

The European Union: Foreign Policy Priority of the South Caucasus Countries

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*Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia
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Preface

In October 2004 Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Georgia Office together with its partner in South Caucasus Institute for Regional Security, SCIRS, organized a conference “The European Union-Policy Priorities for the South Caucasus Countries” in Tbilisi, Georgia.

With the participation of the South Caucasus Countries in the New Neighbours Programme of the European Union after the so-called Rose-Revolution in Georgia the topic of the conference not only continues Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung longstanding endeavour to promote regional cooperation and development but also sets the tune for future emphasis of our work in the region.

Participants from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Great Britain, Germany, the Baltics and the EC Delegation in Tbilisi discussed during two days the topics to be found in the conference programme.

Our special thanks go to the speakers who delivered keynotes or basic contributions for the different parts of the event. These are now published in form of this booklet.

We also expand our gratitude to the Georgian Government and Parliament without whom the conference could not have been organized the way it finally took shape.

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung would also like to take this opportunity to thank its partner SCIRS-namely Alexander Russetsky, Ioseb Nanobashvili and Ambassador Konstantin Zghenti for its cooperation and support.

Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung

Georgia Office

Tbilisi, January 2005

Keynotes and Basic Contributions

Salomé Zourabichvili,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia

I think it is very significant that this conference is taking place here in Georgia at this very moment. We are in this region at an important turning point. Finally we got the region included in the neighborhood policy of the European Union and the EU itself has expanded. We are at a point where democracy in this region is at a developmental stage. Next year we will see the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline begin operation and then the start of construction on the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzrum gas pipeline. All of this has to make us think what we want to do with our region. We all are living in a global world, where all the threats are more and more global and can only be responded to and dealt with in a cooperative manner between states and first of all, between neighboring states sharing a common reality. So, for us and for the foreign policy of Georgia, there are no real alternatives. We have no choice but integration, but it is also our objective, not only a necessity. It is a very fundamental objective, first of all because it is something that is inscribed in our history: ours is a region where there were no inner conflicts. We witnessed many conflicts from outside and invaders of different kinds coming at different times. Now we have to develop a plan for our future construction.

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There have also been ideas about constructing a federal system, as well as different types and different kinds of integrations. This quest for integration is not new. We have integration as an objective because we realize that at the same time we are a small region, a very strategically located region, and one whose development can only come about through transit and openness to the rest of the world. It is very difficult to be open to the rest of the world if you are not open among yourselves, and if you have inner borders that make all procedures and other constraints that complicate the flow of trade, human beings and communication throughout the region. And that is a reason why our primary economic objective is to develop our transit capacities. These transit capacities are linked to the acceleration of

the integration processes in the region. There is no doubt that integration is very important, as we have seen recently through the Beslan tragedy.

This region is one, which for the outside world at least, is closely linked to international terrorism. Most people in the world do not observe much difference between the Northern Caucasus and Southern Caucasus. The further away you go, the more they equate the Caucasus and terrorism. We have to get rid of this notion if we want to progress and if we want to attract foreign investment and cooperation and in order to get rid of it, we have to start working together on this very major threat. We have to cooperate with outside powers on this issue, but we also have to cooperate with forces at home and we need to find ways to carry out the reciprocal management of our borders and the efficient exchange of information, because this threat is one that can be dealt with only through cooperation and through exchange of information. Closing one's territory, by contrast, is not effective to this end – this never works. In today's world you can not close off your territory – this time has passed. All of us lived in a world where this was the practice and we were isolated from the rest of the world. But that time is truly over. Now we have borders, but we have to manage them and we saw very clearly last month when Russia closed its borders with Georgia, not the whole perimeter, but main legal crossing points, as well as with Azerbaijan, all three countries were affected, not only Georgia and Azerbaijan, but Armenia too. This is natural, as we share a common fate; we are already interdependent and very much linked together, even if we do not fully realize it and are not yet as integrated politically as we could be.

This question of the border made it clear as to how much we have to work on this issue not only among ourselves, but - and this is my deep conviction – we have to have the European Union work with us on this issue as they have instruments, means by which we can establish the exchange of information, they have training programs. We all can benefit very much from this.

That is true not only for our northern border; it is also true for our southern border. We have quite an open border

with Turkey and it is much easier to go through that border and much faster, but this does not mean that we do not have to manage it. We need certain relevant information as to what goes through that border; we all need that.

Integration is not only a necessity, it is a fact of life. I have already mentioned how we are affected if one of our borders does not function normally, but we are also very much integrated already in terms of energy. We are going to get more electricity from Armenia and we continue to receive electricity and gas from Russia. That is very clear, but we also will get gas from Azerbaijan through the gas pipeline that is being restored. As I have already mentioned, the oil pipeline and gas pipeline will be going through both Azerbaijan and Georgia. We all know that the railroad issue is very problematic in the region and an important issue, one that is linked to all of our conflicts and our future development. The railroad links our ports, those on the Black Sea and Caspian Sea. All of this makes our region a region – a single organism that cannot be divided. It must operate together and if its operation in one part is affected, the whole region is affected. This is a fact of life.

We see another big obstacle to this integration - conflicts, first of all the conflict between our two neighbors, which is clearly a constraint and barrier to the future integration for the whole region. On the other hand there are the conflicts in Georgia, the frozen conflicts. While working on building a democracy since the November Rose Revolution, we have discovered that you cannot just forget about these frozen conflicts, because there are very bad tendencies that may freeze the development of the whole country, both economic and political. These tendencies affect you directly. They have a very negative impact on anything you try to do on the controlled part of the territory, because of corruption and other criminal activities that find fertile soil in the regions without control. There is no control at the borders and that of course affects the whole economy and affects our capacity to move towards regional integration. Therefore, we have no other alternative in this issue either.

We have to deal with our democratic development and economic development simultaneously with the frozen

conflicts. We cannot just wait for a bright future, where we will be economically strong and developed enough to start worrying about that. Everything has to be done at the same time and this is the problem for this region.

