

**Kornely Kakachia (ed.)**  
**GEORGIAN INSTITUTE OF POLITICS**

# **Reinvegorating Cross Border Cooperation In Black Sea Region: Visions for Future**



Publishing House “UNIVERSAL”

Tbilisi

2012

Cover photo: Diego Homem - Ancient map of Black Sea (circa 1559)

**The Georgian Institute of Politics (GIP)** is a Tbilisi-based non-profit, non-partisan, research and analysis organization founded in early 2011. GIP strives to strengthen the organizational backbone of democratic institutions and promote good governance and development through policy research and advocacy in Georgia. It also encourages public participation in civil society-building and developing democratic processes.

The organization aims to become a major center for scholarship and policy innovation for the country of Georgia and the wider Black sea region. To that end, GIP is working to distinguish itself through relevant, incisive research; extensive public outreach; and a brazen spirit of innovation in policy discourse and political conversation.

[www.gip.ge](http://www.gip.ge)

საქართველოს პოლიტიკის ინსტიტუტი (სიპ) არის არაკომერციული, არაპარტიული, კვლევითი და ანალიტიკური ორგანიზაცია, რომელიც დაარსდა თბილისში 2011 წლის დასწყისში.

ინსტიტუტი ცდილობს საქართველოში დემოკრატიული ინსტიტუტების ორგანიზაციული საფუძვლების გაძლიერებას და ეფექტური მმართველობის პრინციპების განვითარებას პოლიტიკური კვლევისა და ადვოკატირების გზით. ის ასევე ხელს უწყობს საზოგადოების ჩართულობას სამოქალაქო საზოგადოების ფორმირებისა და დემოკრატიული განვითარების პროცესში.

ორგანიზაციის მიზანია გახდეს კვლევებისა და პოლიტიკური ინიციატივების წამყვანი ცენტრი საქართველოსა და შავი ზღვის რეგიონში და საკუთარი წვლილი შეიტანოს რეგიონული თანამშრომლობის განვითარებისა და პოლიტიკური სტაბილურობის მისაღწევად.

[www.gip.ge](http://www.gip.ge)

Publishing of the Summer school material has been supported by the **Robert Bosch Stiftung** and the **Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation of the German Marshall Fund (BST)** of the United States.

**Opinions expressed in the written or electronic publications do not necessarily represent those of the Black Sea Trust, the German Marshall Fund, or its partners.**

© Georgian Institute of Politics, 2012

Publishing House “UNIVERSAL”

19, I. Chavchavadze Ave., 0179, Tbilisi, Georgia ☎: 222 36 09, 5(99) 17 22 30  
E-mail: [universal@internet.ge](mailto:universal@internet.ge)

ISBN 978-9941-17-754-5

## CONTENTS

### FOREWORD

*Profs. Kornely Kakachia and Melanie Sully* ..... 5

### AUSTRIA AND THE BLACK SEA, A SHORT HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

*Dr. Jakub Forst-Battaglia* ..... 9

### THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURE IN CROSS-BORDER UNDERSTANDING

*Dr. Oscar Wawra* ..... 12

### DYNAMICS OF TRANSFORMATION AND SECURITY BUILDING IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

*Ayfer Erdogan* ..... 15

### THE COMPETING SECURITY AGENDAS AND SECURITY IDENTITIES IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

*Marina Vorotnyuk* ..... 22

### CROSS BORDER COOPERATION IN THE BLACK SEA: THE NEED FOR A NEW REGIONAL FRAMEWORK

*Mehmet Zeki Günay* ..... 32

### PROSPECTS OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

*Maxim Stepanov* ..... 38

### CROSS BORDER COOPERATION IN THE BLACK SEA REGION–BLACK SEA DIALOGUE. IS IT POSSIBLE?

*Akper Saryyev* ..... 45

### THE EUROPEAN UNION AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS: A Stimulus for Regional Cross-Border Cooperation

*Orkhan Ali* ..... 52

### THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ENPI CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAM IN THE BLACK SEA REGION: A Tool to Enhance Cooperation at a Regional Level

*Anastasiya Stelmakh* ..... 59

### CLOSE BORDERS IN AN ERA OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION: A Possible Role for Soft Policy Tools and the EU in the Turkey-Armenia Deadlock

*Gökçe Perçinoğlu* ..... 66

### PROBLEMS HINDERING CROSS BORDER UNDERSTANDING IN THE BLACK SEA REGION AND SOUTH CAUCASUS: CAN THEY BE TACKLED?

*Aydan Muradova* ..... 75

<b>THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE ARMENIAN–TURKISH RECONCILIATION PROCESS</b>	
<i>Arpi Atabekyan</i> .....	81
<b>TRACK TWO DIPLOMACY IN THE NAGORNO–KARABAKH CONFLICT: AN INFRASTRUCTURE FOR PEACE</b>	
<i>Akhmed Gumbatov</i> .....	87
<b>CROSS-BORDER AND CROSS REGIONAL COOPERATION FOR MENDING THE INVISIBLE DIVIDES</b>	
<i>Tamar Gzirishvili</i> .....	93
<b>THE GEORGIAN-ABKHAZ CONFLICT: REBUILDING THE TRUST AMONG DIVIDED FAMILIES OF GEORGIAN-ABKHAZ SOCIETIES</b>	
<i>Lia Putkaradze</i> .....	100
<b>CONFIDENCE BUILDING AMONG THE YOUTH OF THE BLACK SEA REGION THROUGH VOLUNTEERISM</b>	
<i>Hovhannes Stepanyan</i> .....	108
<b>WATER MANAGEMENT IN THE KURA-ARAS RIVER BASIN AS A PLATFORM FOR CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS</b>	
<i>Yana Zabanova</i> .....	115

## FOREWORD

This publication is a first attempt to compile papers on Black Sea Cross Border challenges authored by young people from the Black Sea region who participated in a Summer School on “Cross Border Cooperation in Black Sea Region”. The School activities were held at Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University from June 10-14, 2012 and brought together youth involved in civil society and engaged in peace and governance initiatives for the purpose of exploring European values, enhancing cross border understanding. Professors came from the Region as well as European Union countries.

The overall objective of the project was to bring young people together from countries in the region (Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan) as well as Turkey and Russian Federation for a five-day summer school in order to achieve greater mutual cultural understanding and to strengthen understanding of European democratic values. The program also aimed to improve the quality of policy analyses on cross-border development issues and encourage academic discourse within the Black Sea Region, creating a cooperative network among young professionals from academia and civil society.

The Summer school was organized with the support of the Robert Bosch Foundation and the Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation of the German Marshall Fund (BST), in co-operation with Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University, the Georgian Institute of Politics, the Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, the City of Vienna, the Institute for Parliamentarism and Democracy Questions, Vienna, the Go-Governance Initiative Vienna, Sustainable Future Campaign Vienna and the ARA, Batumi.

We trust that this publication will be of interest to many institutions and organizations, government officials, regional analysts and to all those who are involved in researching problems related to Wider Black Sea area and its political development. This publication provides an excellent, highly readable and comprehensive overview of the diverse issues of relevance to the wider Black Sea

region and beyond. Given the growing importance of the region for the European Union, it is a useful reference document, not just for the region itself, but also more widely for policy- and decision-makers.

**Dr. Kornely Kakachia**

Director, Georgian Institute of Politics; Associate Professor, Department of Political Science Iv. Javakishvili Tbilisi State University

**Professor Dr. Melanie Sully**

Vice-President, Institute for Parliamentarism and Democracy Questions, Vienna, Austria and head of the Go-Governance initiative based in Vienna.

## წინასიტყვაობა

ეს გამოცემა არის პირველი მცდელობა თავი მოუყაროს შავი ზღვის რეგიონის ახალგაზრდების ნაშრომებს შავი ზღვის რეგიონთან დაკავშირებულ საკითხებზე. საერთაშორისო საზაფხულო სკოლა “საზღვრისპირა თანამშრომლობა შავი ზღვის რეგიონში,” რობერტ ბოშის ფონდისა და გერმანული მარშალის ფონდის პროექტის შავი ზღვის ფონდი რეგიონული თანამშრომლობისთვის მხარდაჭერით 2012 წლის 10-14 ივნისს ბათუმის შოთა რუსთაველის სახელმწიფო უნივერსიტეტში გაიმართა.

სკოლამ თავი მოუყარა ახალგაზრდებს, რომლებიც ჩაბმულნი არიან სამოქალაქო საზოგადოების, სამშვიდობო და ეფექტური მმართველობის ინიციატივებში. პროგრამა მიზნად ისახავდა ევროპული ღირებულებების წინა პლანზე წამოწევას და საზღვრისპირა ურთიერთობებისა და რეგიონალური თანამშრომლობის გაღრმავებას. პროექტის ძირითადი მიზანს ასევე წარმოადგენდა რეგიონის ქვეყნების ახალგაზრდების (სომხეთი, საქართველო, აზერბაიჯანი), ასევე თურქეთის, უკრაინისა და რუსეთის ფედერაციის წარმომადგენლების გაერთიანება ხუთ დღიან საზაფხულო სკოლაში, რომელიც თავის მხრივ, მიზნად ისახავდა კულტურული ურთიერთგაგების მიღწევასა და ევროპული დემოკრატიული ღირებულებების გაზიარებას.

პროგრამა ასევე მიზნად ისახავდა საზღვრისპირა თანამშრომლობის საკითხებზე პოლიტიკური ანალიზის ხარისხის გაუმჯობესებასა და შავი ზღვის რეგიონში აკადემიური დისკუსიის წახალისებას, ასევე აკადემიური და სამოქალაქო საზოგადოების ახალგაზრდა პროფესიონალებს შორის თანამშრომლობის ქსელის შექმნას.

სკოლის მუშაობაში მონაწილე იყვნენ პროფესორები, როგორც რეგიონის ქვეყნებიდან ასევე ევროკავშირის წევრი სახელმწიფოებიდანაც. პროექტი განახორციელა საქართველოს პოლიტიკის ინსტიტუტმა, და მისი პარტნიორები იყვნენ ბათუმის შოთა რუსთაველის სახელმწიფო უნივერსიტეტი, ავსტრიის ევროპულ და საერთაშორისო საკითხთა ფედერალური სამინისტრო, ვენის მერია, ვენის პარლამენტარიზმისა და დემოკრატიის ინსტიტუტი, ვენის “Go-Governance”, აჭარის განათლების სამინისტრო.

ეს პუბლიკაცია გვთავაზობს შავი ზღვის რეგიონთან დაკავშირებული საკითხების საუცხოო, ადვილად საკითხავ და ყოვლისმომცველ მიმოხილვას. რეგიონისადმი ევროკავშირის მზარდი ინტერესის გამო ეს მნიშვნელოვანი და საჭირო გამოცემაა და არა მხოლოდ რეგიონისთვის. ვიმედოვნებთ, რომ ეს კრებული საინტერესო იქნება არასამთავრობო ინსტიტუტებისა თუ ორგანიზაციებისთვის, სამთავრობო წრეების წარმომადგენლებისა თუ რეგიონალური ანალიტი-

კოსებისთვის, ასევე მათთვის, ვინც იკვლევს შავი ზღვის რეგიონს და მის პოლიტიკურ განვითარებასთან დაკავშირებულ პრობლემებს.

### **კორნელი კაკაჩია**

დირექტორი, საქართველოს პოლიტიკის ინსტიტუტი; ივანე ჯავახიშვილის სახელობის სახელმწიფო უნივერსიტეტის პოლიტიკური მეცნიერების დეპარტამენტის ასოცირებული პროფესორი

### **პროფესორი მელანი სალი**

ვიცე-პრეზიდენტი, ვენის პარლამენტარიზმისა და დემოკრატიის ინსტიტუტი, ვენა, ავსტრია. ვენაში დაფუძნებული “Go- governance” ინიციატივების ხელმძღვანელი

## AUSTRIA AND THE BLACK SEA, A SHORT HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

*By Jakub Forst-Battaglia*

The Republic of Austria is considering the Black Sea Region as one of her focal points for international cooperation, recognizing the political and economic importance of the countries involved. Due to her geographic position, Austria is quite naturally interested in a peaceful, stable and prosperous environment, the rule of law in truly democratic societies, including the Danube Basin, the Balkans and the Black Sea areas. There is a long tradition in Austria of human and cultural ties towards the South-East. That is why our particular attention goes to developing cultural and scientific relations with Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova and the Southern parts of Russia, with their incredible heterogenic richness and diversity at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, West and East, Antique and Byzantine, Christian and Islamic roots.

Nowadays, those efforts go in line with the aims of an active European Union's Eastern Partnership and Neighborhood Policy. Dialogue, openness, increasing mutual knowledge is beneficial to everybody. Youth exchange is an element quite promising for a common future. In preparing this future we should look back at the past in order to understand better the complexity of the Black Sea in its geopolitical position.

