementing an ambitious reform and EU approximation agenda. In this respect, we look forward to working with the future government of the Republic of Moldova.

Election results:

	Votes %	Seats
Party of Moldovan Communists	39.3	42
Liberal Democratic Party of Mold.	29.4	32
Democratic Party of Moldova	12.7	15
Liberal Party	10.0	12

Source: Central Election Commission of Moldova (www.cec.md).

EU Commissioner Füle on Enlargement Package
 Press points on Enlargement Package
 Brussels, 9 November 2010. [Link](#)

[Extract]

2. What's new in this year's Enlargement package?

This is the first Enlargement package to be prepared after the Lisbon Treaty. With the Lisbon Treaty in force, we removed the institutional bottlenecks in our decision-making, facilitating our ambition to remain a relevant global player. The second effect is that we can now combine forces with HR/VP Catherine Ashton in the enlargement area, while making full use of the entire CSFP and community toolbox to effectively address the key issues of the region.

Second, this package contains the first progress report on Iceland.

(As you may recall, the Commission's positive recommendation regarding Iceland's application to the EU was accepted by our member States, leading to the opening of accession negotiations in July.)

Third, today we adopted two Opinions, on Albania and Montenegro.

Fourth, we welcome Serbia's further step on its European path by beginning the analysis of its membership application. Serbia will soon receive our questionnaire.

Finally, the central theme of this year's package is "credibility".

Let me devote the third part of my presentation to this topic.

3. Credibility

To continue to be successful, the EU's enlargement policy must continue to be credible. Credibility is a two-way street.

a) For Member States, credibility of the enlargement process means rigorous conditionality towards the applicants. It means that a candidate country is only recommended to join the EU once it is fully prepared.

b) For the candidate and potential candidate countries, credibility is about their tangible European perspective. We have to provide them with a framework in which they can achieve real change, real reform and real results.

This framework is defined by the Member States through the Copenhagen criteria of 1993 and the 2006 renewed consensus on enlargement. But what does this mean in practice?

The 'rules of the game' remain the same. Aspirant countries must develop the capacity to assume fully the obligations of membership by satisfying the political and economic conditions required. That is non-negotiable.

However, the application of these rules reflects the lessons learnt in previous years:

The Commission's Opinions on applications for membership are based on a thorough analysis. We will only recommend the opening of accession negotiations, once a country has achieved a satisfactory degree of compliance with the membership criteria.

As soon as negotiations start, both the opening and the closing of each of the 35 chapters are based on clear benchmarks, whenever necessary. These benchmarks are approved by the Member States on the basis of consensus.

The EU expects a convincing track record in the fulfilment of these benchmarks, in particular regarding judiciary and fundamental rights. Accession negotiations do not simply involve ticking boxes about legislative approximation. Countries must build a credible track record of reform and implementation, in particular in the area of rule of law.

Furthermore, we closely monitor the implementation of commitments once chapters are provisionally closed through monitoring tables, which are discussed with the Member States.

Finally, we undertake an analysis of the EU's absorption capacity in key sectors.

During the whole process, the Commission provides advice and support on how to achieve the next step in the accession process. Political guidance and rigorous conditionality are two sides of the same coin. This is the key for sustaining credibility and will form a leitmotif of my term as Commissioner for Enlargement.

As a consequence, we make sure that no country will join the European Union before being 100% ready to do so. Equally, we must make sure that the European Union is 100% ready before it enlarges to include new countries.

Being 100% prepared will help to attain another vital element for the enlargement process: The support of the citizens in both the EU and the applicant countries.

Let me now turn to each country individually.

First Albania and Montenegro, and our Opinions

In its Opinions adopted today the Commission recommends "that accession negotiations should be opened with Montenegro and Albania once these countries have achieved the necessary degree of compliance with the membership criteria set out by the 1993 Copenhagen European Council. In particular, Montenegro and Albania need to meet the specific key priorities set out in each Opinion.