Despite the fact that all of us in the region have had a very difficult recent history, we have been moving forward, we have been realizing parts of integration, sometimes without knowing it, sometimes without talking about it, but it is in progress. We have no other alternative but to go ahead in that direction. We know that *rapprochement* with the European Union depends on our capacity. We know that our economic relations with Central Asia, which has most promising potential today, depend on our capacity to build the road to better regional integration. I also would say that our relationship with Russia, which is very important to the whole of the region and which we need for the stability of the region, will be stable only if there is a relationship between a more hopefully confident Russia and a more integrated region that can establish with Russia normal and equal partnership relations, which we try to do individually as well. At the same time we have to be viewed by Russia as an important region, as a self-standing region that can be friendly as long as it is treated in a friendly manner. That is why we have to build long-term stability in the region, which will attract foreign investments and foreign cooperation; because it will be a stable region and at the same time remain a very strategic region.

We are here between East and West, North and South, and we cannot close ourselves to the outside world. Lenin once said "Communism is socialism + electrification," I would say "our future is democracy + railroad + integration and we have no other future." That is my absolute conviction and we have to continue trying everything to progress more quickly on that road, because it is a road that will bring to our people prosperity, peace and stability, which we all want to achieve.

Tamar Beruchashvili,
*State Minister of Georgia on
European Integration*

It is a distinct honor and pleasure for me to be here today. I am grateful, indeed, to the organizers of this event, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and the South Caucasus Institute of Regional Security, for the opportunity to share with you our vision of Georgia's future.

First of all, I would like to underline that full-fledged integration into the European Union is a key foreign policy priority for Georgia. The recent enlargement of the European Union in May 2004 further augmented this ambition as it brought Georgia and the South Caucasus region closer to the EU and signified an historic opportunity for European integration.

The EU's active role in the region has an immense importance for the South Caucasian countries. European integration will considerably speed up the conflict resolution process thereby contributing to regional stability as a whole. The EU's significance is further strengthened by its role as a facilitator of regional cooperation through different projects and regional initiatives. European integration denotes stability, peace and prosperity not only for Georgia, but for the entire South Caucasus.

European integration became the unanimous aspiration for Georgia after the peaceful "Rose Revolution" of last November. We clearly understand that the option for integration is directly linked to reform processes, to the development of a democratic society and the creation of a viable market economy. It should be mentioned that fundamental political, economic and legal reforms are currently taking place in Georgia as well as in Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Since the beginning of 2004, a number of important and necessary political reforms were carried out to ensure the proper development and implementation of policies defined by the Government of Georgia. Despite the relatively short period of time since undertaking the reforms within the spirit

of Georgia's declared European vocation, we have achieved significant initial results. The basic principles underpinning our reform program include the protection of human rights, equality before the law, the elimination of corruption and bribery, the enhancement of transparency on all levels, public oversight and citizen participation, clear accountability, reduction of state interference and increased professionalism of the civil service.

One of the most important political steps reflecting Georgia's foreign policy goal is the establishment of a Governmental Commission for Georgia's integration into the EU chaired by the Prime Minister of Georgia, the first session of which has recently been held. In addition, European integration departments or divisions were set up in every sectoral ministry with deputy ministers assigned activities related to European integration. Ongoing active work in the field of legislative harmonization further demonstrates Georgia's strong commitment to the implementation of the PCA. Individual Action Plans for legislative harmonization were developed by sectoral ministries. Interministerial groups of experts working on harmonization issues are currently being formed. In this respect it is important to emphasize that the political will of the new Georgian government represents a fundamentally new departure and provides a good impetus for the undertaking of further reforms. We indeed hope that the EU will support the reform efforts of the South Caucasus states, especially given that it also has its own stakes in the region.

The conflict zones in Georgia and in the South Caucasus as a whole represent a safe haven for terrorism and all forms of illegal activities, which jeopardize European security as well.

As a contributor—and not only a consumer of European security—the South Caucasus, and Georgia in particular, is a front-line partner in the fight against terrorism and all forms of illegal trafficking, such as drug smuggling and illegal migration.

Situated at the crossroads of Europe and Asia and linking the oil-rich Caspian region to the outside world, the South Caucasus represents a transit corridor for the EU which

faces new energy needs and is trying to diversify its energy supplies and serve as a direct trade channel between Asia and Europe.

By including the South Caucasus states into the new European Neighborhood Policy in June of this year, the EU sent an important message that it is committed to supporting the South Caucasus countries on their way towards building stable societies based on democratic values and provided for a powerful paradigm shift for the foreign policy elite in the South Caucasus. We consider the ENP to be a solid opportunity for further integration into the EU and a new driving force behind regional integration.

In this regard, we believe that the ENP opens up new opportunities to develop regional policy initiatives in various areas, especially security, energy, transport and communications. Regional cooperation in these fields is of particular importance to increase the competitiveness of the South Caucasus transport corridor. In this context, effective implementation of regional projects, such as TRACECA and INOGATE, is essential. We think that given the importance of multilateral cooperation in this field, the EU should increase its support for the implementation of the transport and energy interconnection network projects in the region. We expect the ENP Action Plans to fully reflect the new perspectives of regional cooperation.

In order to utilize the huge potential of regional cooperation in the framework of the ENP, development of consultations and discussions with Armenia and Azerbaijan in order to elaborate our common stand is necessary. The establishment of a so-called South Caucasus Taskforce on the ENP would help to define a politically specified vision of the ENP and allow the EU and the South Caucasus to develop technically workable and politically acceptable approaches to security issues such as transnational crime, trafficking and conflict resolution that, in turn, will contribute to stability and cooperation in the region.

We are looking forward to obtaining additional assistance instruments, which will complement existing programs. We are particularly interested in new tools such as Twinning, cross-boarder and transnational cooperation, TAIEX and

others. The increased assistance and better understanding of the problems that the South Caucasus countries face are necessary if these countries are to best take advantage of what the ENP has to offer. The South Caucasus countries, in turn, should take a pragmatic approach and fully exploit the ENP opportunities in every field. We endorse fully the continuation of the experience-sharing and telling of lessons learned by the accession and candidate countries of Central and Southeastern Europe as in the Fourteenth Economic Forum which took place in Krynica, Poland, last month, and encourage and support further such initiatives which can only benefit and continue to enhance Georgia on its European path.

In parallel with the South Caucasus regional cooperation and bearing in mind that Georgia is also a Black Sea Country — much as EU candidate and accession countries (Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey) — it is of utmost importance to foster a Black Sea cooperation within the ENP that will give Georgia an additional opportunity for *rapprochement* with the EU. We believe that the ENP should promote further the Black Sea as a European Sea and that the countries concerned should exploit the potential benefits of cooperation within the framework of this wider region, particularly in the field of infrastructure development, trade and investments.