Until late in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottoman Empire used to be the dominating power in the Black Sea after the fall of Constantinople (1453). The Crimean Tatars, the Polish-Lithuanian Realm, the Cossacks and the Danube Principalities-ancestors of Romania- and Georgia at the Eastern shore, used to be further important factors. With the expansion of Russia in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the partitions of Poland, the weakening of Turkey and the increase of Habsburg power in the Danube basin, the balance of power changed. Russia could use the Lower Danube and build up a fleet in the Black Sea, becoming a protector to the Balkan Christians (Treaty of Küçük-Kainarci, 1774), conquered Crimea(1783) and created Odessa (1794). In 1812, the Czarist Empire got control of Bessarabia. In 1815, the Danube became an international river (Congress of Vienna). The Peace Treaty of Andrinople (1829) and the Treaty of Hünkar Iskelesi(1833) extended the privileges of Russia in the Black Sea and through the Straits, whereas the London Treaty(1841) gave the Straits an international status, limiting the exclusive rights of Russia. This tendency was strengthened after the Crimean War (Treaty of Paris

1856) in demilitarizing the Black Sea. Russia obtained in 1871 the amendment of this clause (London Treaty).

Again, Russia was obliged in 1878 (Berlin Congress) to accept more European balance despite her victory over Turkey in Bulgaria (1877). Austria, then Austria-Hungary since 1867, was interested in freedom of traffic and trade on the Lower Danube and the Black Sea. Within the antirevolutionary Holy Alliance (1815) with Russia, Prussia and France, she tried to maintain a balance of conservative order in Europe, an attitude shared by Russia. But Vienna and St.Petersburg became more and more rivals in the Balkans, with impacts on the Black Sea policy. Austria was neutral in the Crimean War between France, Britain and Turkey against Russia, and occupied the Romanian Principalities for a short period. In 1878, she occupied Bosnia for good and annexed it in 1908.

Russian Pan Slavism, the attempt to dominate the Balkans by means of Christian Orthodox populations and to extend Russia's influence over a heavily weakened Ottoman Empire represented a threat to the multinational Austro-Hungarian Empire of the Habsburgs. Although during the whole 19<sup>th</sup> century, Habsburgs and Romanovs tried to coexist nevertheless peacefully and even concluded a treaty of alliance inspired by the German Hohenzollern Empire under Bismarck(1881), they were unable to do so longer then by 1914, when the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand led to a war around Serbia, the Great War that put an end to Austria-Hungary, to the Czars in Russia and to the Ottoman Empire. That is how nationalism, imperialist expansion dictated by economic interest and ideology or by an ultimate and desperate defense of status quo despite new developments asking for audacious reform measures is able to bring about catastrophe and destruction. For quite long, British interests of free trade and a balance of powers on the Continent served the purposes of Austria in limiting a further expansion of Russia to the South, but finally, the alliance of Central Powers, Germany and Austria, supported by Turkey, Berlin trying to compete with London and Paris, ended in a conflict deriving from the Balkans.

Before, during long decades, trade and even early tourism flourished in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Austrian Lloyd as leading shipping company in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea, had regular courses from Trieste to several harbors in the Black Sea, including Batumi. A rich network of Austrian consulates in all majors places along the Russian and Turkish Black Sea coast showed the importance of Austrian involvement.

After World War I, the map of the Black Sea changed completely, its northern shore becoming a theater of heavy fightings in World War II, before it represented a partition line of superpowers during the Cold War. Now, its strategic importance still cannot be underestimated for multiple reasons, but the conditions for a fruitful international cooperation and peaceful exchange seem to be very good.

We should make use of this promising opportunity under all possible aspects.

## **ავსტრია და შავი ზღვის რეგიონი, ისტორიული მიმოსილვა**

### **ჯაკუბ ფორსტ-ბატალია**

ავსტრიას სამხრეთ-აღმოსავლეთთან ურთიერთობის ხანგრძლივი ისტორია გააჩნია. ისფრიად დაინტერესებულია კულტურული და სამეცნიერო ურთიერთობები განავითაროს უკრაინასთან, საქართველოსთან, სომხეთთან, აზერბაიჯანთან, თურქეთთან, რუმინეთთან, ბულგარეთთან, მოლდავეთთან და რუსეთის სამხრეთ ნაწილთან, რადგან ეს ქვეყნები ევროპისა და აზიის, დასავლეთისა და აღმოსავლეთის, ანტიკური და ბიზანტიური, ქრისტიანული და ისლამური კულტურების გასაყარზე მდებარეობენ და საოცარი თავისებურებებითა და განსხვავებული მსოფლმხედველობებით ხასიათდებიან.

გამომდინარე მისი გეოგრაფიული მდებარეობიდან ავსტრია ბუნებრივად დაინტერესებულია დუნაისაუზის, ბალკანეთისა და შავი ზღვის რეგიონის მშენებლობისა და სტაბილური განვითარებით, რათა ეს ქვეყნები ნამდვილ დემოკრატიულ სახელმწიფოებად ჩამოყალიბდნენ, სადაც კანონი სუზენაესობა და დემოკრატიული პრინციპები გადამწყვეტი მნიშვნელობისაა.

შავი ზღვის რეგიონი ავსტრიის რესპუბლიკისათვის საკვანძო ნერტილსწარმოადგენს, რადგან რეგიონის ქვეყნები პოლიტიკურად თუ ეკონომიკურად მნიშვნელოვან როლს თამაშობენ ავსტრიის საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობებში.

შავ ზღვასთან მიმართებაში აუცილებლად უნდა გავითვალისწინოთ ისტორიული ფაქტორი, რადგან რეგიონი ისტორიულად ჰეგემონი ძალების დაპირისპირებისას პარეზს წარმოადგენდა. I მსოფლიო ომის შემდეგ მისი პოლიტიკური რუკა მნიშვნელოვნად შეიცვალა, II მსოფლიო ომის დროს რეგიონის ჩრდილოეთი სანაპირო ნამდვილ საბრძოლო არენად გადაიქცა, ცივი ომის პერიოდში კი ეს ტერიტორია დიდი ძალების გამყოფ ხაზს წარმოადგენდა. შავი ზღვის რეგიონს დღესაც დიდი მნიშვნელობა ენიჭება.

დღეს დღეისობით ავსტრიის მიდგომა რეგიონის ქვეყნებისადმი ევროკავშირის აღმოსავლეთის პარტნიორობასა და სამეზობლო პოლიტიკასთან თანხვედრაშია. ახალგაზრდული გაცვლითი პროგრამების აერთომომავლის მშენებლობისთვის გადადგმული მნიშვნელოვანი ნაბიჯია რადგან დიალოგი და აზრთა გაცვლა ხელს უწყობს თანამშრომლობის პერსპექტივებს, რაც ყველა მხარისათვის სასარგებლოა.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURE IN CROSS-BORDER UNDERSTANDING

*By Oscar Wawra*

Culture can be considered as a set of both spiritual and material distinctive values which characterize a society or a social group. It includes literature, arts as well as ways of life, tradition, beliefs and value systems of a society or group. Culture shows the diversity and distinctiveness of peoples, nations or regions and at the same time unites them under common values. And especially Europe in its diversity shows a common cultural heritage, which is the result of many centuries of exchange, migration, integration and creativity. The importance and role of culture can also be seen in a greater context: One of the answers to the great global challenges of today, to keep peace and security not only in a regional, but also in a global perspective, can be an active dialogue of cultures and civilizations. People who live in fear of other cultures, who have no understanding for each other will tend more readily to hatred, violence or even destruction.

The City of Vienna is actively taking up this dialogue of culture and civilization. Vienna is not only the seat of many important international Organizations like UN, IAEA, UNIDO or OSCE, it is also a centre for the dialogue of cultures: An international centre for interreligious and intercultural dialogue has recently been established in Vienna, concentrating on the dialogue between cultures, religions and civilizations. Focusing on the Europe of today, cultural exchanges are as lively as ever. Cross border exchanges and dialogue in Europe go far beyond the European Union and include South and Eastern Europe as well as the Caucasus. The cultural sector is also a very dynamic trigger for economic activities, stimulating growth and creating jobs. In this way it can help to promote the development of society, reduce poverty and social exclusion.

### **Black Sea Region Cooperation**

On the crossroads between Europe and Asia, Russia and the Middle East, the black sea region is not only an area of geo-strategic and geo-political importance, it combines many different nations, cultures and ethnical groups. The diversity of the people living in the black sea region can be seen as a great potential, from which especially young people can profit. There is possibility to cooperate with each other as well as with the EU and its member countries. There are many ways for students to engage themselves actively – just a few examples: The European neighbourhood policy has created several programs for the black sea region. The eastern partnership program for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia; Moldavia and the Ukraine finances programs not only for the public but also for the private sector, for NGO's and the civil society. Students can get involved in programs in the cultural sector including cinema, audio visual arts or cultural heritage programs.

Another program under the European Neighbourhood is the black sea basin joint operation program, with the main objective to promote local people to people cooperation. Priority is given to support cultural and educational networks to establish common cultural environment. Another institution is the organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation. One of the priorities is to promote the academic, educational and scientific cooperation in the region. Another network, the Black Sea University Network can be used for students to take part in meetings, workshops, youth and art festivals, sports activities and other events.

It was the Persian spiritual leader Rumi, who lived in the middle ages, who once said: "Outside beyond the ideas of left or right is a field – let us meet there." In this sense we can say today regarding the black sea region and the great potential especially for students to get involved: "Let us all meet together on the wide common field of culture."

## **კულტურის როლი საზღვრისპირათანამშრომლობის სფეროში**

### ***ოსკარ ვაგრა, ავსტრია***

კულტურა წარმოადგენს საზოგადოების, ან სოციალური ჯგუფისათვის დამახასიათებელი სულიერი და მატერიალური ღირებულებების ერთობლიობას – ლიტერატურის, ცხოვრების წესის, ტრადიციებისა და შეხედულებების ჩათვლით. სწორედ კულტურა განასხვავებს ერებს ერთმანეთისაგან, ამავდროულად კულტურას აქვს საოცარი უნარი ერების დაახლოებისა. ამის კარგი მაგალითია ევროპაში არსებული მრავალი ერი, რომლებიც ამჟამად ერთიანი ევროპული კულტურის ნაწილს წარმოადგენენ და საერთო ევროპული მემკვიდრეობის მფლობელები არიან. ეს საერთო ევროპული ღირებულებები წარმოადგენს მრავალსაუკუნოვანი მიგრაციის, აზრთა გაცვლა-გამოცვლის, ინტეგრაციისა და შემოქმედებითობის ნაყოფს.

კულტურის მნიშვნელობა და როლი დღევანდელ მსოფლიოში იზრდება: მას არამარტო ერების გაერთიანების, არამედ აქტიური თანამშრომლობის წინაპირობადაც მოაზრებენ, როგორც რეგიონალური, ისე მსოფლიო მასშტაბებით. საერთო კულტურას შეუძლია დადებითი როლი ითამაშოს მშვიდობისა და უსაფრთხოების უზრუნველყოფის საქმეში. ხელი შეუწყოს კულტურებისა და ცივილიზაციების აქტიურ დიალოგს. უდავოა, რომ გარემოში, სადაც ადამიანები არ იცნობენ ან მტრულად არიან ერთმანეთის კულტურების მიმართ განწყობილი, კონფლიქტის წარმოშობის ალბათობა ბევრად დიდია, ვიდრე იქ, სადაც მეზობელი ერები საერთო კულტურულ მემკვიდრეობას ფლობენ, ან უკიდურეს შემთხვევაში პატივს სცემენ ერთიმეორის კულტურას.

ქალაქი ვენა აქტიურადაა ჩართული ამ კულტურათმორის და ცივილიზაციათმორის დიალოგში. ვენაში მდებარეობს არამარტო ისეთი ორგანიზაციების შტაბ-ბინები, როგორებიცაა გაერო, საერთაშორისო ატომური ენერჯის საა-

გენტო, UNIDO და ეუთო, არამედ ეს ქალაქი ასევე წარმოადგენს კულტურათა-შორისი დიალოგის კერას: აქ ცოტა ხნის წინ გაიხსნა რელიგიათშორისი და კულტურათშორისი დიალოგის საერთაშორისო ცენტრი, რომელიც სხვადასხვა კულტურების, რელიგიებისა და ცივილიზაციების დიალოგის საკითხებზე მუშაობს.

კულტურული გაცვლა-გამოცვა ევროპაში დღეს ისეთი აქტიურია, როგორც არასდროს. ევროპის დიალოგმა კარგახანია დატოვა ევროკავშირის ფარგლები და გადანვდა ისეთ რეგიონებს როგორებიცაა სამხრეთი და აღმოსავლეთი ევროპა და კავკასია. კულტურული სექტორი ეკონომიკური განვითარების მნიშვნელოვანი ხელშემწყობი ფაქტორია. კულტურას შეუძლია დადებითი გავლენა იქონიოს საზოგადოების განვითარებაზე, სიღარიბის დაძლევისა და სოციალური ჩართულობის ამაღლებაზე.