For Albania the Opinion concluded that "negotiations for accession to the European Union should be opened once the country has achieved the necessary degree of compliance with the membership criteria, and in particular the Copenhagen political criteria requiring the stability of institutions guaranteeing notably democracy and the rule of law." We urge Albania to make further efforts to build on the progress to date.

For Montenegro the Commission considers that "negotiations for accession to the European Union should be opened once the country has achieved the necessary degree of compliance with the membership criteria and in particular the Copenhagen political criteria requiring the stability of institutions guaranteeing notably the rule of law." The Commission recommends "that the Council grants the status of candidate country to Montenegro."

"The Commission's progress report on both countries in the 2011 enlargement package will focus in particular on the implementation of the key priorities which need to be addressed with a view to the opening of accession negotiations."

Let me now turn to current Candidate Countries:

With Croatia, accession negotiations have reached the final phase. "The Commission considers that negotiations should be concluded once Croatia has met outstanding closing benchmarks, in particular in the field of judiciary and fundamental rights, including fight against corruption, thus removing the need for the EU to consider a cooperation and verification mechanism after accession." The Commission will assess the progress in the relevant chapter in the first quarter of 2011.

Turkey has continued its political reform process, in particular through the reform of its Constitution. But no one can be satisfied with the current pace of negotiations. "It is now urgent that Turkey fulfils its obligation of full non-discriminatory implementation of the Additional Protocol to the Association Agreement and makes progress towards normalisation of bilateral relations with the Republic of Cyprus. In the absence of progress, the Commission recommends that the EU maintains its measures from 2006, which will have a continuous effect on overall progress in the negotiations."

With Iceland, "the accession process ... has been launched ... Accession negotiations were opened in July 2010." The

screening of Iceland's legislation is about to start. "Substantial efforts are needed to ensure that citizens in Iceland are properly informed about what EU membership entails."

As far as former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is concerned, "it continues to sufficiently fulfil the political criteria. ... The Commission reiterates its recommendation that negotiations for accession to the European Union should be opened." However, an unanimous decision of Member States is required for the negotiations to start. A "negotiated and mutually accepted solution to the name issue under the auspices of the UN is essential."

And now, our three potential candidates:

Serbia. Two weeks ago, the Council invited the Commission to submit its Opinion on Serbia. Commission has started to fulfil this task and intends to present its Opinion in the second part of 2011. "Serbia is well placed to fulfil the requirements under Stabilisation and Association Agreement ... and ... has continued its cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia." This cooperation remains "an essential condition for membership of the EU".

While the Commission has concluded that "Serbia has taken important steps towards reconciliation in the region", we also urge "Serbia to demonstrate a more constructive attitude towards Kosovo's participation in regional trade and cooperation."

Bosnia and Herzegovina. Following the October general elections, "Bosnia and Herzegovina needs to form a government committed to the country's EU future and to speed up relevant reforms." In particular Bosnia and Herzegovina needs "to align its Constitution with the European Convention of Human Rights and to improve functioning of its institutions. The country must be in a position to adopt, implement and enforce the laws and rules of the EU. Regarding international obligations, making progress towards meeting the objectives and conditions which have been set for the closure of the Office of the High Representative remains essential."

And finally, Kosovo – "the decentralisation process in Kosovo has advanced significantly and cooperation with EULEX has increased. However, major (political) challenges remain. The authorities need to ensure a constructive approach towards Kosovo participation in regional cooperation fora." Subject to continued implementation of Action Plan on reintegration of returnees, "Commission is committed to launch a visa liberalisation dialogue shortly. The commission is (also) assisting Kosovo to put into place the conditions needed for a possible trade agreement with the EU. ... The Commission will propose the opening to Kosovo's participation in relevant Union programmes, such as Europe for Citizens and Culture."

Related Document:
- 2010 Enlargement Package. [Access here.](#)

EU visa liberalisation for Albania and Bosnia

EU press release

Brussels, 8 November 2010. [Link](#)

Citizens of Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina possessing biometric passports will be able to travel to and throughout the Schengen area without a visa. That is the result of a unanimous vote by the Council which amends regulation No 539/2001 (PE-CONS 50/10).