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As far as the ENP envisages cooperation against trafficking, smuggling and in other related issues, the development of the concept of Integrated Border Management in the framework of the European Neighborhood Policy would help to facilitate cross-border cooperation with the EU, the Black Sea and the South Caucasus countries as well.

European integration is the only answer for a strong, democratic, empowered, fully independent and self-confident Georgia. We have declared our European vocation as the aspiration of our new leadership and our population in order to fix Georgia's rightful place within Europe. Our foreign policy priority therein could not be clearer or more focused and it has been my pleasure to have the opportunity to speak to you today and share with you our vision of Georgia's future.

Mahmud Mammad-Quliyev,
*Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of
the Republic of Azerbaijan*

Following my opening notes, I would like to elaborate on the position of my country in regard to the process of integration of Azerbaijan into the EU.

The accession of ten new European member states into the European Union family is a vivid sign that Europe is united under the umbrella of peace, security, mutual confidence and common values that marks the beginning of a new stage in European history, burying the legacy of Cold-War divisions in the memories of everyone.

As the EU is expanding towards East, it is high time to elaborate a more cohesive, substantial and mutually beneficial strategy of the Union regarding partnership with countries of the South Caucasus - countries which attach significant importance to multi-faced cooperation with the EU. This will serve both the interests of those countries and the EU, since first of all, Europe can not be secure without stability on its borders and secondly, countries of the region have historic links with Europe and corresponding political, economic and cultural affiliation. Despite the fact that this relationship was temporarily frozen during the Cold War period, our communality has acquired specific features, and Western and Eastern Europe can enrich each other from political, economic and cultural viewpoints.

Moreover, the region of South Caucasus - here I speak only on the readiness of Azerbaijan - can serve as a springboard for promoting European values and interests to the Greater Middle East and Asia.

Being a part of Europe and a state, that follows European culture and its intellectual legacy and shares the values of democracy, Azerbaijan views integration into European family as a strategic objective and sees itself as an inalienable and inexorable part of Euro-Atlantic security structures.

Our strategic goal of integration to Euro-Atlantic political, security and economic structures has come as a logic development of our historic aspirations and political and economic processes inherent to our society. We strongly believe that the modern civilized state can only build on the sound basis of true values of democracy, human rights, political and economic freedoms, and the rule of law.

Today, confirming our dedication to European values, we can proudly state that Azerbaijan has gained its deserved place among the European states. Its experience and potential enables Azerbaijan not only to be satisfied with the role of recipient of the achievements of European civilization, but also, taking into consideration the peculiarities of its geopolitical position, geo-economy, history and culture, to make its unique contribution to the Pan-European cooperation, development of all areas of social life, consolidation of a dialogue and links between Europe, Asia, and countries of the Near and Middle East.

The Republic of Azerbaijan has gone through hardships and difficult tests on the road to independence facing aggression, external influence and internal pressure coming from the socio-economic consequences of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, a struggle for power, transition problems and other factors. In spite of these difficulties Azerbaijan managed to stand firm, restore and maintain the stability, and carry out democratic and economic reforms.

As a result of the reforms implemented in recent years - improvement of the legislation and adoption of effective measures of macroeconomic regulation -substantial success was achieved in Azerbaijan in the dynamics of economic growth, stabilization of prices and exchange rate as well as in the creation of favorable conditions for the attraction of domestic and foreign direct investments (FDI). It should be noted that a big portion of FDI flows from Europe.

It is important to point out the growth of domestic investments, which demonstrates the trust of our citizens in the state, the credibility of legal guaranties, and the confidence in stable economic growth. The favorable

investment climate led to the increase of the private sector share of the GDP, which now constitutes over 75%, and this tendency continues to this day. The private sector began to play an important role in the economic development of the country.

Touching on the recent measures taken by the Government of Azerbaijan, I would like to point out the State programs on Poverty Reduction and Economic Development (2003-2005), on the development of tourism (2002-2005), on the social-economic development of the regions (2004-2008) as well as a national strategy for the development of information-communication technologies (2003-2012). These programmes are directed at the growth of the non-oil sector of the economy and foresee the development of all regions of Azerbaijan. Moreover, a number of programs have been adopted which are aimed at the encouragement of certain sectors of the economy and small and medium enterprises. Several institutions have been established such as the Oil Fund and the Agency for the encouragement and attraction of investments, which facilitate us in our goal to achieve transparency in the distribution of resources and ensure social and economic stability.

As for the democratization process, I would like to note that the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan is strongly committed to the course of democratic state building. To this end, we closely cooperate with international organizations, such as the UN, the Council of Europe, EU, OSCE/ODIHR etc.

As a result of democratic reforms a list of alleged political prisoners is already closed, the Law on the combat against corruption was adopted, and the relevant State Programme was approved by the President, the Parliament adopted the Law on State Registration and State Register of Legal Persons as well. Moreover, the Law on State Secrets passed the second reading in the Milli Majlis (Parliament), the Law on Public Broadcasting is expected to be adopted soon, the draft Law on alternative service was elaborated and submitted to the Council of Europe for expertise and the relevant working group was

charged with the elaboration of the draft Law on Defamation etc.

In addition, I would like to mention that municipal elections will be held on 17 December in Azerbaijan. The Central Election Commission is now carrying out preparatory works in order to conduct the forthcoming elections in full conformity with the international standards and in compliance with the relevant legislation elaborated and adopted in close coordination with the Council of Europe Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR.

Using this opportunity, I would like to express my high appreciation for “The Joint Program between the Council of Europe and the European Commission to Promote and Strengthen Democratic Stability and Prevent conflicts in the South Caucasus” which recently came to an end. This Programme serves as a good example of close collaboration between different international structures, in particular the Council of Europe and the European Commission sharing the same values and pursuing common aims with regard to the protection of democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law. The Joint Program’s target-oriented projects covering important fields such as the protection of human rights, legal reforms, social cohesion, education for democracy and development of state-society relations, added significant value to the process of democratic reforms and thus achieved its overall objectives. Nevertheless, there are still some fields that should be duly tackled in order to improve the situation and the joint efforts by the Council of Europe and the European Commission would be of great importance to this end. In this regard, I would like to use this opportunity to ask the EU through its representatives participating at this meeting to consider the possibility of elaboration and implementation of a follow-up program for Azerbaijan in cooperation with the Council of Europe.