## DYNAMICS OF TRANSFORMATION AND SECURITY BUILDING IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

*By Ayfer Erdogan*

The Black Sea Region, which is situated at the crossroads between Europe and Asia, is becoming increasingly important on the international agenda. The region's geostrategic location, proximity to the Eurasian energy corridor, as well as the transformation process to democracy and good governance, are some of the factors which make the region a priority for international actors. As the relevant actors understand that cooperation is vital in dealing with the common problems, a regional approach is regarded as vital. However, longstanding animosities between regional states, nationalist forces within these countries, and instability in economic and political development get in the way of cooperative efforts. To achieve cross border cooperation, regional actors such as the European Union, Russia and Turkey need to develop sound policies which promote dialogue and cooperation in order to settle conflicts peacefully. In doing this, it is equally important to provide stability in the political and economic spheres in the region in order to curb the impact of the nationalist forces on these countries' political and economic development. Without the frozen conflicts and disputes being settled peacefully, and stability being provided, there is almost no chance of achieving cross border cooperation in the region.

There is a vested interest in building security and providing stability for both the regional and international actors in the Black Sea Region. This region is strategic both for being a buffer zone between Europe and Asia, Russia and the Middle East, and for being a transit route to the Eurasian energy resources. During the Cold War era, the region was a site of confrontation and the East-West strategic competition. Yet, the end of the bi-polar world structure and the demise of the Soviet Union brought an end to the forced stability and set the sources of old grievances and tension free, bringing new challenges to the regional security in the Black Sea Region. With the ideological vacuum of the Post-Cold War era, the Black Sea regional states have been exposed to internal and bilateral problems such as nationalistic movements, territorial claims and ethnic upheavals. Rivalry and mistrust continue to dominate bilateral relations among regional states.

The heterogeneity of the ethnic makeup in the region has also been a source of internal and bilateral conflict. In the Post-Cold War era, the Yugoslav conflict, as a real test case for the heterogeneity of the ethnic complex and territorial disputes, has shown us how fragile and destructive ethnic and territorial disputes can be. The Yugoslav conflict was also a test case for the international actors and peacekeeping instruments such as the UN, NATO and OSCE and it indicated that

these actors were not totally successful in conflict resolution and providing stability. Given that the states of the Black Sea Region are in their transformation process and faced with serious challenges of ethnic and territorial conflicts, as with the former Yugoslavia, any spark could bring a destructive war in the region. Indeed, with the demise of the Soviet Union, the territorial disputes in Nagorno-Karabakh, which ignited war in 1992, the ongoing territorial conflicts in Ossetia and Abkhazia and Transnistria are clear examples of the volatility and instability of this region.

Instability and security problems in the region are closely related to the internal dynamics of the Black Sea states in their transition to democracy in the Post-Cold War era. These states share several commonalities with regard to their cultural background and communist heritage. There are diverse political systems ranging from developing democracies to authoritarian regimes. With the fall of the Soviet Union, just like in Eastern Europe, the countries of the Black Sea Region were faced with several challenges, among which state-building and the transformation to democracy and a market economy prevailed. After becoming independent, these countries had to tackle both the question of how to transform into democracies and market economies, and how to fulfill state-building and nation building processes. Yet, in contrast to Eastern Europe, where the democratization process was fast and smooth, in the Black Sea Region, this process has been rather slow and remittent which is partly due to the influence of the legacies of the past, regional conflicts, and animosities among the states of the region.

In countries surrounding the Black Sea, the lack of democratic tradition and well-functioning democratic institutions is endemic, though the post-communist states of the Black Sea Region have displayed some differences in their pace and efficiency in the transformation process. While some states perform much better in the transformation to democratic systems and a market economy, some states regress and present as an 'authoritarian democracy' or a 'steered democracy'(Altmann et al, 2010:8). The transformation process to democracy is crucial to these states, especially since their problems in the Post-Cold War era (such as manipulated elections, the lack of transparency, corruption, clientelism, nepotism, a weak judiciary system, the lack of free media, and a low turnout in grassroots movements and civil society initiatives) are closely linked to the absence of democratic systems. Nation building and the search for a state identity also play a crucial role in the transformation processes of the states in the Black Sea Region.

In addition to the challenge of transformation into well functioning democracies, the states of the Black Sea Region are faced with a setback in their political and economic development because of territorial conflicts either internally or with neighboring states. The four conflict-ridden states of the Black Sea Region, namely Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Moldova encountered territorial conflicts in

the 1990s. These conflicts are generally called *frozen* as there hasn't been any resolution in the last two decades. In particular, unresolved conflict in Transnistria and Nagorno-Karabakh, the 2008 war in Georgia and the secession of Abkhazia and South Ossetia have strengthened the aggressive discourses of nationalist parties and hinder policy makers from taking steps further in their political reforms.

Conflicts by their nature interfere with the development of democracy since they require the use of military force or authoritarian tactics in order to keep the situation under control. In addition, they pave the way for the consolidation of populist discourses and nationalist parties in the internal political atmosphere. Above all, these unresolved conflicts have not only hugely affected the political atmosphere in internal politics and neighborhood relationships, but also jeopardize long term stability in the region. For instance, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict poses a significant security threat to both Armenia and Azerbaijan and it has led to a severe deterioration in neighborhood relations. Likewise, separatist conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia resulted in the Georgian-Russian war in 2008. Both regions were brought under Russian forces' control, thus undermining Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty. The unresolved conflict in Transnistria poses a serious challenge to the Moldovan state's security and transition to democracy. Consequently, these conflicts absorb much of the development potential of those societies and weaken support for pro-Western and liberal political groups within the society.

The political uncertainty, which has derived from the frozen conflicts in the Black Sea Region, is not only against these states' political and economic interests but also against the key actors' interests in the region. Given that the Black Sea Region today borders the European Union and the region is an energy corridor to the natural gas and oil resources in Central Asia, European interests are vital in the region. The existence of mostly Western-based multinational companies in the Caspian Basin indicates the increased Western interest in gaining access to Caspian oil and gas through the Black Sea (Aydın, 2004:7). Gaining access to the oil and gas resources would enable European countries to gain control over the pipelines and transit routes, which would ultimately serve the European interest in securing its oil and gas demand and diversify away from Russia—currently the main gas supplier to Europe. Securing the major share of the oil pipeline transit in this region means gaining enhanced political leverage not only over the Black Sea and Caspian regions but also over a global political scale (ibid). Besides, this region is also important for Russian security and economic interests as the countries in the region act as buffer zones and transit states for Russian energy sources.

Russia sees the Black Sea and the Caspian Regions as its own backyard within its self proclaimed Russian *sphere of influence* and has sought to justify its involvement

in the region by pointing to the territorial disputes in this post-Soviet space. Russian criticism of the attempts to promote Western democracy and the integration of economies and political systems of the Black Sea states into the EU clearly indicates the existing disparity between the global actors in their policies towards the region. Finally, as these countries are neighboring Turkey, any instability in one of them could lead to a flow of refugees, and migration to the neighboring countries (among which Turkey has the potential to receive the most refugees).

Given that any political turmoil and conflict in one state might have a spillover effect since the ethnicity complex is great, stability in the Black Sea Region is a high priority for Turkish security interests. Besides, the economic investments and trade in the Black Sea countries, particularly for Georgia and Azerbaijan entails Turkey developing sound policies promoting peace and stability in the region. Moreover, in a wider perspective, problems emerging from the Black Sea Region, ranging from environmental disasters, smuggling of drugs and guns, ethnic conflicts, border problems and demographic challenges, have the potential to influence the whole region including the EU, Russia and Turkey. Therefore, stability has to be ensured in the Black Sea Region and one has to keep in mind that without the peaceful settlement of conflicts, there can be neither successful democratic transition nor any stability in the region.

It is widely argued that regionalization is an agent of integration into market economies and transformation from totalitarian regimes to democratic institutionalization (Özer,1997:78). Regional cooperation schemes are believed to make up for the inherent weaknesses of the international collective security arrangements. Furthermore, by engaging in non-military security issues in the political, economic and environmental fields, regional organizations build a sense of common interest, and, to a certain extent, a shared identity (ibid:79). Their existence serves as a catalyst for promoting security by reducing tendency to resort to coercive means in the pursuit of national interests. Regional cooperation schemes also provide forum for the state, sub-state and non-state actors to engage in dialogue and mutual understanding on a wide range of issues. In terms of economic cooperation, regional organizations stimulate economic growth by fostering mutual benefits and interdependence and the higher the economic interdependence between states, the less likely they are to resort to non-peaceful means.

Since economic benefits lie at the heart of regional cooperation, regional organizations could engage in dialogue to eliminate potential tensions and situations of conflict, and try to enhance good-neighborly relations. They can also contribute to global security by developing common positions on security issues within wider organizations like the UN and OSCE. Thus, a wide range of political, economic and security benefits makes regional cooperation appealing for regional actors.

The Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) is a positive manifestation of a regional cooperation scheme. It promotes interaction on various issues and contributes to stability indirectly. The BSEC wasn't initiated as a forum for political dialogue, yet the economic benefits it has brought act as a catalyst for security. Though the BSEC created a favorable atmosphere for harmonious coexistence and stability, regional cooperation is far from being adequate. There is a lack of coordination and common understanding among the countries of the region as to what the BSEC means to each of them. While for some states such as Romania and Turkey, it is considered to be a means of achieving European integration, for some states such as Russia (which is in the quest for hegemony in the region), that is not acceptable (Aral, 2002).

The current landscape of the Black Sea Region, particularly the South Caucasus, with the ongoing territorial conflicts and nationalistic movements, clearly indicates the lack of mutual understanding and cross border cooperation. Open dialogue and sound policies aimed at cross border understanding and cooperation are vital in order to tackle unresolved conflicts in the Black Sea Region. Given that the European Union, Russia and Turkey are key regional actors, they need to play a constructive role in the resolution of conflicts by promoting dialogue and creating sound policies to achieve cross border understanding. This constructive role is only possible if these actors are convinced of their common interests in the region. The level of interdependence in trade, energy, transportation and environment issues will determine the success of any regionalization process. Once these key players see common interests in cooperation and security building, they will begin to develop sound policies towards security and stability in the region. Realization of stability and security requires parallel progress in all spheres of development; namely, complete democratic and transparent institutions, a well structured market economy, and a well functioning legal system.

The EU's transformative power is a necessary tool for a smooth transition process and the EU could promote reforms and progress in political and economic fields in the region. In dealing with the Black Sea states, the EU needs a coherent regional approach rather than individually tailored policies (Aydın, 2004:29). The main problem lies in that the EU prioritizes energy security over transformation in its policies towards the Black Sea states and it is interested in some superficial developments rather than true democratic transition and peaceful settlement of unresolved conflicts (Altmann et al, 2010:6). Yet, its main priority should be how to achieve stability in the region, which is also directly linked to its energy security. Without a stable South Caucasus, the EU will be successful neither in its efforts towards diversification of energy supplies nor in its efforts to securitize its Eastern borders. Moreover, Russia is a very important key actor with which the EU needs to find a way to cooperate.

If Russia could be convinced of the benefits of open dialogue and cooperation in the region and acted towards this goal, energy security could be provided and cross border cooperation could lead to economic prosperity and political development throughout the region. Finally, Turkey could play an important role as a mediator in the Nagorno–Karabakh conflict so that true rapprochement between Armenia and Turkey to be achieved.

Instead of top down mediation, proactive and grassroots processes need to be promoted as a way to settle conflicts peacefully. An open dialogue and cross border cooperation can only be achieved with the involvement of NGOs and free mass-media in these societies. This is where the European involvement for the consolidation of the civil society sector is vital. The EU could initiate new programs to train NGO workers and peace activists and cooperate with local governments towards the sustainability of the civil society sector. Further, they could develop initiatives aimed at addressing the problems associated with uncontrolled media.

Cooperation with the EU both in the political sphere within the framework of the Eastern Partnership and in economic sphere is important for stability in the region. Therefore, the EU can use its transformative power and cooperate with other regional actors, namely Russia and Turkey, to settle frozen conflicts peacefully. The peaceful settlement of these conflicts will not only pave the way for cross-border cooperation and the political and economic development of these countries, but also will stabilize the region for a secure flow of energy supplies, in which the EU is particularly interested.

### References:

- Altmann, F.L, Deimel, J. & Schmidt, A.G. 'Democracy and Good Governance in the Black Sea Region', *Commission on the Black Sea, Policy Report IV*, 2010, [http://www.blackseacom.eu/uploads/media/Black\\_Sea\\_Policy\\_Report\\_IV\\_Democracy.pdf](http://www.blackseacom.eu/uploads/media/Black_Sea_Policy_Report_IV_Democracy.pdf) (accessed: 25 May 2012).
- Aral, B. 'The Black Sea Economic Cooperation after Ten Years: What Went Wrong?', *Alternative*, Vol. 1, No. 4, Winter 2002, <http://www.alternativesjournal.net/volume1/number4/aral.htm> (accessed: 30 June 2012.)
- Aydın, M. 'Europe's Next Shore: The Black Sea Region after the EU Enlargement', *European Union Institute for Security Studies, Occasional Papers*, No. 53, June 2004, <http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/occ53.pdf> (accessed: 26 June 2012.)
- Özer, E. 'The Black Sea Economic Cooperation and Regional Security', *Perceptions, Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. II, No. 3, September-November 1997.