The European Parliament gave its green light to the amendments on 7 October 2010. The visa free regime concerns stays of up to 90 days. Concerning the entry into force, article 2 of the adopted text reads: "on the day following that of its publication in the Official Journal of the European Union". This is expected to occur in mid-December.

With this decision Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina join the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Montenegro and Serbia who already joined the visa free regime on 19 December 2009.

The Commission entered a statement to the minutes of the Council meeting on the establishment of a follow-up mechanism to the visa liberalisation process for the Western Balkan countries. This follow-up mechanism concerns the monitoring of the reforms which these countries need to continue to carry out. It also introduces emergency consultation arrangements so that the European Union and its member states can, in cooperation with the authorities of the countries concerned, react in the best possible conditions to any specific difficulties which might arise with flows of persons from the countries of the Western Balkans and states that the Commission may if necessary propose the suspension of visa free travel. The Commission will report back regularly to the Council and the European Parliament.

European Commission sends Questionnaire to Serbia

Serbian Government press release

Belgrade, 25 November 2010. [Link](#)

[Extracts]

Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration Bozidar Djelic said that Serbia will respond to the European Commission's Questionnaire within a record time of two months thanks to the work done in the first half of this year.

[...]

He stated that 2,483 questions from the Questionnaire have been examined and affirmed that a meeting was held yesterday with European Enlargement Commissioner Stefan Fule and the Serbian Council for European Integration.

It was agreed that the Council for European Integration should hold a meeting before sending out the completed Questionnaire, confirmed Djelic and added that the work on

the answers will involve civil society, social stakeholders and the parliament.

The Questionnaire was structured around future chapters that will be the subject of negotiations for EU membership. When the Questionnaire is returned at the end of January, Serbia will receive additional questions, followed by checking the situation in the field, outlined Djelic.

He pointed out that by June the European Commission will have all the elements to prepare an opinion, based on which it will be decided whether Serbia will be granted candidate status for EU membership in December.

Djelic expressed his belief that the quality of reforms and cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia (ICTY) will enable Serbia to obtain candidate status and recalled that our ambition is to get the date for the launch of negotiations for EU membership.

The Deputy Prime Minister declared that the government will be checking and assessing the quality of responses.

He noted that some of these questions show that more reforms are needed in some domains, including justice.

Djelic maintained that Kosovo-Metohija is regarded as status-neutral and in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1244, based on which the UN's six-point plan was adopted.

The Deputy Prime Minister emphasised that ICTY Tribunal Chief Prosecutor Serge Brammertz will submit a report in December this year, followed by another report in June 2011, on the basis of which EU member states will evaluate the cooperation of Serbia with the ICTY.

Related Document:

Questionnaire - Information requested by the European Commission to the Government of Serbia for the preparation of the Opinion on the application of Serbia for membership of the European Union. [Access here.](#)

First screening meeting between Iceland and the EU

Iceland MFA press release
Reykjavik, 15 November 2010. [Link](#)

Today, the first screening meeting between experts from Iceland and the EU Commission took place in Brussels. The screening meetings are part of the preparation for the forthcoming negotiations on Iceland's membership of the EU. The experts analyse the national legislation of the applicant state to evaluate its degree of harmonization with EU legislation which is divided into 33 chapters, each covering a specific policy area. The process is to determine which issues the negotiations will address.

The topic of the first meeting is chapter 5, Public procurement, which is included in the EEA-Agreement. Iceland has already adopted the legislation of this chapter, which includes general

principles of transparency, equal treatment, free competition and non-discrimination. The objective of the meeting is to verify its adoption into Icelandic legislation.

Several experts attend the meeting in Brussels on behalf of Iceland. At the same time members of the negotiation team (EEA I), including representatives from interest groups, had the opportunity to follow the meeting in Reykjavik, as it was transmitted via video link.

The Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs has already published the timetable for the screening meetings, which are expected to be concluded in June 2011. Further information about the content of individual chapters and Iceland's negotiation committee is to be found at the Ministry's website on Iceland's accession talks.

Related Documents:

- EUobserver: "Icelandic minister criticises 'Kafka-esque' EU talks". [Access here.](#)

- "Iceland's Negotiation for Membership in the European Union", by Einar Benediktsson, Ambassador Ret. [Access here.](#)

The EU agrees to grant Jordan "advanced status" partnership

EU press release
Brussels, 26 October 2010. [Link](#)

On the occasion of the ninth EU-Jordan Association Council's meeting of 26 October 2010, the first ever European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) Action Plan incorporating the "advanced status" partnership was agreed by the two parties.

"Jordan has become an increasingly significant player, a regional actor and a key interlocutor for the European Union in the Middle East," stated Catherine Ashton, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission.

The "advanced status" partnership will be based on the overarching objective of promoting peace, stability and prosperity in the EU neighbourhood. The advanced status is building on the core values Jordan and the EU share, i.e. the rule of law, good governance and the respect for human rights.

Jordan is the first ENP Mediterranean partner country with whom the European Union has concluded the technical negotiations for a new joint ENP Action Plan which gives concrete substance to the "advanced status" partnership. "Today's meeting of the Association Council clearly represents a new milestone in the history of EU-Jordan relations," added Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy Štefan Füle.

The "advanced status" partnership further expanded the areas of cooperation between Jordan and the EU opening up new opportunities in economic and trade relations via a progressive

liberalisation in services and the right of establishment, facilitation of market access, progressive regulatory convergence and preparations of future negotiations on a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement, as well as reinforced cooperation with certain European agencies and programmes.

Related Document:
Conclusions 9th Meeting of the EU-Jordan Council.
[Access here.](#)

Council adopts final legal acts for European External Action Service

EU press release

Brussels, 17 November 2010. [Link](#)

The Council today adopted revised versions of the EU staff and financial regulation necessary for the functioning of the European External Action Service (EEAS). This follows a first-reading agreement with the European Parliament. The modifications reflect and concretise agreements made in the context of the Council decision on the establishment and functioning of the EEAS which was adopted on 26 July 2010.

The two texts are the last of the legal acts necessary for making operational the EEAS, one of the most significant changes introduced by the Treaty of Lisbon.

The new staff regulation (52/10) provides inter alia for the following rules:

- the High Representative is empowered to act as appointing authority;
- EU officials and temporary agents coming from the diplomatic services of the member states enjoy the same rights and obligations and will be treated equally; this applies in particular for the eligibility to assume all positions and, as a matter of principle, for recruitments;
- personnel from the diplomatic services of the member states appointed as temporary agents should represent at least one third of all EEAS staff at AD level and EU officials at least 60%;
- recruitment or engagement is directed to securing for the EEAS the services of officials and temporary staff of the highest standard of ability, efficiency and integrity, while ensuring adequate geographical and gender balance.

The amended EU financial regulation (53/10) includes the following key elements:

- the EEAS is recognised as an institution in budgetary terms, which provides it with autonomy for its administrative budget, i.e. its own section in the EU budget;
- concerning operational expenditure (mainly financial assistance programmes and development aid), the financial

governance framework of the Commission will apply to the EEAS;

- the heads of EU delegations will be given sub-delegated implementing powers by the responsible Commission Directors General for this operational expenditure; at the same time, they will have to comply with specific reporting duties. The revised financial regulation also spells out the various safeguards that are necessary to handle these operations, including how to act in case of irregularities.