Setting the goal of European integration as a priority of its foreign policy, Azerbaijan pays special attention to the strengthening of its relations with the European Union. Our Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with

the EU has visibly enhanced our bilateral cooperation aimed at transforming our institutions and economic structure to conform to European standards.

Our successful partnership with EU is manifested for example, in the implementation of TRACECA, INOGATE and TACIS programs. We appreciate the EU assistance to my country within the framework of these programs and hope for further cooperation. At the same time, being an active economic partner of the EU, Azerbaijan stands ready to search for new forms of cooperation with the EU alongside the implementation of the PCA. This cooperation could be extended to create a common economic area, a common trade area, and a common security area between the EU and Azerbaijan, which would include the cooperation in the areas such as border security, police, combating corruption, terrorism, illegal drug trafficking, money laundering, illegal migration, and etc.

We would also welcome the establishment of close cooperation with the EU on security issues. The newly united Europe with its enormous economic power and great political weight is capable of decisively changing the overall situation in our region for the better. Thus, we are ready to take part in the operations leading under auspices of Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU.

It is worth considering the possibility of establishing consultation between the EU and GUUAM - an organization engaged in addressing such issues as economic cooperation, trade, and fight against organized crime, illegal drug and human trafficking.

An important area of cooperation for Azerbaijan with the EU is energy. With the increased EU demand for the alternative sources of energy, the access to the oil resources of the Caspian Sea has acquired its relevant place and significance for Europe. Azerbaijan is also interested in the transportation of its oil resources to the European markets. At the moment, 34 transnational corporations from 16 countries, many of them European ones, make investments in the energy sector of the Azerbaijan's

economy. The construction of Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipelines will create necessary conditions for the transportation of energy resources to the European and world markets.

In view of the above-mentioned factors, the recently established sub-committee on energy and transport should facilitate dialogue between Azerbaijan and the EU regarding energy and transport issues, which will be mutually beneficial for both sides. We believe that the involvement of European Investment Bank and other financial institutions will be conducive to the promotion of this dialogue.

We also welcome the appointment of the special envoy of the European Commission in Azerbaijan and hope that the EC Mission will soon be opened in Baku.

Being faithful to European values, Azerbaijan has maintained its image as a peace loving country, which does not claim for the territory of any other state, while itself falling victim of the aggression by the neighboring Armenia. Continuing Armenian occupation of 20% of our territory constitutes the major impediment to our national security and regional stability. The consequences of the occupation including massive ethnic cleansing, heavily burden our economy and social sphere, distracting a great amount of national resources.

The negotiations between the conflicting parties to seek out the ways for the solution of the conflict are being continued for more than ten years; however, do not bring any results, because of the unconstructiveness of Armenian position, which is negotiating from the position of force demanding the secession of the part of Azerbaijani territory. Azerbaijan will not yield a single inch of its territory to Armenia, and the Armenian side should remember that any solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict must rely on the respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

By renouncing the territorial claims towards Azerbaijan and withdrawing armed forces from the occupied territories

Armenia could open the way for the establishment of good neighborly relations with Azerbaijan. That will give impetus to an economic boost of the entire South Caucasus and would accelerate the integration of the region into the EU.

In conclusion, I would like to add some words to what I have said in my opening remarks about the EU initiative on “Wider Europe: New Neighborhood Policy”, which is designed to shape the future relations of the EU with its neighbors. We firmly believe that in expanding the scopes of this initiative into broader geographic areas, it is very important to differentiate individual countries and assess them according to their own merits. The ENP would have value for the South Caucasus if it would provide country-specific programming based on mutually agreed-upon priorities and flexible assistance schemes.

Azerbaijan’s major concern with regard this initiative is the concept of “regionalism”, which the “Wider Europe: New Neighborhood” initiative focuses on. In view of very well known factors, this approach based on the promotion of the regional cooperation, creates some complications for Azerbaijan.

In our view, the EU’s attempts to promote regional cooperation in the South Caucasus by all means without taking into account the realities of the region, is not a viable solution. The cornerstone for all-inclusive regional cooperation in the South Caucasus region should be the settlement of the protracted conflicts.

In this regard, I would also like to express my belief that if it more deeply understands the problems of Azerbaijan, the EU’s political role will be much more enhanced towards the solution of the lasting problems of Azerbaijan, including first and foremost the resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict based on the norms and principles of international law and the respect for the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

Vytautas Landsbergis,

Member of the European Parliament, Delegation to the EU-Armenia, EU-Azerbaijan and EU-Georgia Parliamentary Cooperation Committees, Vice Chairman

Georgia is playing and will play a key role in the determination of all South Caucasus countries about the region's Eastern or Western links and orientation.

Because of that political importance, Georgia's westward path will be difficult, very possibly burdened by a variety of splits, accidents, clashes and instability brought from outside.

Your beautiful country experienced it once already in the early nineties, when a lack of national consolidation blocked reforms and stopped the building of truly independent Western-type democracy, which now strives again to be part of unified Europe.

Georgia was and is facing the same choice between European independence and Eurasian quasi-independence still today. Your friends in the Baltic States look upon the crossroads before you now with hope for your success. Having in mind our own Lithuanian experiences, as well as the situation of some Southeastern European countries on their way towards the EU, I will dare to make here some remarks, possibly suggestions.

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When Lithuania proclaimed her restored independence on 11 March, 1990, giving thus an example for other then-Soviet republics, including Georgia, we have been threatened by the same means to turn us back: internal splits on social and national grounds, efforts to compromise us internationally, a psychological and propaganda war, even the use of an intervening imperialist military force and bloodshed. Territorial partitioning and seizures was also provided in the Kremlin's menu.

Lithuania succeeded in withstanding it all, thanks to the strongly determined way of political, explicitly non-violent struggle for essential human and national rights, as well as the greater consolidation of the people on the issue of independence, which prevailed over conspiracies and personal ambitions among the politicians.

Soviets counted mainly on the latter and such hopes of the Kremlin failed. The consolidation of our people prevailed. Of course, the imperial trend of the USSR was then weakened, being well balanced by the struggle for democracy in Russia itself on the part of Boris Yeltsin. But the Georgia of President Z. Gamsakhurdia failed, because of splits among the ambitious politicians and the skillfully exploited ethnic diversity of people – and, as I see, some challenges and provocations were met then in an inappropriate way.