## **უსაფრთხოების სტრუქტურების განმტკიცება შავი ზღვის რეგიონში და მათი ტრანსფორმაციის ღონისძიება**

### **აიფერ ერდოგანი, თურქეთი**

შავი ზღვის რეგიონი, რომელიც ევროპისა და აზიის საზღვარზე მდებარეობს და ბუფერულ ზონას წარმოადგენს რუსეთსა და შუა აღმოსავლეთს შორის, სულ უფრო მნიშვნელოვანი ხდება საერთაშორისო არენაზე. რეგიონის გეოსტრატეგიული მდებარეობა, ევრაზიის ენერჯო დერეფანთან სიახლოვე, დემოკრატიული ტრანსფორმაციის პროცესი, ისევე როგორც ურთიერთთანამშრომლობით მიღებული პოლიტიკური თუ ეკონომიკური სარგებელი ზოგიერთი იმ ფაქტორთაგანია, რაც ამ რეგიონს პრიორიტეტულს ხდის არა მხოლოდ რეგიონალური, არამედ საერთაშორისო აქტორებისთვისაც. საერთაშორისო აქტორებისთვის ასევე ფრიად მნიშვნელოვანია უსაფრთხოებისა და სტაბილურობის გარანტიები შავი ზღვის რეგიონში.

ამასთანავე, საბჭოთა კავშირის დაშლის შემდგომ პერიოდში რეგიონის ქვეყნებს შორის წარმოქმნილი ხანგრძლივი დაპირისპირებები, ეროვნული ძალების კონსოლიდაცია, არასტაბილური ეკონომიკური და პოლიტიკური განვითარება, ისევე როგორც შიდა ტერიტორიული კონფლიქტები და ეთნიკური დაპირისპირებები, რამაც წარმოშვა “გაყინული” კონფლიქტები სომხეთში, აზერბაიჯანში, საქართველოსა და მოლდავეთში, ხელს უშლიან რეგიონალური თანამშრომლობის პერსპექტივებს. ამ კონფლიქტების ფონზე არსებული პოლიტიკური არასტაბილურობა კი აფერხებს არა მხოლოდ რეგიონის ქვეყნების პოლიტიკურ და ეკონომიკურ განვითარებას, არამედ ეწინააღმდეგება ამ რეგიონში საერთაშორისო აქტორების ინტერესებსაც.

რეგიონალურ და საერთაშორისო აქტორებს ესმით, რომ საერთო პრობლემების გადასაჭრელად აუცილებელია თანამშრომლობა, რეგიონალური მიდგომა კი ამ კუთხით ყველაზე მნიშვნელოვანია. ეფექტური საზღვრისპირა თანამშრომლობის მისაღწევად მთავარმა რეგიონალურმა აქტორებმა, როგორცაა ევროკავშირი, რუსეთი და თურქეთი უნდა განავითარონ ეფექტური კურსი, რომელიც ხელს შეუწყობს კონფლიქტების მშვიდობიანად გადაწყვეტას დიალოგისა და თანამშრომლობის გზით.

ასევე უაღრესად მნიშვნელოვანია რეგიონში ეკონომიკური და პოლიტიკური სტაბილურობის შენარჩუნება, სახელმწიფოებრიობის მშენებლობა, დემოკრატიული და გამჭვირვალე ინსტიტუტები, კარგად დაგეგმარებული საბაზრო ეკონომიკა, გამართულად ფუნქციონირებადი სამართლებრივი სისტემა, ისეთ საერთაშორისო ორგანიზაციებთან თანამშრომლობა, როგორებიცაა გაერო და ეუთო. სტაბილურობის მისაღწევად ასევე მნიშვნელოვანია არასამთავრობო ორგანიზაციებისა და თავისუფალი მედიის როლი.

## THE COMPETING SECURITY AGENDAS AND SECURITY IDENTITIES IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

*By Marina Vorotnyuk*

It has become an academic and political truism that the wider Black Sea Region is not a unitary structure of analysis in a sense of a single security community with a shared understanding of its single identity, but rather a flexible construction with shifting borders and divergent visions of national interests. From a social constructivist perspective, the Black Sea Region has the explicit characteristics of a 'security region'<sup>1</sup>—in the constructivist sense, an undesirable disposition. Extensive securitization by the intraregional powers has led to a security mindset becoming ingrained in the fragmented states of the Black Sea Region.

A very relevant definition of this situation (originally referred to as the Turkish position) is that these are states 'surrounded by reality'<sup>2</sup>. Applying this notion to the Black Sea countries, one can state that this geographical maxim has not only shaped the historical context of their state-building, but continues to influence social processes in at least certain parts of the Black Sea Region, reproducing and reconstructing the culture of insecurity in the area.

Presently, the Black Sea Region is a battleground between two competitive security visions, traditionally labeled as modernist and post-modernist. As Makarychev notes, 'the BSR may be seen as an area unable to become a security bridge between two competing spatial orders, Euro-Atlantic and Russian.'<sup>3</sup> This leads to, what he calls, 'symmetric securitization' when Russia is considered as 'the other' by its neighbors and in turn, Russia securitizes their 'difference'.<sup>4</sup>

These modernist and post-modernist visions acknowledge themselves in actors' security identities which contribute to a further exclusion of 'the other' rather than to mutual inclusion in cooperative mechanisms within the region. While Russia is considered as a 'modern' state, the EU, which has been present in the region since Bulgaria and Romania became its members, is a post-modern one. Taking into consideration its experience of being a part of the Western and European civilization, Turkey might be viewed as a country on the verge of both, being traditionally labeled in academic discourse as an insulator. Ukraine, Moldova and

---

<sup>1</sup> A.S. Makarychev, *Securitization and Identity. The Black Sea Region as a "Conflict Formation"*, PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo 43 (2008), available at [http://www.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/pepm\\_043.pdf](http://www.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/pepm_043.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> F. Tayfur, Turkish Foreign Policy towards the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation: A Comparative Analysis, *Foreign policy (A Quarterly of the Foreign Policy Institute)*, 1-2-3-4, (1999), P. 48.

<sup>3</sup> A.S. Makarychev, Op. cit.

<sup>4</sup> A.S. Makarychev, Op.cit.

South Caucasian states are a borderland between both spaces trying to define themselves in independent, rather than auxiliary terms.

The existence of a gap between the modern and post-modern spaces in the Black Sea Region reconstructs the insecurity culture and impedes the prospects of its eventual homogenization as a single security community. This has led to a situation where the 'perspectives for a post-modern European security order in the East Europe could be limited by the modern part of international system persisting in the area.'<sup>5</sup>

The discourse employed by the Black Sea states is not supportive of the construction of a common identity, and in certain cases contributes to the further fragmentation of the region. Discourse analysis is crucial for understanding the dynamics of security developments within the Black Sea Region. Noteworthily, '...whether states agree or disagree on common policies does depend on their respective discourses, on whether the discourses happen to allow agreement on a particular policy.'<sup>6</sup>

Below, the features of the security identities of such Black Sea states as Russia, Ukraine and Turkey, and their vision for the Black Sea Region, are examined. Modernization, not democratization, seems to be the key term for understanding contemporary Russia. As the current Russian authorities see it, '[t]he meaning of current transformation of Russia is to fit into the modernization break-through, common for European and world development.'<sup>7</sup> Russia regards itself as a 'development supplier on the global scale.'<sup>8</sup> Symptomatically, Russian political circles perceive the activities of other actors as a direct threat to Russian positions and modernization. In the aftermath of 2008 Russian–Georgian war Georgian actions were regarded as a direct challenge to Russia's modernization project. Georgia was accused of the intent to curtail Russia's modernization and of starting the militarization processes.<sup>9</sup>

Quite notably, the Russian side is actively using normative arguments describing its stance on security issues: 'Regrettably, many our western partners have been unable to appreciate the essentially postmodernist and ideology-free tendencies in

---

<sup>5</sup> D. Vainalavicius, Perspective of a Post-Modern European Security Order in Baltic-Black Sea Intermarum and Beyond, *Crosroads Digest*, 6 (2011), P.153.

<sup>6</sup> H. Larsen, Op.cit., P. 24.

<sup>7</sup> *Stat'ya Ministra inostrannyh del Rossii S.V. Lavrova "Vneshniaya politika Rossii – vklad v ukreplenie mejdunarodnoi bezopasnosti i stabil'nosti"* (The article of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia S.V.Lavrov "Foreign policy of Russia – the contribution to the promotion of the international security and stability") for Diplomatic Yearbook 2010, available at [www.mfa.mid.ru](http://www.mfa.mid.ru).

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> *Stat'ya Ministra inostrannyh del Rossii S.V. Lavrova "Litsom k litsu s Amerikoi: mejdy nekonfrontaciej i konvergenciej"* (The article of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia S.V.Lavrov "Face to face with America: from non-confrontation to convergence), published in "Profile", No 38, 2008, available at [www.mfa.mid.ru](http://www.mfa.mid.ru).

the CIS space, predicated on a striving to use common values, the combined potential and heritage in the interests of our peoples', claims Lavrov, Russian Minister of foreign affairs. According to Lavrov, relations inside the Russian sponsored Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC), Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) 'have their own civilizational specificities—here we do not oppress one another, do not twist arms, which far from all in the West can understand.' Moreover, the Kremlin clearly sees that 'the line on tearing away its neighbors from Russia on the rails of creating national states of the 19<sup>th</sup> century type promises all of Europe not postmodernist perspectives, but a return to the past with its destructive nationalism.'<sup>10</sup>

Pragmatism, in Russian political discourse, is a symbol of the Russian attitude to its neighbors. 'Mutually privileged relations', an invention of Russian diplomatic machine, has substituted the ill-perceived 'sphere of influence'. However, Russia is not ready to 'agree when attempts are being made to pass off the historically conditioned mutually privileged relations between the states in the former Soviet expanse as a 'sphere of influence.'<sup>11</sup> Moreover, in a confrontational way, Russia declared that mutually privileged relations have 'no geographical limits—useful to know for those who would like to enclose Russia in a "shell" of post-Soviet space, while artificially imposing a viscous confrontation upon us here.'<sup>12</sup>

The relationships within the region have been always marred by the declared intentions of Ukraine and Georgia to become NATO members. Russia stresses 'the unacceptability...of the plans to move forward the military infrastructure of the alliance to its borders and the attempts to transmit global functions to it...'<sup>13</sup> Besides, Russia protests against the creation of any alternative projects in its neighborhood. From the outset it claims them to be artificial and 'stillborn'. For example, the Eastern Partnership initiative is considered to be non-transparent.<sup>14</sup>

As for Ukraine, its southern vector of foreign policy activity has long been a *blind spot* on the map of Ukrainian foreign presence. Only in the last decade has the process of rediscovering the South become not an episodic, but rather a traditional phenomenon for Ukraine. Though the West–East dichotomy is still relevant for the description of the Ukrainian foreign policy choices, the Black Sea Region has been gradually acknowledged as a noteworthy priority.

---

<sup>10</sup> Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov's Article 'Russian Foreign Policy and a New Quality of the Geopolitical Situation' for *Diplomatic Yearbook 2008*, available at [www.mfa.mid.ru](http://www.mfa.mid.ru).

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> *Strategiya natsionalnoi bezopasnosti Rossiyskoi Federatsii* (Russian Federation Security Strategy), 2009, available at <http://www.scrf.gov.ru/documents/99.html>.

<sup>14</sup> *Stat'ya Ministra inostrannyh del Rossii S.V. Lavrova "Vneshniaya politika Rossii – vklad v ukreplenie mezdunarodnoi bezopasnosti i stabil'nosti"* (The article of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia S.V.Lavrov "Foreign policy of Russia – the contribution to the promotion of the international security and stability") for *Diplomatic Yearbook 2010*, available at [www.mfa.mid.ru](http://www.mfa.mid.ru).

Still, from the very beginning, this direction was, to a certain extent, externally determined and not relevant per se. For example, Ukraine cooperation with Turkey in 1990s was regarded as a measure to balance Russian ambitions. Clearly, the Ukrainian–Turkish alliance was partly dictated by the realities of confrontation with Russia. In the event of pressure from Russia, the possibility of creating a ‘strategic axis of southern orientation’ was considered.<sup>15</sup>

Indeed, the Russian factor was a defining stimulus for the bilateral engagements in the region. Turkish Foreign Minister Davutoğlu acknowledges the influence of the Russian factor on Turkey's relations with the post-Soviet states: ‘Tensions that new actors had with a pivotal power in the north of the Black Sea–Russia, accelerated Turkish–Ukrainian and Turkish–Georgian relations...’<sup>16</sup> This feeling of defensiveness was an integral feature of all types of cooperation between Ukraine and Turkey, and was the defining feature of their security identities. The security culture was institutionalized through this interaction. Quite symptomatically, in certain cases Ukraine still preserves the inertia of such thinking, although the environment of Ukrainian–Turkish cooperation has fundamentally changed.