Related Document:
REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL amending the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Communities and the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of those Communities [Access here.](#)

Unearthing China's Rare Earths Strategy

Roderick Kefferpütz

CEPS Policy Brief, No. 218, November 2010. [Link](#)

[Abstract]

Relations between China and the West have been difficult for some time. Recently, however, one issue in particular has made the headlines: rare earths. Vital for the production of low-carbon products such as hybrid cars and wind turbines, consumer goods and sensitive military hardware like cruise missiles and smart bombs, rare earths are indispensable for high-tech industries and emerging technologies.

With China responsible for the production of almost 97% of these rare earth elements (REE), recent Chinese reductions in exports, coupled with increasing export taxes, are causing jitters not only in the markets but also politically.

Roderick Kefferputz, Associate Research Fellow at CEPS, takes a look at China's long march towards dominance of this all-important market and, ahead of the European Commission's publication of its Raw Materials Strategy, considers options for the future.

Readings in European Security, Volume 6

Michael Emerson and François Heisbourg

CEPS Paperback, November 2010. [Link](#)

[Abstract]

The sixth and final volume of Readings in European Security brings together the unique insight and analysis of security experts from the EU, NATO, diplomatic missions, national governments, parliaments, business, media and academics on the following topics:

Obama's Foreign Policy: Is this change we can believe in?

Somalia and the Pirates

The Political Future of Afghanistan

The papers in this volume were presented at the European Security Forum during the period of April 2009 to March 2010.

A (short) to-do list for the G20

Daniel Gros

CEPS Commentary, 10 November 2010. [Link](#)

[Abstract]

In this Commentary, Daniel Gros takes pains to discourage any great expectations from the 5th G20 summit taking place in Seoul, November 11-12, given the conflicting national policy imperatives that will be in strong evidence. He acknowledges, however, that a lot could be achieved through a frank exchange on key economic issues so that the world's leaders understand the concerns of their counterparts and agree to tone down the rhetoric.

Perspectives of Lukashenka's Political Survival and Beyond

Alexei Pikulik - Belarusian Institute for Strategic Studies

Studies & Analyses, No. 01/2010EN, 30 November 2010. [Link](#)

[Abstract]

After more than a decade and a half of being deadlocked in a combination of autocracy and command-style economy, Belarus stands on the verge of change. Whether because of the contagious wishful thinking of liberal-minded Belarusians or largely due to the real threats coming from Russia, domestic and international experts began to take seriously the possibility that Lukashenka may not stand in power for much longer. Even if the social situation is rather stable and approval ratings are rather favorable, Lukashenka's political survival is neither pre-determined nor anymore granted: it will rather depend on the outcome of strategic actors' choices, compromises, conflicts and various willed and unwilled events. BISS analyst Alexei Pikulik analyses possible scenarios for the election and post-election period through the prism of four factors: a) Russia's recognition (or its lack thereof) of the elections; b) Western (European Union and the United States') recognition (or its lack therefore) of the elections; c) the ability of the democratic opposition to effectively mobilize public protest on 19-th of December, d) (in) coherence and (dis)loyalty of the ruling elite. The right 'alignment of stars' (protest mobilization, elite defection, and Russia's (and EU's) failure to recognize the legitimacy of election results) can lock Belarusian situation out of its autocratic trap and guide it to the unknown something else, whilst the 'wrong alignment of stars' may preserve the status quo -- rather than not making Belarusian regime more repressive. On the basis of the paper, BISS issues recommendations to various actors as to how make the best use of the situation to achieve their goals in the elections that is: a) for the European Union: to ensure that the vote would be conducted in a relatively free and fair manner; b) for President Lukashenka: to ensure legitimacy of the election; c) for the opposition: to provide a credible evidence to its case that Lukashenka might not have won as much as he would insist (or may not have won at all). Given the unexpected set of circumstances surrounding the elections, BISS comes up with paradoxical set of recommendations to key actors running contrary to their customary modes of behavior: the EU needs to talk to Russia and vice versa; Lukashenka will survive problem-free if he plays by the civilized rules and 'drag's the opposition to the process instead of pushing it to the square, and the opposition may actually not want that real improvements in conduct of the election happen in order to prevent the ultimate loss of face.

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