Because of all of that, I wish to remind you, as a basic principle on the way to independence and democracy, first consolidation, then consolidation and consolidation once more. Now my remarks about the two main obstacles and tasks, as I see them.

First is the building of democracy as a state of law. While Russia fails as a democracy, favoring autocracy and lawlessness, Georgia may become more advanced in that sense – a post-communist, but European-type state of law. That is a political chance and possible advantage to get consistent support from your own people and recognition of Georgia's progress from the West. That success may open the doors of the EU as well – beginning, but not ending, with programs of Union's New Neighborhood Policy.

The next problem, rather solution of a problem, is related to the first. I would not advise Georgia to push on and solve rapidly that painful problem of disunity of your forcibly partitioned land, before the first task - building of democracy and a state of law – is well advanced. There are wounds that need to be healed by therapy, not surgery.

When building democracy in the good spirit of the "Rose Revolution" goes ahead, already praised by the EU officially, when poverty and lawlessness reduces, then your "mainland," governed by Tbilisi, will differ more and more from those parts of country where Tbilisi is not able to execute Georgia's sovereignty and Georgian law because the force majeure is authority there, and no law, as it seems, is respected, the people in Abkhazia and South Ossetia may desire the changes for better.

In addition, the positive differences between your "mainland" and those parts of Georgia taken under the Russian umbrella

would increase and channels of smuggling would be largely blocked, the preferences for Georgian democracy, together with chances of joining the EU, will become more and more evident. I have in mind the above-mentioned lawless areas temporarily seized from Georgia, where nobody is accountable for human rights. Therefore human rights in Georgia of President M. Saakashvili must be upheld with utmost priority.

Let me look about 10 years into the future. If Russia is not struck yet by the third collapse of empire, loosing its Far East, Georgia, with its neighbor Turkey already in the EU, will bring the local problem of two force majeure areas at the table of your negotiations about full accession with the EU. *Nota bene*, if not sooner, then with the accession of Turkey at least, the similar problem of Cyprus will be fully resolved. All nations and nationalities appear in one European entity without any shooting at the borders between themselves. That would be a possible peaceful future for Azerbaijan and Armenia also, but at first for all Georgia. There is no more Cyprus of two pieces (one state and one quasi-state), but a single Cyprus as one entity, which acceded the EU. European assistance will not be deprived of the Turkish part of it. The rest of reunification will come in a natural way. The umbrella of the EU is better, indeed. Therefore I advise Georgians to have much patience and to keep up a consistent political struggle in the Euro-Atlantic, keeping cold reason upon all possible provocations intended to show that Georgia is the one who takes up arms first.

Recently the European Parliament passed and adopted new documents on the South Caucasus, especially Georgia. Some wordings there are of significant importance in a sense of policy based on international law.

Recommendations of the EP to the Council: "increased EU engagement in the region should be based on a willingness to act as mediator"; "to urge the Russian Federation... to take note that the free consent of the host country is mandatory for the presence of foreign military bases on its territory"; "to give high priority to the creation of the necessary conditions for the safe and dignified return of IDPs to the Gali district." In its last resolution, EP "rejects the 'presidential elections' in Abkhazia as illegitimate"; "calls on the government of the Russian Federation to refrain from any action which might

endanger this process” [of securing stability]; “urges the Russian Federation to respect its commitments... [agreed to in from 1999] on the reduction and withdrawal of Russian military forces from Georgia.” To add, as early as in June 2001, the EU-Georgia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee stated that games of Russia with the visa regimes for Abkhazia and South Ossetia “could be considered as de facto annexation of these regions.” What do you say then about the recent arbitrary delivery of Russian citizenship and passports to those inhabitants of Abkhazia not expelled from the region?

Meanwhile, protesting that proceeding annexation, Georgia could ask about legal terminology for its territories where Russian military bases, in violation of international obligations, are stationed. Could they be called “occupied” pieces of Georgian land – occupied with no consent of the host country by force majeure again? The Georgian ambassador in Brussels confirmed such an opinion.

In our Lithuanian case, in 1991 – 1992, we never agreed even during friendly negotiations with Boris Yeltsin, to treat Soviet-Russian military bases and troops as existing and deployed there legally, on a lawful basis. No legalization. They were officially called Russian troops in a stage of withdrawal. And we achieved in a Helsinki Summit in July 1992 the formula, agreed in consensus with Russia, about its troops’ withdrawal: quick, orderly, and complete. And troops went out in one year despite many diplomatic tears shed and requests for ten years, then four years and millions of dollars. They took Lithuania in three days, - was my response for journalists. – Why they can’t leave in three months? Finally, in one year the post-Soviet Russian troops left Lithuania, earlier than Germany and Poland.

Therapy, not surgery.

One more suggestion for Russian generals could be – how long do they need to leave Chechnya after the peace treaty was signed? You see, everything depends on good will, and sometimes, Russian authorities do have good will.

I wish all success for Georgia, free and whole.

Torben Holtze,
*Head of the Delegation of the European
Commission to Georgia and Armenia*

It is an honour for me to be here today and speak about the European Neighbourhood Policy, a complex issue very much the focus in these days. I will try to give you an overview. What is the European Neighbourhood Policy and how did it begin?

The concept came out of the latest enlargement. As a result of the enlargement to 25 member States, the EU acquired borders with Belarus and Ukraine, and extended its frontier with Russia. The EU's land border with these three countries now extends for more than 5.000 km. With the accession of Romania, scheduled for 2007, the EU will share a border with Moldova. The accession of two island states, Cyprus and Malta, has brought a number of Mediterranean countries closer to EU territory.

These geopolitical changes led to the design of a policy, initially known as "wider Europe" now the European Neighbourhood Policy or for short ENP.

The overall aim of ENP is to increase stability, security and prosperity both for the EU and its neighbours. With enlargement, the EU has recognized the need for a significant greater degree of engagement with its new neighbours to avoid new dividing lines, to tackle asymmetries in wealth and to meet common challenges based upon common values. The "common values" imply specific steps such as the holding of free and fair elections, facilitating the activities of non-governmental organisations, and allowing greater media freedom. The core foreign policy objectives include the fight against terrorism and prevention of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as dialogue and cooperation to resolve existing conflicts.