Currently, with the new authorities in power in Kyiv, Ukrainian strategic interests have been redefined with the declaration of its non-aligned status and reconsideration of its relations with NATO. Russia has made a manoeuvre directed at strategic rapprochement with Ukraine. Having signed the agreement with Ukraine in April 2010, it secured the presence of its Black Sea fleet in Crimea till at least 2042. According to Ukrainian President Yanukovich, the issue of the Black Sea fleet ‘is being treated in the context of the formation of the European security system’ whereas the fleet itself is regarded as ‘a security guarantee for the states of the Black Sea basin.’ This is in sharp contrast to the former rhetoric of Ukrainian side. In Russia’s view, the presence of its fleet in Crimea ‘creates a necessary balance of interests’ for all Black Sea actors.<sup>17</sup> In a joint announcement by the Presidents of Ukraine and Russia on the security issues in the Black Sea Region from May 2010, the states agreed: to conduct consultations on security issues; to promote cooperation between the Russian Black Sea Fleet and the Ukrainian maritime forces; and to develop confidence-building measures. Among the instruments meant to provide regional security the BLACKSEAFOR and Black Sea

---

<sup>15</sup> V. Sandru, Interdependence of Economic Co-operation, Stability and Good Neighbourliness in the Black Sea Area, *Romanian Journal of International Affairs*, 1 (1997), P. 124.

<sup>16</sup> A. Davutoğlu, *Stratejik derinlik: Türkiye'nin uluslararası konumu*, Küre yayınları, İstanbul, 2009, S. 160.

<sup>17</sup> Interv'yu ukrainskim SMI (Interview to Ukrainian mass-media), 16 May 2010, available at <http://news.kremlin.ru/news/7771>.

Harmony were mentioned.<sup>18</sup> Still, in bilateral Russian–Ukrainian relations there remains extensive potential for mutual accusations and securitizations.

In the Black Sea Region Turkey holds the distinct position of being in-between the different security orders, inheriting some features of a modern one, but itself claiming to be a part of a post-modern security community. In the post-bipolar era, Turkey started to actively develop relations with neighboring regions. These policies reflect Ankara’s desire to get rid of the inheritance of the Cold War, when Turkey conducted reactive or even passive strategies. ‘Even if Turkey’s initial vision towards wider Eurasia proved somewhat unrealistic, the effects it generated did set the tone for Turkish policy for the rest of the 1990s and early 2000s’, argues Aydin.<sup>19</sup> This activism skyrocketed with a new Justice and Development Party administration in 2002.

A new philosophy of reasoning and the evolution of the Turkish identity can be seen through a changing public discourse. Recognizing the existence of static factors such as history and geography, Ankara is trying to ‘reinterpret and rediscover’ its identity in a constructivist logic.<sup>20</sup> This interpretation of the past may indicate, in our opinion, a departure from the *realpolitik*—the traditional approach of Turkish foreign policy and its filling with normative content. That has to a certain extent changed the regional setting:

In this context, an interesting characteristic of the transformation of Turkish security identity is the assertion that there was a shift in its self-image and worldview from Hobbesian to Kantian paradigms. Named after the founders of the realist and liberal traditions respectively, these approaches reflect different visions of foreign policy: self-defense and conflict vis-à-vis cooperativity.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, at the present stage Turkey is an example of a state whose foreign policy is a combination of realism and idealism. Realism is associated primarily with the historical past of the country and its geographical location. The political idealism in the course of modern administration is manifested through a messianic nature of foreign policy rhetoric—the belief that Turkey is a cornerstone of regional and global security. This allows parallels to be drawn with the US’ messianic concept of ‘manifest destiny’.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> *Sovmestnoe zayavlenie Presidentov Rossiyskoi Federatsii i Ukrainy po voprosam bezopasnosti v Chernomorskom regione* (Joint communication of the Presidents of Russian Federation and Ukraine on the security issues in the Black Sea region), 17 May, 2010.

<sup>19</sup> M. Aydin, Contending Agendas for the Black Sea Region: A Turkish Alternative, *Sarem Journal of Strategic Studies*, 14 (2010), P. 11-33.

<sup>20</sup> Interview with Turkey’s Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu “Turkey Creates Balance in the Middle East”, 17.03.2010, available at [http://www.qantara.de/webcom/show\\_article.php/\\_c-476/\\_nr-1305/i.html](http://www.qantara.de/webcom/show_article.php/_c-476/_nr-1305/i.html).

<sup>21</sup> K. Kirişçi, Turkey’s Foreign Policy in Turbulent Times, *Chaillot Papers*, 92 (2006), P. 99-103.

<sup>22</sup> S. Kardas, Turkey: Redrawing the Middle East Map or Building Sandcastles?, *Middle East Policy*, 1 (2010), P. 115-136.

Turkish security identity is being shaped by different self-images used in political discourses. Having rid itself of the Cold war image as a 'buffer state' or NATO's 'wing country', Turkey has recently tried to utilize the image of a 'bridge' between civilizations. Since 2002, through the introduction of a new diplomatic lexicon, Turkey tried to avoid the sense of passivity inherent in the role of *bridge* actualizing a new identity marker—that of a 'central', and 'pivotal' state.<sup>23</sup> Presently, Turkey advocates a new identity describing itself as a 'model' to the Middle Eastern societies. 'Although Turkey maintains a powerful military due to its insecure neighborhood, we do not make threats. Instead, Turkish diplomats and politicians have adopted a new language in regional and international politics that prioritizes Turkey's civil-economic power', stresses the Turkish Foreign Minister.<sup>24</sup>

One of the symbolic desecuritizing moves initiated by the Turkish administration was the idea of creating a 'Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform'. This was reiterated by Turkish diplomacy after the Russian–Georgian war. The idea was grounded on the ambitious plans of Ankara to establish itself as the helmsman of regional and extraregional processes. From the Turkish vantage point, the Stability Platform has to become a conceptual basis of the future security architecture of the region, similar to the Black Sea Synergy and Eastern Partnership of the EU and Wider Middle East of the U.S. At the same time, this concept (as noble an idea as it is), is not perceived by Turkey itself as a panacea to solve all regional problems. According to Davutoglu, 'Conflicts [in the Black Sea Region] serve as a precondition for the emergence of such a structure, as well as a main obstacle for the implementation of this idea.'<sup>25</sup> Indeed, the existing conflicts between regional actors quickly proved the bankruptcy of Turkish initiative for the South Caucasus subregion, and the Turkish desecuritizing move was apparently rejected by the relevant audience.

Russian–Turkish relations have been undergoing profound desecuritizing processes. At the present stage Turkey defines Russia as an important partner—an integral part of Ankara's multidimensional foreign policy.<sup>26</sup> For Ankara and its JDP administration, foreign policy activism and, in particular, the 'new' relations with Russia, are a tool for reconstructing the Turkish national identity and security with a focus on its 'non-Western' components to legitimize it.

---

<sup>23</sup> Davutoğlu A. Türkiye merkez ülke olmalı, *Radikal*, 26.02.2004, available at <http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=107581>.

<sup>24</sup> Article by H.E. Ahmet Davutoğlu published in *Foreign Policy magazine (USA)* on 20 May 2010, available at [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/article-by-h\\_e\\_-ahmet-davutoglu-published-in-foreign-policy-magazine-\\_usa\\_-on-20-may-2010.en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/article-by-h_e_-ahmet-davutoglu-published-in-foreign-policy-magazine-_usa_-on-20-may-2010.en.mfa).

<sup>25</sup> A. Davutoglu. Vneshniaya politika Turtsii i Rossiya (Turkish foreign policy and Russia), *Rossiia v globalnoi politike* (Russia in global politics), 1 (2010), P. 69.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

Quite notably, in the first half of the 1990s, Russian–Turkish relations were dominated by tense contradictions, verging on hostility. The polarization of interests led to a different geo-strategic vision of the role of the region and actualized the conflictual perception of actions of the opposite side in the area vital for the national interests of both countries. Among the urgent problems of bilateral relations were the following controversies: the Turkish disapproval of the alleged Russian support to PKK and Kurdish separatism, and Russian counter-accusations concerning the alleged Turkish help to Chechen separatists; Russia's disagreement with Turkish policies dealing with the regulation of the Black Sea straits; support to different conflicting parties in the South Caucasus; energy competition and the lobbying for different transportation routes for hydrocarbons; Russian protest against the presence of Turkish troops in Cyprus etc. NATO's increased activities in the Black Sea Region and traditionally strategic Turkish–American relations have intensified these problems.

At the present stage due to the reconstructions of Russian and Turkish security identities Russian–Turkish relations have improved dramatically. The relationship has evolved towards 'managed competition', as coined by Sezer, which implies the parties' active interaction on a number of issues where their positions do not collide.<sup>27</sup> In this regard, an interesting view is that '... the distribution of spheres of influence [between the Russian and the Ottoman Empire]—in the later period also between Turkey and the USSR—survived until 1991 and up to date influences the thinking of Turks on the Black Sea and cooperation in the region.'<sup>28</sup> It can be summed up, that 'managed competition' rests on a division of spheres of influence that constrains the securitization of non-vital issues.

The important common denominator of Russian and Turkish strategic visions for the region has been an approach focusing on the status-quo. Turkey with its desire to limit the projection of the influence of the extraregional actors within the region has been traditionally labeled as a status quo power. The desire to maintain the status quo manifested itself throughout the existence of the Turkish Republic from the 1936 Montreux Convention, which transferred control over shipping in Black Sea straits to Turkey, to Turkish resistance against the expansion of NATO *Active Endeavour* operation from the Mediterranean to the Black Sea. The status quo stance was a part of generally introverted, defensive and reactive Turkish foreign policy. But events of recent years showed a shift by Turkey from the status quo stance in certain areas. With the new 'zero problem policy with neighbors', Turkey attempts to use its 'strategic depth' and become a global player—Turkey has started to challenge the status quo. This new security discourse of Turkey might be conventionally labeled as 'transformational'. Within this discourse,

---

<sup>27</sup> D.B. Sezer, *Turkish-Russian Relations a Decade Later: From Adversity to Managed Competition, Perceptions*, 1 (2001), P. 79-98.

<sup>28</sup> Shimanski A. *Turtsiya i chernomorskoe regionalnoe sotrudnichestvo (Turkey and the Black Sea regional cooperation)*, *Evropa (Europe)*, 4 (2008), P. 83.

transformation in the societal sphere (such as the processes of democratization, the limitation of the power of the army, and the increase of foreign policy activism), is taking place.

Still, in the Turkish case there remains a dichotomy of simultaneous policy tracks: active disruption of the status quo on certain foreign policy directions and, at the same time, the maintenance of the status quo in other areas that do not lie in the area of its first-priority preferences. Therefore, Turkish security identity remains a hybrid version of modern and post-modern trends. It appears that the matter of the status quo versus activism is a dialectical essence of modern Turkey.

Notwithstanding the common points between Russia and Turkey, according to Markedonov, the extent and duration of the thaw between Russia and Turkey should not be overestimated, mainly because Turkey is not delighted with the unilateralism of Russian foreign policy ambitions.<sup>29</sup> The decision to deploy the radar of a NATO anti-missile defense system in Turkey is obviously a factor that will not lessen the tensions between the parties. Thus, apparently, 'managed competition' also has its natural limits, which can lead to securitization over certain issues.

The chances to create common grounds in the trilateral format between Russia, Turkey and Ukraine seem to be obscure. Turan believes that Ukraine and Turkey have a common interest in assisting Russia to adapt to its new role in the post-bipolar world and to take a new vision. In his view, they should resist the Russian imperial attempts to put pressure on them. The researcher offered the following dimensions of this policy: the strengthening of solidarity between Ukraine and Turkey, the development of all dimensions of cooperation (ranging from economic to cultural etc.), cooperation on the basis of such international fora as the BSEC, the Partnership for Peace, Council of Europe, etc., cooperation in their European integration et al.<sup>30</sup> Clearly, assistance to Russia in adapting to new realities is a welcome 'recipe', which is, unfortunately, not feasible due to the current developments in the region. So far, the security identities of parties are founded on mutually exclusive premises and provide for only a situational cooperation.

It is quite unlikely, that the gap between the different security orders might be bridged in the near future. One cannot but notice the different security practices on the opposite sides of the sea. On one side there is European Union with 'its hegemonic practices of peace – i.e. the extension of its pattern of order to the rest

---

<sup>29</sup> S. Markedonov, *The Big Caucasus: Consequences of the "Five Day War", Threats and Political Prospects*, ICBS, Athens, 2009, P. 62.

<sup>30</sup> I. Turan, Ukraine, Russia and Turkey, *Insight Turkey*, 2 (2000), P. 156-158.

of the continent.<sup>31</sup> On the other there is Russia with its reliance on a militaristic understanding of security. Turkey is in a provisional position—its security identity in some ways reflects the desire of the country not only ‘to consume’ the security, but also to produce (and project) it while spreading its ‘pattern of order’, by analogy with the EU. Moreover, Turkish identity has been profoundly shaped by the Europeanization process it is undergoing. Finally, Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia hold a distinct position striving to reassure their positions as actors in contrast to being considered as a buffer zone.