For its part, the EU will invite partner countries to participate in several important aspects of its own activities: the internal market and "justice and home affairs". The latter includes police and judicial cooperation, border management, efforts to stem

organised crime, corruption, money laundering and trafficking. Other areas are the development of energy and transport networks, exchange programmes and other initiatives in education, science and research.

Thus there will be two baskets, one containing commitments by partner countries and one containing commitments by the EU.

The contents of the two baskets would differ from country to country, according to countries particular needs and capacities. As a result of consultations, an action plan would be established with each partner country and implemented in the framework of the EU's cooperation or association agreement with the respective country. If sufficient progress has been made after an initial three year period, EU would be ready to consider a new and more ambitious bilateral agreement as the framework for future relations.

For efficient implementation of the ENP, the European Commission proposed a new "European Neighbourhood and Partnership Financial Instrument".

This above outlined approach is inspired by the EU's enlargement experience. The commitments to shared values contain an echo of the 1993 Copenhagen accession criteria. The action plans draw on the experience from the "accession partnerships" with the candidate countries, and the "European partnerships" with the western Balkan countries. The main difference with the enlargement process comes in the second basket, the "EU's offer", as it does not include, the perspective of accession.

Bearing this in mind, would the partner countries embark on the process of closer integration into the EU structures without being a member? At this stage, it can be said that most countries, to which the offer was made, have responded positively.

Which are the countries subject to ENP? Let's start with Eastern Europe.

The ENP's initial focus was on Eastern Europe in respect of the countries beyond the enlarged EU's eastern border. The

main challenge for the new EU member states in Eastern Europe is to preserve and develop cross-border links, while strengthening their external border controls with a view to permit their future full participation in the Schengen system.

Russia made it clear from the outset that it preferred to develop a separate partnership with the EU. Russian pointed out that the country is not, in any event, a new neighbour, already sharing a border of well over a thousand kilometres with the EU. Russia's vision is of a "twenty-five plus one" approach, in which Russia is recognised as a political equal.

As for Belarus, there is very little hope of developing a relationship based on common values under the present regime. But Poland and Lithuania, in particular, attach great importance to the message that the ENP also applies potentially to Belarus. The EU indicated that as soon as Belarus has a government based on the will of the people expressed through free and fair elections, it would be ready to develop normal relations with the country and to bring it fully into the scope of the ENP.

This meant that, in practice, the EU's initial coverage in Eastern Europe is limited to Ukraine and Moldova. Consultations on Action Plans with these two countries took place in the first half of 2004. These talks revealed clearly the two countries' main wishes.

Ukraine's principal objective is to obtain from the EU a commitment to negotiating a new bilateral agreement, to replace the 1998 Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. The new agreement, in Ukraine's view, should be similar to the agreements, which paved the way for accession by countries in central and Eastern Europe. A commitment on accession is not on the EU's agenda and Kiev brushed aside the European Commission's alternative proposal for a possible future "European Neighbourhood Agreement". To allow completion of the Action Plan, the issue is set aside for review after three years.

Moldova's principal objective in embarking on ENP talks is to obtain a fast-track with the destination of EU membership. As a member of the Stability Pact, Moldova aspired to the negotiation of Stability and Association Agreement, like the

EU has with Macedonia, Croatia and other western Balkan countries, which include the goal of EU membership. However, the EU is not ready to extend to Moldova the membership perspective given to the Balkan countries.

As to common values and foreign policy goals, Moldova largely agreed to implementation of the commitments to human rights and fundamental freedoms, for which shortcomings have been the subject of EU diplomatic demarches.

Overall, the EU Action Plan with Moldova, the first to be concluded with a partner country, demonstrated the extent of common interests in closer links between the EU and Moldova.

How do the Mediterranean countries fit into the ENP?

While the initial impetus for the ENP came from the situation along the enlarged EU's eastern border, the Commission also proposed from the outset that the policy covers the entire Mediterranean region. The objective is "to promote a ring of well governed countries to the East of the European Union and on the borders of the Mediterranean Sea. In addition, the EU would like to address issues, which concerned the EU as a whole and in particular it's southern Member States, such as terrorism, prevention of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and prevention of illegal migration into the EU. Furthermore, the ENP is seen as a means to promote better governance and respect of human rights. In the Mediterranean region, this meant encouraging governments to live up to commitments made through the Barcelona Process and in various international conventions.

Action Plans would be drawn up and implemented through existing instrument, namely the Barcelona Process. Implementation would be monitored closely by both sides and the Commission would issue periodic progress reports. On the basis of these reports, a decision would be taken as to whether progress is sufficient to warrant the moving towards a new and more intense relationship between the EU and the individual countries concerned. This could take the form of a "European Neighbourhood Agreement". The approach was more positively received by partners in the Mediterranean region, who did not aspire to EU membership, than from partners in Eastern Europe.

The ENP would be extended to all Mediterranean countries participating in the Barcelona process. Action Plans would be concluded with partners having EU association agreements in force. This meant that a first round of Action Plans would be concluded with Israel, Jordan, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority and Tunisia, followed by Egypt and Syria.

What about the three countries in the Caucasus?

Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia were not included in the scope of the ENP when it was announced in 2003. The argument was that these three countries in the southern Caucasus would not be neighbours of the EU of twenty-five. Furthermore, although members of the OSCE and to the Council of Europe, all three countries fell below the standards set by these bodies in terms of free and fair elections and respect of human rights.

All three countries expressed dissatisfaction at their exclusion from the ENP and the EU's Council of Ministers subsequently promised to return to the question, on the basis of a recommendation to be drawn up by the Commission. In May 2004, the Commission recommended the three countries inclusion in the ENP. The EU Council endorsed this recommendation in June 2004.

What had happened to reverse the EU's position in the intervening period? EU enlargement had contributed to a growing awareness of the Caucasus region's strategic significance for the EU in terms of energy supply, transport links with central Asia and the prevention of trafficking in drugs and human beings. Several new EU Member States attached particular importance to energy and transport links between the EU and the southern Caucasus. These links would become more significant with the Baku-Tblisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline coming into operation in 2005, subsequently to be followed by a parallel gas pipeline.

The "Rose Revolution" in Georgia in November 2003 brought to power a government bent on reforms, which recognised the need to fight corruption and to maintain good relations with all the countries of the region.

Elections in Azerbaijan in 2004, while still below international standards, represented a certain improvement on past practice. It was felt desirable to engage more directly with Baku to push for greater efforts on political and economic reforms.

Turkey's progress during 2003-2004 towards meeting the conditions for accession negotiations meant that the southern Caucasus had become, potentially, a region neighbouring the EU. Overall, the ENP provides the best available tool to enable the EU to engage more fully in the Caucasus region.

What does the ENP represent for the three countries concerned? It represents an opportunity to diversify their foreign policy, to provide a modest counterweight to Russia, and to obtain new forms of support. Georgia and Armenia, in particular, insist on their European identity and proclaimed EU membership as their long term goal. Azerbaijan shares this objective and seeks to remain in step with its neighbours. All three countries seek to move closer to the mainstream of political and economic life in Europe. Armenia hopes that through closer links with the EU it could increase pressure on Turkey to re-opening of the border, which has been closed since the war with Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh.

Overall, both the EU and its partners in the southern Caucasus view the ENP as a tool for drawing attention of the region to the outside world, and for resolving its political and economic problems. This was reflected in a series of high level EU visits to the three capitals during 2004.

What next?

The ENP is still in the initial stages of its development. It is too early to make any conclusions, if it will be successful or not. The main question is if the process of European integration can also be effective in EU neighbour countries in the absence of a perspective for EU membership.

Neighbouring countries, which are not on a path to membership, do not have the same incentive to subordinate all their political and economic processes. They have many priorities in their internal and external policies, of which closer links with the EU are just one.

The EU does not seek, through the ENP, to bring about a fundamental shift in the neighbouring countries' domestic political and external policy options. The EU does, however, seek to create incentives for political and economic reforms. The closer neighbouring countries come to EU standards, the more scope there will be to involve the neighbouring countries in EU policies and programmes.

Modalities for supporting reforms, as developed with candidate countries include legislative approximation, support for administrative and judicial reform, technical assistance, twinning, and monitoring and regular reporting. These will be adapted to the needs of neighbouring countries and backed up in the future by a new financial instrument and increased level of support (14. 000 million EURO over a 7 year period 2007-13 or an annual doubling in comparison to the present level).

The Action Plans already agreed in 2004 are a first step in this process. They represent a significant step forward, with far-reaching commitments made in the two "baskets" described earlier. In the light of real progress with the implementation of these commitments, the EU and its partners will need to consider further steps, including new and more comprehensive bilateral agreements.

The process will take place in a differentiated manner. It will reflect the needs, capacities and will of each country, who wants a closer partnership with the EU. The ENP creates the basis for a more effective cooperation between the enlarged EU and the neighbouring states. The resulting gains in stability and security, as well as political and economic development, will bring benefits not only for the EU and its neighbours but for the international community as a whole.

As a final note, the ENP is not about membership or non-membership of the EU. This possibility, open for any European country, has to be addressed in a different framework of relations. Also the ENP does not replace the existing contractual framework established by the PCAs in the CIS countries or association agreements in the Mediterranean countries. These will remain the cornerstone of the EU relations with countries subject to the ENP for some time to come.

David Shahnazaryan,
*Head of the Center for Political and
Legal Studies, Armenia*

First of all I would like to thank the organizers of this wonderful conference– the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and the South Caucasus Institute for National Security for offering me this opportunity to meet with such bright people and old friends. I think this conference will be very useful for all of us.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all the speakers and I'm sure it's a very promising start for our conference. I would like to underline the participation of Mr. Landsbergis.

In my view, it was a program-presentation with program-points and recommendations for our region, for the region of the South Caucasus. I would like also to say some remarks on the presentation of Mr. Mammad-Quliyev, the deputy minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan. Mr. Mammad-Quliev spoke about the Karabakh conflict, which is a key conflict in the South Caucasus. I want to say that my position is not close to the official position of the Armenian government. There is a lot of criticism of the foreign policy of Armenia and particularly of its position in regard to the Karabakh conflict. Before we start discussing the issue on the withdrawal of Karabakh troops from those territories, we need to speak about guarantees for the Karabakh population, security guarantees – What I mean is the physical security of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh - and there can be only international guarantees. Unfortunately Azerbaijan cannot present such guarantees to the population of Nagorno Karabagh, as there are a lot of violations of human rights within Azerbaijan itself (there are political prisoners in Azerbaijan). *And if Azerbaijan is unable to guarantee the security and the rights of Azeris living in Azerbaijan how can it guarantee the security and the rights of the Armenian population of Nagorno Karabakh?*

That's why I am saying that both positions must be changed and the regulation of Karabakh conflict is very necessary and important for our region. The Karabakh conflict is a

key conflict for our region and I would like to see a realistic position from both the Armenian and Azerbaijani presidents. The solution must be based on mutual compromises.

Unfortunately I don't see good will from either side. We need conflict resolution as soon as possible – that is my point of view.

And another small remark on Mr. Christopher Wratslav's presentation; it was very interesting for me, but I still would like to make a little comment. I'm sorry, but I'm not sure that Russia can play a key role in securing stability in the South Caucasus. I doubt that Russia genuinely wishes to see a real democratic stability in the South Caucasus, a democratic stability based on regional cooperation. I'm afraid that the Russian government wants to maintain this situation as it is and keep these conflicts frozen. I would be glad if I proved to be wrong, but I'm not sure that the Russian policy in the South Caucasus is a positive force for achieving a real democratic stability in the region.

Program of Conference

Saturday, 30 October

10:00 – 10:15 **Opening of the conference**
«Ten years in the South Caucasus: the role of the programs of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in the development of peace and democracy in the region»
Greeting speech:
Guenther Fichtner, Coordinator of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in the South Caucasus
Ia Tikanadze, Head of the Representation of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Georgia

10:15 – 11:15 **Addresses by**

- **Uwe Schramm**, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Republic of Germany
- **Mahmud Mammad-Quliyev**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan

I plenary session:

Integration into EU as a general priority of the foreign policy of the South Caucasus countries

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Chairman: **Konstantin Gabashvili**, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Parliament of Georgia

Theme of report • **Tamar Beruchashvili**, State Minister of Georgia on European Integration
Speaker: • **Vytautas Landsbergis**, Member of the European Parliament, Delegation to the EU-Armenia, EU-Azerbaijan and EU-Georgia Parliamentary Cooperation Committees, Vice Chairman