## **ურთიერთდაპირისპირებული უსაფრთხოების პარამეტრები და განსხვავებული იდენტობები შავი ზღვის რეგიონში**

*მარინა ვოროტნიუკი, უკრაინა*

აკადემიურ თუ პოლიტიკურ წრეებში საყოველთაოდ აღიარებულია, რომ შავი ზღვის რეგიონი არ წარმოადგენს ერთიან სისტემას, რომელსაც საერთო უსაფრთხოების კონცეფცია გააჩნია, არამედ ეს არის “მოქნილი კონსტრუქცია” მუდმივად ცვალებადი საზღვრებით, განსხვავებული ხედვებითა და ინტერესებით.

ამ სიტუაციის ყველაზე შესაფერისი განსაზღვრა თურქულ პოზიციად წოდებული ტერმინით შეიძლება – შავი ზღვის სახელმწიფოები “რეალობით არიან გარშემორტყმულნი.” თუკი ამ მიდგომას გამოვიყენებთ შეიძლება დავასკვნათ, რომ მოცემულმა გეოგრაფიულმა პრინციპმა არა მხოლოდ რეგიონის ქვეყნების სახელმწიფოებრიობის მშენებლობის ისტორიული კონტექსტი ჩამოაყალიბა, არამედ დღემდე გავლენას ახდენს შავი ზღვის რეგიონის ზოგიერთი ქვეყნის სოციალურ განვითარებაზე.

ამჟამად შავი ზღვის რეგიონი ორ ურთიერთდაპირისპირებულ მოდერნისტულ და პოსტ-მოდერნისტულ უსაფრთხოების ხედვებს შორის ბრძოლის ველია, რაც თავის მხრივ, ხელს უწყობს რეგიონის დაყოფას. მაშინ როცა რუსეთი “მოდერნისტულ” სახელმწიფოდ მიიჩნევა, ევროკავშირის მიდგომა პოსტ-მოდერნისტულ ხასიათს ატარებს. რაც შეეხება თურქეთს, მისი უსაფრთხოების მიდგომები მოდერნისტული და პოსტ-მოდერნისტული მიმდინარეობების ჰიბრიდულ ვარიანტს წარმოადგენს. უკრაინა, მოლდავეთი და სამხრეთ კავკასიის ქვეყნები ამ ორი ცნების გასაყარზე მდებარეობენ და ცდილობენ თავი არა დაქვემდებარებულ, არამედ დამოუკიდებელ სახელმწიფოებად წარმოაჩინონ. შავი ზღვის რეგიონში მოდერნისტულ და პოსტ-მოდერნისტულ სივრცეებს შორის არსებული უფსკრული ანაწევრებს რეგიონს და ხელს უშლის უსაფრთხოების საბოლოო ჰომოგენიზაციას ერთიან სტრუქტურად.

---

<sup>31</sup> E.R. Kawalski. Identity of Peace: Framing the European Security Identity of the EU in *European Identity: Theoretical Perspectives and Empirical Insights*, Ed. by I. P. Karolewski, V. Kaina, LIT Verlag, Münster, 2006, P. 92.

დღესდღეისობით რეგონში საერთო უსაფრთხოების სტრუქტურის შექმნა ნაკლებად სავარაუდოა. მნიშვნელოვანია რეგიონის ქვეყნებს შორის სოლიდარობის გრძნობის გაღვივება და ყოველმხრივი თანამშრომლობა, თუმცა მიუხედავად ამისა, ძალიან მცირეა იმისი ალბათობა, რომ განსხვავებული უსაფრთხოების ხედვების მქონე ქვეყნებს შორის თანამშრომლობის ხიდი უახლოეს მომავალში გაიდება.

# CROSS BORDER COOPERATION IN THE BLACK SEA: THE NEED FOR A NEW REGIONAL FRAMEWORK

By Mehmet Zeki Günay

The lack of a cooperative security mindset in the Black Sea is the biggest problem hindering cross border understanding and cooperation in the region. Lack of 'security' in the Black Sea Region strengthens and encourages dividing lines and borders, and feeds mistrust and fear in and across the region. This, in turn, complicates the prospects for cross border interaction, dialogue, understanding and, accordingly, cooperation in the Black Sea.

This paper discusses: the importance of creating a cooperative security framework in the Black Sea Region for preventing and containing regional conflicts; major obstacles against this process; and the significance of a new regional framework for achieving and enhancing regional cooperation. The paper argues that the Black Sea Region needs a cooperative security framework, which rejects zero-sum approaches to regional security that are based on power rivalries and competing mechanisms.

## Current Security Setting in the Black Sea

The Black Sea Region has failed to develop a comprehensive cooperative security system in which all regional actors are the key players and guarantors of regional stability. The Russian–Georgian war of 2008 showed the fact that the various attempts at cooperation in the Black Sea have not produced a regional cooperative security system that is capable of preventing or containing internal or interstate regional conflicts. Zero-sum approaches to regional security still dominate the Black Sea Region.<sup>1</sup>

The current Black Sea security system is based on a multilayered approach with overlapping groupings, national actors and institutions coexisting in parallel, leading to further competition rather than cooperation.<sup>2</sup> Most of the regional cooperation structures have failed to enhance cooperation and resolve conflicts, mainly because they excluded some of the region's stakeholders, whether they be local or external. International organizations such as the United Nations (UN) and

---

<sup>1</sup> Dimitrios Triantaphyllou, 'The "Security Paradoxes" of the Black Sea Region,' *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 9, No. 3, (September 2009): 233; Peter M.E. Volten and Blagovest Tashev, "International Relations, Political Culture, and Security: Conceptual Challenges," in *Establishing Security and Stability in the Wider Black Sea Area: International Politics and the New and Emerging Democracies*, ed. Peter M.E. Volten and Blagovest Tashev (Amsterdam: IOS Press, 2007), 21.

<sup>2</sup> For an analysis of institutional overlap and its impact on cooperation see Stéphanie C. Hofmann, 'Why Institutional Overlap Matters: CSDP in the European Security Architecture,' *Journal of Common Market Studies* 49, No.1, (2011): 101-120.

its agencies, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Council of Europe and local initiatives like the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and GUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova), have offered cooperation strategies for the region.<sup>3</sup> The presence of various and competing mechanisms, which bring together like-minded actors and help individual states realize their strategic ambitions rather than regional interests, induces divisions and inhibits cooperation in the region.<sup>4</sup> Competition among third parties over influence results in contradictory promises. The Minsk Group, for example, suffered from the contradictory policies of the three co-chairs, namely, Russia, the US and France.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the presence of various institutions has led to the false illusion that security issues in the Black Sea are being addressed.

In the post-Cold War era, the Black Sea Region has become one of the playgrounds for power rivalries.<sup>6</sup> The interest of the bigger powers, namely the US, Russia and the EU, in the region does not necessarily yield positive results.<sup>7</sup> Conflicts of the region are easily utilized for strategic ambitions and the exertion of influence in the region. Initiatives and measures to increase regional cooperation only for the sake of the bigger powers or some regional states result in additional problems. Regional conflicts are hard to handle when regional security is connected only to the initiatives and policies of external powers, rather than regionally-based comprehensive, cooperative efforts. In such cases, priorities and policies of the regional actors are shaped by developments outside the region. In turn, regional rivalries shaped by global rivalries result in diverging expectations and conflicting interests, rather than encouraging efficient regional mechanisms for cooperation.<sup>8</sup> Power rivalries feed protracted conflicts and insecurity, and therefore, fear and mistrust in the Black Sea Region. Further, they impede the creation of a cooperative security system.

Protracted conflicts in the Black Sea Region (e.g. Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Transnistria) create serious problems for the peace and security

---

<sup>3</sup> For the role of institutions and their achievements in regional cooperation in the South Caucasus see Panagiota Manoli, 'The Role of Intergovernmental Institutions in Regional Cooperation,' in *Non-Traditional Security Threats and Regional Cooperation in the Southern Caucasus*, ed. Mustafa Aydın (Amsterdam: IOS Press, 2011), 90-106.

<sup>4</sup> Oksana Antonenko, 'Towards a Regional Security Framework in the Black Sea Region after the Russia-Georgia War,' *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 9, No. 3, (September 2009): 263-268.

<sup>5</sup> Nina Caspersen, 'Third Party Conflict Resolution in the Caucasus,' in *Non-Traditional Security Threats and Regional Cooperation in the Southern Caucasus*, ed. Mustafa Aydın (Amsterdam: IOS Press, 2011), 82.

<sup>6</sup> For more discussion on the subject see Sergii Glebov, 'Black Sea Security as a Regional Concern for the Black Sea States and the Global Powers,' *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 9, No. 3, (September 2009): 351-365.

<sup>7</sup> Mustafa Aydın, 'Geographical Blessing Versus Geopolitical Curse: Great Power Security Agendas for the Black Sea Region and a Turkish Alternative,' *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 9, No. 3, (September 2009): 272.

<sup>8</sup> Mitat Çelikpala, 'Escalating Rivalries and Diverging Interests: Prospects for Stability and Security in the Black Sea Region,' *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 10, No. 3, (September 2010): 290.

in the region, strengthen lines of division and significantly hinder the formation of a cooperative security mindset. The Russian–Georgian war of 2008 made it very clear that security was closely linked with the protracted regional conflicts. None of these conflicts are being resolved primarily through regional mechanisms.<sup>9</sup> Although there have been attempts by regional countries, especially by Turkey, to enhance cooperation through regional organizations such as the BSEC<sup>10</sup> and initiatives like Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform,<sup>11</sup> no effective regional cooperation has emerged mainly due to the diverging security perceptions and clashing interests of the relevant actors.<sup>12</sup> Black Sea Regional cooperation has played only a minor role in conflict resolution.<sup>13</sup> Attempts by third parties to manage and resolve conflicts have resulted in failure. This situation necessitates the establishment of an efficient regional cooperative security approach.<sup>14</sup>

### A New Framework for the Black Sea

In order to avoid the creation of new dividing lines, it is particularly important to remove obstacles to effective cross border cooperation in the Black Sea Region. The strengthening of cross border cooperation and removal of obstacles to this process in the Black Sea Region depends on the creation of a cooperative security system. Only with such a system can ‘security’ in the region be maintained and managed. Accordingly, fear and mistrust among the parties can be reduced and borders and lines of division can be ‘crossed’. The Black Sea Region needs cooperative action, guidance and greater engagement by all relevant actors.<sup>15</sup>

Resolving and preventing conflicts and securing the Black Sea Region require a fundamental change of perceptions and policies on the part of all players in the region. This change can be achieved by establishing a cooperative security mindset, which rejects zero-sum approaches to regional security that are based on

---

<sup>9</sup> Antonenko, 261.

<sup>10</sup> For the achievements and limitations of the BSEC see Sergiu Celac, Tedo Japaridze, David Kereselidze, Zefi Dimadama and Ilias Roubanis, ‘Building a Sustainable Future for the Black Sea area: New Perspectives & Challenges for B.S.E.C.,’ *ICBSS Policy Brief* 24 (March 2012): 1-32.

<sup>11</sup> For information on the Platform see, Eleni Fotiou, ‘Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform: What is at Stake for Regional Cooperation,’ *ICBSS Policy Brief* 16 (June 2009): 1-26; Burcu Gültekin Punsmann, ‘The Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform: An Attempt to Foster Regional Accountability,’ *ICBSS Policy Brief* 13 (April 2009): 1-8.

<sup>12</sup> For more discussion on the failure of the Platform see Kornely K. Kakachia, ‘The Post-conflict South Caucasus within New Geopolitical Framework – View from Georgia’ in *Non-Traditional Security Threats and Regional Cooperation in the Southern Caucasus*, ed. Mustafa Aydın (Amsterdam: IOS Press, 2011), 183-196; Mitat Çelikpala, ‘Türkiye ve Kafkasya: Reaksiyoner Dış Politikadan Proaktif Ritmik Diplomasiye Geçiş,’ (Turkey and the Caucasus: Transition from Reactive Foreign Policy to Proactive Rhythmic Diplomacy) *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 7, No. 25 (Spring 2010): 93-126.

<sup>13</sup> For a list of regional structures and programmes see Panagiota Manoli, ‘Reinvigorating Black Sea Cooperation: A policy discussion,’ *Policy Report III of the Commission on the Black Sea* (2010): 1-40.

<sup>14</sup> Caspersen, 79.

<sup>15</sup> Triantaphyllou, 236.

power rivalries and competing mechanisms.<sup>1</sup> The Black Sea Region suffers from numerous protracted conflicts. The situation in the Black Sea Region, particularly in the Caucasus, requires the involvement of all the parties in the peace-making processes. Collective negotiation and compromise are necessary to overcome these conflicts. To this end, a region-wide cooperative security framework should be established.