11:15 – 11:45 **Coffee-break**

- 11:45 – 13:30**
- **Mahmud Mammad-Quliyev** Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan
 - **Oksana Antonenko**, International Institute for Strategic Studies - Senior Fellow Programme Director (Russia and Eurasia)
 - **Herr Christoph Retzlaff**, Division for Southern Caucasus and Central Asia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Germany: “The South Caucasus from an EU-Perspective”

Discussion

13:30 – 14:30 Lunch

14:30 – 16:30 Continuation of the I plenary session:
“New Neighborhood Initiative” and the South Caucasus countries”

Chairman: **Ia Tikanadze**, Head of the Representation of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Georgia

- Theme of report Speaker:**
- **Torben Holtze**, Head of the Delegation of the European Commission to Georgia and Armenia
 - **Dr Wolf Preuss**, Consultant to the Governments of the Republic of Albania and Kosovo on European Integration: “On the way to Europe – Experience from South-Eastern Europe”
 - **Ioseb Nanobashvili**, Counselor of the Mission of Georgia to the EU
 - **David Bakradze**, Chairman of the Committee on European integration of the Parliament of Georgian

Discussion

16:30 – 17:00 Coffee-break

17:00 – 18:30 *II plenary session:*
“Use of the positive experience of European and Euro-Atlantic cooperation for the countries of the South Caucasus with the purpose of sustainable development in the united system of security”

Chairman: **General Sir Garry Johnson**, Chairman of International Security Advisory Board (ISAB), Consultant of Georgian Government in Security Issues

**Theme of report
Speaker:**

- **Konstantin Zhgenti**, Ambassador of Georgia in Austria and Republic of Hungary, expert of SCIRS : *“Conference on security and cooperation in the South Caucasus”*
- **Franz Werner**, Ret. GenMaj, German Member ISAB for Georgia: The European Security and Defence Policy (ESVP) and the Military and Civilian Capabilities for Crisis Management Operations: *“European policy of security and defence – military and civil resources at crisis resolution”*
- **Jurgen Schmidt**, Political Officer of OSCE Mission to Georgia: *“Role of OSCE in the South Caucasus”*
- **Rustam Mamedov**, Office of the President of Azerbaijan, Social-political department, Head of department
- **David Hovannessyan**, Yerevan State University, Docent of chair of Arabistica

Discussion

19:00 – 21:00 **Reception**

Sunday, 31 October

10:00 – 11:30

Greeting speech:

- **Salomé Zourabichvili**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia

III plenary session:

“New initiatives in the South Caucasus promoting the integration into European Union”

“Initiatives in human rights and implementation of recommendations of the Council of Europe and European Union”

Chairman:

Paruyr Hayrikian, President of the International Coordinating Center of National-Democratic Organizations “Democracy and Independence”

Arzu Abdullayeva, Laureate of Olaf Palme Peace Prize (1993), Co-chairman of the Helsinki Citizens’ Assembly

**Theme of report
Speaker:**

- **Givi Shugarov**, Center of Georgian – Armenian Research at SCIRS: “*Old recommendations of the Council of Europe and new initiatives of integration in EU*”
- **Nana Kakabadze**, President of Society of Former Political Prisoners for Human Rights: “*Caucasian monitoring group of implementation of recommendations of the Council of Europe “Strasbourg group” as a mechanism*”
- **Gulnara Shahinyan**, Deputy Chair of Ad hoc Committee of Actions Against Trafficking in Humans: “*New Convention of Council of Europe and EU on human rights protection and security*”

11:30 – 12:00

Coffee-break

12:00 – 13:30

IV plenary session:

“Initiatives in development of regional economics, transborder cooperation and ecological security”

Chairman: **Giorgi Gogsadze**, International Research Institute of Globalization, President of the Center for Democratic Development and Conflict Resolution

Zardusht Alizade, Caucasian Research Center of Crisis Situations

- Theme of report Speaker:**
- **Alexander Russetsky**, Executive Director of SCIRS, coordinator of the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly-Georgian National Committee: "Development of regional economic thinking, effective management of resources and the idea of the Caucasian Economic Forum"
 - **Alexander Tvalchrelidze**, "Georgian Resources and Sustainable Development", expert of SCIRS on issues of economics - "Prospects of development of regional economics in the context of economical demands of the European Union"
 - **Christian Calov**, Director, KfW Regional Office Tbilisi: „Financial Cooperation in the framework of the German Caucasus Initiative“

13:30 – 14:30 **Lunch**

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14:30 – 15:45 *Continuation of the IV plenary session:*

Chairman: **Nata Martirosyan**, Helsinki Citizens' Assembly – Armenian National Committee

- Theme of report Speaker:**
- **Olga Dorokhina**, Caucasian Center of Transborder Cooperation – "*Caucasian Center of Transborder Cooperation at SCIRS and its initiatives*"
 - **Liudas Mazyliis**, Vice-director, Institute of Political Science and Diplomacy (Kaunas, Lithuania) - "*Euro-regions as an instrument of cross-border co-operation: Lithuania's experience*"

- **Natalia Kirvalidze**, REC Caucasus, Regional Research Center of ecological security of SCIRS: *“General strategy of ecological security as a necessary condition for accelerating the European integration process ”*
- **Gulnara Mamedzade**, Editor-in-chief of “Obozrevatel” newspaper: *“Effective use of information technology for promoting the European integration”*

15:45 – 16:15 **Coffee-break**

16:15 – 17:30 *V plenary session:*
“Initiatives in prevention of political violence and improvement of political culture of the South Caucasus communities”

Chairman: **Vakhtang Kolbaia**, Expert, Former Deputy Chairman of the Parliament of Georgia, Former Chairman of the South Caucasus inter-parliamentary group

Theme of report Speaker: • **Badri Nachkebia**, Research Center of Terrorism and Political Violence at SCIRS: *“Standards of the European Union on fight against terrorism and political violence and problem of double standards of terrorism issue”*

• **David Shahnazaryan**, Head of the Center for Political and Legal Studies “Concord”, Research Center of Terrorism and Political Violence at SCIRS: *“Problems of legitimacy level in the Caucasus countries as a factor of unstable development of political system”*

• **Kamil Salimov**, Prison Watch - Azerbaijan Association, Research Center of Terrorism and Political Violence at SCIRS: *“Accordance of our legislations and EU legislation on fighting against terrorism”*

17:30 – 18:00 **Summary**