This framework should be inclusive in terms of its zone of coverage, and should be regionally owned and supported. The new initiative should be based on an all-embracing organizing concept for managing security in the region that might be agreeable to all Black Sea states. Competing security arrangements that encourage divisions in the region should be replaced. The comprehensive cooperative security framework should aim to replace the traditional zero-sum approaches to regional security. With the new security approach, cooperation on environmental, human, economic and social security in the Black Sea Region should be taken into account.<sup>17</sup> Most importantly, the most suitable institutional model should be chosen for establishing the new framework.

## Bibliography

Antonenko, Oksana. 'A Comprehensive Regional Security Framework in the Black Sea Region after the Russia–Georgia War.' *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 9, No. 3, (September 2009): 259–269.

Aydın, Mustafa. 'Geographical Blessing Versus Geopolitical Curse: Great Power Security Agendas for the Black Sea Region and a Turkish Alternative.' *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 9, No. 3, (September 2009): 271–285.

Caspersen, Nina. 'Third Party Conflict Resolution in the Caucasus.' In *Non-Traditional Security Threats and Regional Cooperation in the Southern Caucasus*, edited by Mustafa Aydın, 79-89. Amsterdam: IOS Press, 2011.

Celac, Sergiu, Tedo Japaridze, David Kereselidze, Zefi Dimadama and Ilias Roubanis. 'Building a Sustainable Future for the Black Sea area: New Perspectives & Challenges for B.S.E.C.' *ICBSS Policy Brief* 24 (March 2012): 1-32.

Çelikpala, Mitat. 'Escalating Rivalries and Diverging Interests: Prospects for Stability and Security in the Black Sea Region.' *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 10, No. 3, (September 2010): 287-302.

---

<sup>16</sup> Antonenko, 259.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 267.

Çelikpala, Mitat. 'Türkiye ve Kafkasya: Reaksiyoner Dış Politikadan Proaktif Ritmik Diplomasiye Geçiş.' (Turkey and the Caucasus: Transition from Reactive Foreign Policy to Proactive Rhythmic Diplomacy) *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 7, No. 25 (Spring 2010): 93-126.

Fotiou, Eleni. 'Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform: What is at Stake for Regional Cooperation.' *ICBSS Policy Brief* 16 (June 2009): 1-26.

Glebov, Sergii. 'Black Sea Security as a Regional Concern for the Black Sea States and the Global Powers. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 9, No. 3, (September 2009): 351-365.

Gültekin Punsmann, Burcu. 'The Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform: An Attempt to Foster Regional Accountability.' *ICBSS Policy Brief* 13 (April 2009): 1-8.

Hofmann, Stéphanie C. 'Why Institutional Overlap Matters: CSDP in the European Security Architecture.' *Journal of Common Market Studies* 49, No.1, (2011): 101-120.

Kakachia, Kornely K. 'The Post-conflict South Caucasus within New Geopolitical Framework – View from Georgia.' In *Non-Traditional Security Threats and Regional Cooperation in the Southern Caucasus*, edited by Mustafa Aydın, 183-196. Amsterdam: IOS Press, 2011.

Manoli, Panagiota. 'Reinvigorating Black Sea Cooperation: A policy discussion.' *Policy Report III of the Commission on the Black Sea* (2010): 1-40.

Manoli, Panagiota. 'The Role of Intergovernmental Institutions in Regional Cooperation.' In *Non-Traditional Security Threats and Regional Cooperation in the Southern Caucasus*, edited by Mustafa Aydın, 90-106. Amsterdam: IOS Press, 2011.

Triantaphyllou, Dimitrios. 'The "Security Paradoxes" of the Black Sea Region.' *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 9, No. 3, (September 2009): 225–241.

Volten, Peter M.E. and Blagovest Tashev. 'International Relations, Political Culture, and Security: Conceptual Challenges.' In *Establishing Security and Stability in the Wider Black Sea Area: International Politics and the New and Emerging Democracies*, edited by Peter M.E. Volten and Blagovest Tashev, 3-25. Amsterdam: IOS Press, 2007.

## **საზღვრისპირა თანამშრომლობა შავი ზღვის რეგიონში: ახალი რეგიონალური სისტემის შექმნის აუცილებლობა**

### *მეჰმეტ ზეკი გუნეი, თურქეთი*

ცივი ომის დასრულებისთანავე შავი ზღვის რეგიონი ძალაუფლებისთვის მებრძოლი მხარეების დაპირისპირების არენად გადაიქცა. დიდი ძალების, როგორცაა ამერიკა, რუსეთი და ევროკავშირი, დაინტერესებას ამ რეგიონით ყოველთვის დადებითი შედეგი არ მოაქვს. მათი ინტერესი ხშირ შემთხვევაში ბევრი პრობლემის სათავეცაა, რადგან რეგიონში არსებულ კონფლიქტებს ეს ძალები მათი სტრატეგიული ამბიციების დასაკმაყოფილებლად და რეგიონში ძალაუფლების მოსაპოვებლად იყენებენ. რეგიონული თანამშრომლობის წამახალისებელი ინიციატივები, რომლებიც მხოლოდ ამ აქტორების ან რეგიონის ზოგიერთი ქვეყნის საკეთილდღეოდაა შემუშავებული, დამატებითი რისკების მატარებელია. კონფლიქტების მოგვარება კი რთულია, როცა რეგიონის უსაფრთხოება არა მისი შიდა ძალების საერთო ძალისხმევას, არამედ გარე ძალების ინიციატივებს ეფუძნება. ასეთ შემთხვევებში, რეგიონული აქტორების პრიორიტეტებს გარე ფაქტორები განსაზღვრავენ. ძალთა დაპირისპირება კი ამძაფრებს ისედაც გაჭიანურებულ კონფლიქტებს და შავი ზღვის რეგიონში საერთო უსაფრთხოების სისტემის შექმნას აფერხებს.

ახალი გამყოფი ხაზების გაჩენის საფრთხის თავიდან ასაცილებლად აუცილებელია შავი ზღვის რეგიონში ეფექტური საზღვრისპირა თანამშრომლობის განვითარება. საერთო უსაფრთხოების სიტემის შექმნა კი სწორედ ამ ინიციატივებს წაახალისებს. მხოლოდ ამ სისტემას ძალუძს რეგიონში უსაფრთხოების შენარჩუნება და რეგიონის ქვეყნებს შორის ნდობის აღდგენა. შავი ზღვის რეგიონი საჭიროებს ურთიერთმეთანხმებულ ქმედებებს, ძლიერ ხელისუფლებას და ყველა მნიშვნელოვანი აქტორის უფრო მეტ ჩართულობას.

კონფლიქტების მოგვარებისა და შავი ზღვის რეგიონის უსაფრთხოებისათვის აუცილებელია არსებული პოლიტიკური კურსისა და მიდგომების ფუნდამენტური ცვლილება რეგიონის ყველა ქვეყანაში. ამ ცვლილებების მიღწევა კი საერთო უსაფრთხოების სტრუქტურის შექმნითაა შესაძლებელი. კოლექტიური მოლაპარაკება და კომპრომისი ასევე აუცილებელია კონფლიქტების გადასაწყვეტად.

საერთო უსაფრთხოების სტრუქტურამ უნდა ჩაანაცვლოს რეგიონული უსაფრთხოებისადმი ტრადიციული “ნულოვანჯამიანი” მიდგომები, რომლებიც ჯერ ისევ დომინანტურია რეგიონში. ახალ მიდგომაში კი გასათვალისწინებელია ისეთი საკითხები, როგორცაა თანამშრომლობა გარემოს დაცვის, ადამიანის უსაფრთხოების, ეკონომიკურ და სოციალურ სფეროში. ასევე უმნიშვნელოვანესია შესაფერისი ინსტიტუციონალური მოდელის შერჩევა, რომელიც ხელს შეუწყობს შავი ზღვის რეგიონში ახალი სტრუქტურის ჩამოყალიბებას.

# PROSPECTS OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

*By Maxim Stepanov*

## Introduction

This paper is concerned with cross-border cooperation in the Black Sea region, its limits and future prospects. The origins of the growing European engagement in the region are briefly touched upon. Primarily, this paper seeks to identify main obstacles which hamper the integration process in the Black Sea region and examines strategies on how to foster better cross-border understanding.

The European Union's interest in the stability of the Black Sea region and in close cooperation between the countries of the region can be accounted for by the EU's interest in resources that the region is rich in, as well as by logistical considerations. Some of the region's countries have valued resources and others are strategically important transit countries. For example, the BTC pipeline (Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan) can be considered one of the primary factors contributing to the stability of the region. This particular case illustrates that political and economical engagement are closely interconnected. Greater stability in the region and deeper cooperation with its close neighbours are the European Union's ultimate goals.

The above-mentioned strategic interests hold a huge potential for societies in the target countries, not least of which is the possibility of a smoother democratic transition within the complex post-Soviet countries. The European interest cannot arguably be applied without certain limitations but European support, both in the fostering of civil society and media institutions for example, is absolutely necessary. However, its influence is not limited only towards the support of civil society. Global expansion of businesses, exploration of new markets and diversification of energy supplies are further motives behind the European engagement within the Black Sea region. Human security concerns are also an important point of consideration. Nevertheless, the European Union showed little interest in playing an active role in the region until the end of the 1990s. It was only after eastward enlargement of the EU became a near-future perspective that the EU launched a number of regional initiatives aimed at strengthening the regionalism, such as the Black Sea Forum (2006), Black Sea Synergy (2008), the Black Sea Environmental Partnership (2010), and others.

Even though it seems to have become a matter of course that regionalism is the most appropriate approach for developing the countries which share the Black Sea basin, competitive strategies prevail over the collaborative ones.<sup>1</sup> Throughout its

---

<sup>1</sup> cf. "A 2020 Vision for the Black Sea Region. A Report by the Commission on the Black Sea". Page 22., retrieved in June 2012 at

[http://www.blackseacom.eu/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Paper/A%202020%20Vision%20for%20the%20Black%20Sea.pdf](http://www.blackseacom.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/Paper/A%202020%20Vision%20for%20the%20Black%20Sea.pdf).

history, the Black Sea region has typically remained an area of competitive interests for global powers. While in the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Ottoman and the Russian Empires struggled over the control of the Black Sea, these days America, Russia and increasingly the EU compete for influence in the region. In recent years, a hardening of the confrontation can be observed, as the following chain of incidents illustrates. These incidents can furthermore be considered to have had direct consequences upon one another:

- Early in 2008, Georgia and the Ukraine became candidates for MAP (Membership Action Plan) of NATO
- In August of 2008, Russia and Georgia fought a war followed by the recognition of the Abkhazian and South Ossetian regions by Russia
- In 2009 the EU initiated the Eastern Partnership, which was sceptically received by Russia.<sup>2</sup>

These incidents exerted new risks on relations in the region. Instead of addressing older regional conflicts, new division lines appeared across the region. The gas conflicts between Russia and the Ukraine served as an example of how the shifting geopolitical landscape affected bilateral relations negatively: although apparent as early as 2005, the gas conflicts experienced a new, more intense round of tensions in 2008-2009. Political fragmentation of policies in the Black Sea region is the main chronic disease behind these tensions, which can be delineated into several specific problems:

### **1. Overlapping, competitive and partly dysfunctional international structures in the region**

The Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) remains the only organization where all the countries of the region are associated within one forum. With this in mind, it is all the more condemning for BSEC that it failed to achieve most of its goals in this respect.<sup>3</sup> Apart from the BSEC, there are no regional organisations which can pursue the same goals in as broad a manner, although the list of political organisations and alliances that encompass the region is long enough – CIS, GUAM, Eastern Partnership, and the Collective Security Treaty Organisation, to list just a few. Unofficially there is even the so-called CIS-2, which includes the four unrecognized states of the region, underscoring the disintegration processes in the region with a certain irony. The unwillingness to integrate is characteristic, however, of a political minority in power for whom unresolved conflicts are a

---

<sup>2</sup> See “Eastern Partnership from the Russian Perspective” by Andrei Zagorski, retrieved in June 2012 at [http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/ipg/2011-3/05\\_zagorski.pdf](http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/ipg/2011-3/05_zagorski.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> As stated in the World Bank report “Regional Cooperation of the CIS7: Past Experience and Options for the Future”. Page 18., retrieved in June 2012 at [http://www.wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2006/03/14/000160016\\_20060314122633/Rendered/PDF/353690MMaliszewska01public1.pdf](http://www.wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2006/03/14/000160016_20060314122633/Rendered/PDF/353690MMaliszewska01public1.pdf)

source of revenue and a tool for maintaining its political power. By contrast, integration is precisely what lies in the region's own best interests.

## **2. Protracted conflicts**

There are four protracted conflicts in the region and each of them comes with their own list of historical complications, violent episodes, and state institution failures. International diplomacy has proven its inability to reach resolutions within these deadlocked conflicts. Sadly, these unresolved conflicts become the status quo in the affected countries. At the line-of-contact in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, sharpshooters have been claiming several victims every month since 1994.<sup>4</sup> This reputation for being a "pot of conflicts" cannot be underestimated in how the political consciousness is shaped among its residents, as it is similarly formed within the minds of any potential foreign investors.

## **3. Ideology and dealing with history**

The population in the countries of the Black Sea region live in a highly ideological political environment. Political debates often concentrate around a few central themes and every decision or action is subordinated to these particular issues – regardless if whether it directly concerns them or not. For Russia it may be the fear of NATO expansion; for the Ukraine, it is the East-West division; for Armenia, it is recognition of the genocide and of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. The analogous conceptual model for the latter in particular is that of the 'fortress-under-siege' mentality, that of being encircled by one's enemies. In Armenia, it is especially evident how this theme serves as a source of internal stability, consolidates its current administration, and weakens the opposition because critics of the regime are automatically accused of betrayal of the national interests. The re-telling of the history of ethnic conflicts in the region, as represented in the educational system, becomes a kind of indoctrination and veers away from being a disinterested social science.

## **4. The "Leninist legacy"**

This term is applicable to the entire post-Soviet space, but past enforcement of the Soviet administration has had much more severe effects in regions where little-to-no modern state structures existed prior to its implementation. To a certain extent it refers to the South Caucasus where, for example, Soviet "National Policy" led to the creation of ethnic enclaves such as Nagorno-Karabakh within the ex-Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan. Furthermore, Max Weber's formulation of patrimonialism, when applied to modern societies in transition, points out a number of

---

<sup>4</sup> According to the report of the CSIS – Center for Strategic and International Studies "Targeting Peace: Snipers Threaten Compromise over Nagorno-Karabakh", retrieved in June 2012 at <http://csis.org/blog/targeting-peace-snipers-threaten-compromise-over-nagorno-karabakh>

problematic aspects in the relationship between a state and a nation in the post-Soviet countries. This can be referred to as neo-patrimonialism.<sup>5</sup> The main characteristic of patrimonial societies is their combination of traditional legitimacy and new formal (bureaucratic) institutions. Economic and political power is merged, as well as both the public and the private spheres. As a result, people rely more on informal and corrupt practices than on the rule of law. The state institutions are not granted trust because the control mechanisms such as an independent judiciary, the media and the strong civil society are not established. These patrimonial features affect cross-border cooperation negatively because the political class in power have no interest in either a free flow of information or in open societies. Granting implicit accordance to either would undermine its own power.

### **Addressing these challenges...**

It is the opinion of this paper that the following strategies be applied. They are outlined in brief:

- The free movement of persons and ideas across open borders should be encouraged. Abolishment of existing visa regimes is necessary, and frequent contacts, exchange and cooperation on different levels should be encouraged. Platforms for dialogue should be created, in particular a forum that emphasizes common history. It would be provide a countering balance to the current malignant historical arguments used to support certain political agendas. Leaving aside the question of missing evidence in some of these so-called arguments, the discipline of history should not be exploited for political purposes on principal.
- “Positive examples” of cooperation should be emphasized as empowerment for future progress. For example, the resolution of the Transnistrian conflict should become the highest priority over the next few years, partially in order to foster a successful template in conflict resolution for the region. Although the Transnistrian conflict differs significantly from other protracted conflicts, the stakeholders and mediators involved are mostly the same. Besides, the Transnistrian conflict is arguably the most promising in terms of a feasible resolution, given that the stakeholders can agree on the terms of Moldovan reunification. Contacts between Moldovans and Transnistrians across the easily penetrable demarcation line should also be a positive example for other territorial conflicts.
- The involvement of big regional players like Russia, Turkey and the EU should not as portrayed as competitors but as partners. To make regional cooperation

---

<sup>5</sup> The Max Weber concept was applied by Shmuel N.Eisenstadt to modern societies. See Eisenstadt, Shmuel N. *Traditional Patrimonialism and Modern Neopatrimonialism*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications. 1973.

programs work, rapprochements between Russia-EU and Russia-NATO are needed.

- As an important pre-condition, national legislations in all Black Sea countries have to be improved in order to ensure equal access to civil and political rights. Furthermore, existing laws are often inefficiently enforced. Corruption and other practices, which undermine democratic principles, should be transparently fought.
- Democratic legislation and functioning executive authorities are indeed essentials but no less important are those initiatives from below which would ensure better protection of human rights. And if democratic grass-root movements don't find support in their home countries, then support should come from the Western countries.
- In accordance with the "Leninist legacies" those in power use their political office as a protective shield for their businesses. Highly centralized governing structures and strong hierarchy are tools to keep their opponents out of power. However, the state-directed economy proved their inefficiency, and therefore decentralization of economy and administration would not only enhance economies but also provide more self-determination. Yet it would be naïve to expect these kind of democratic reforms from the current regimes without pressure from below and from outside.
- Regionalism as a political project needs support at the level of public awareness. A new identity for the region needs to be shaped in the political rhetoric and in the media. At first sight, very few commonalities between the countries may be obvious, but at the same time diversity doesn't necessarily hinder a political or an economic association as the example of the EU illustrates. A commitment to the same democratic values, pragmatic considerations and, in the negative sense, even common threats could serve as the uniting factor for such a regional political project as the Black Sea region is.

## **Conclusion**

When looking at the Black Sea region, it is far easier to identify obstacles and burdens which hinder the successful cross-border cooperation in the region than opportunities. It is all the more essential, if not more challenging, to find examples of successful cooperation and to build on them. With regard to some intricate issues such as the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the question that emerges is how to start approaching this deadlock if all attempts to do so have been failing for the last 20 years? The inconvenient answer is that there is no magic bullet for solving the conflict and in order to address it a lot of work has to be done at all possible levels: intergovernmental negotiations, enhanced inter-ethnic contacts on the

ground, civil society cooperation in the target countries, deeper media coverage on the topic, coming to terms with the past, the overall democratization of the societies, and most importantly, the political will to unite behind such targets. All the levels of the conflict are interrelated and the resolution remains blocked if efforts are not jointly conducted. Currently it is true that the political elites lack an interest in fostering cross-border cooperation. Nonetheless this must not create the illusion that cross-border cooperation is not a high priority for the Black Sea nations.

## **საზღვრისპირა თანამშრომლობის პერსპექტივები შავი ზღვის რეგიონში**

### *მაქსიმ სტეპანოვი, რუსეთი*

შავი ზღვის რეგიონში სტაბილურობის შენარჩუნება და რეგიონის ქვეყნებთან მჭიდრო თანამშრომლობა ევროკავშირის მთავარი მიზანია. ევროკავშირის ინტერესი შეიძლება აიხსნას რეგიონის “ღირებული” რესურსებით. შავი ზღვის რეგიონის ზოგიერთი ქვეყანა მდიდარია ენერგო რესურსებით, სხვები კი სტრატეგიულად მნიშვნელოვან სატრანზიტო ქვეყნებს წარმოადგენენ. ევროკავშირისთვის ასევე მნიშვნელოვანია ახალი ბაზრების მოძიება და ენერგო რესურსების მიმწოდებლების დივერსიფიკაცია, ასევე პრიორიტეტულია ადამიანის უსაფრთხოების გარანტიები.

ისტორიულად შავი ზღვის რეგიონი მუდმივად იყო გლობალური ძალების დაპირისპირების არენა. თუკი მე-19 საუკუნეში ოსმალეთისა და რუსეთის იმპერიები იბრძოდნენ რეგიონში ძალაუფლების მოსაპოვებლად, დღეს ამერიკა, რუსეთი და ევროკავშირი ეჯიბრებიან ერთმანეთს. ბოლო წლებში შეინიშნება ურთიერთობების მკვეთრი გაუარესება. ძველი რეგიონალური კონფლიქტების მოგვარების ნაცვლად ახალი გამყოფი ხაზები გაჩნდა რეგიონში. პოლიტიკური ფრაგმენტაცია შავი ზღვის აუზის ქვეყნების ქრონიკული დაავადებაა, რაც შეიძლება დაიყოს რამდენიმე კონკრეტულ პრობლემად: კონკურენტული და ნაწილობრივ უმოქმედო საერთაშორისო სტრუქტურების არსებობა რეგიონში; გაჭიანურებული კონფლიქტები; პოლიტიკურ-იდეოლოგიური და ისტორიული გარემო; ასევე “ლენინის მემკვიდრეობა,” რაც მოყვება მთელს პოსტ-საბჭოთა ქვეყნებს და ნაწილობრივ სამხრეთ კავკასიასაც ეხება.

ამ პრობლემების გადასაჭრელად აუცილებელია ეფექტური ქმედებები. უნდა ნახალისდეს ადამიანებისა და იდეების თავისუფალი მოძრაობა ღია საზღვრებზე; მომავალი პროგრესის მისაღწევად აუცილებელია თანამშრომლობის “პოზიტიური მაგალითების” ხაზგასმა; დიდი რეგიონალური აქტორები, როგორცაა რუსეთი, თურქეთი და ევროკავშირი, უნდა მოქმედებდნენ როგორც პარტნიორები და არა როგორც კონკურენტები; შავი ზღვის რეგიონის ქვეყნებში უნდა გაძლიერდეს ეროვნული კანონმდებლობა, რათა უზრუნველყოფილ იქნას თანაბარი ხელმისაწვდომობა სამოქალაქო და პოლიტიკურ უფლებებზე. ასევე მნიშ-

ვნელოვანია დემოკრატიული კანონმდებლობა და ფუნქციონირებადი აღმასრულებელი ხელისუფლება;

არანაკლებ მნიშვნელოვანია ის ინიციატივები, რომლებიც ემსახურება ადამიანის უფლებების დაცვას. ეკონომიკისა და ადმინისტრაციის დეცენტრალიზება არა მხოლოდ გააძლიერებს ეკონომიკას, არამედ ხელს შეუწყობს თვითგამორკვევასაც. დემოკრატიული რეფორმები ნაკლებად მოსალოდნელია არსებული რეჟიმებისგან, ამიტომაც საჭიროა წნეხი, როგორც მოსახლეობის ქვედა ფენებიდან ასევე დასავლეთიდან. აუცილებელია ახალი მიდგომების ჩამოყალიბება და ამ კუთხით მოსახლეობის ინფორმირება, ამაში კი უდიდესია მედიის როლი. საერთო დემოკრატიული ღირებულებები, პრაგმატული აზროვნება და საერთო საფრთხეებიც კი შეიძლება გამაერთიანებელი ფაქტორი აღმოჩნდეს ისეთი რეგიონალურ-პოლიტიკური პროექტისთვის, როგორიცაა შავი ზღვის რეგიონი.

## CROSS BORDER COOPERATION IN THE BLACK SEA REGION—BLACK SEA DIALOGUE. IS IT POSSIBLE?

*By Akper Saryyev*

The proximity of the Black Sea Region to the Balkans, the Middle East, the Caucasus, and Central Europe, makes it a strategically important region on the world map. Looking back at the history of the region, we see that the powers which had a strong influence on the region, instead of making it easily accessible, sought to close the access to the Black Sea from the outside. During the Roman, Ottoman and Byzantium periods, isolation policy was predominant in the region. Similarly, the policies of the Soviet Union towards the Black Sea were predominated by notions of isolation. The reason for this has always been obvious—empires wanted to have total control over strategic straits, trade routes and rich natural resources.<sup>1</sup>

After the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, different players appeared in this region. Bulgaria and Romania's acceptance into the European Union opened up the region to the West and raised the interest of external players. This impacted positively on the region but at the same time it made the region more vulnerable. The scope of problems in the Black Sea Region is wide. Political, economic and ethnic tensions make the region unstable and therefore unattractive for foreign investors and tourists. More specifically, the most significant problems of the region include:

- issues of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Nagorno–Karabakh, and separatism in Transnistria
- tensions with ethnic minorities
- low levels of trade and economic relations between the countries of the Black Sea Region (only Russia and Azerbaijan have developed good trade relations with energy resources)
- demonstrative naval and military activity of more powerful players of the region and the existence of military bases
- marine areas and land borders are often not delimited and demarcated
- increased illegal migration and smuggling of weapons, drugs and people, etc.

'The Black Sea Region is increasingly becoming a priority on the international agenda. In fact, a regional approach is emerging as actors understand that common problems need to be addressed jointly.'<sup>2</sup> There is no main or most

---

<sup>1</sup> Özbey, F. 'Black Sea Factor in Russian-Turkish Relationships'

[http://www.bilgesam.org/ru/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=285:chernomosrky-faktor-v-turetsko-rossiyskih-otnosheniyah&catid=104:analizler-rusya&Itemid=210](http://www.bilgesam.org/ru/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=285:chernomosrky-faktor-v-turetsko-rossiyskih-otnosheniyah&catid=104:analizler-rusya&Itemid=210) , last visited June 30, 2012 (translated from Russian into English)

<sup>2</sup> 'Democracy and Good Governance in the Black Sea Region', p.2. Policy report 4, available at:

[http://www.blackseacom.eu/uploads/media/Black\\_Sea\\_Policy\\_Report\\_IV\\_Democracy.pdf](http://www.blackseacom.eu/uploads/media/Black_Sea_Policy_Report_IV_Democracy.pdf), last visited June 24, 2012

important problem as all they are intertwined. To resolve these issues, all the players/countries of the region have to start improving parliamentary culture, administrative efficiency and reach consensus. One more issue that is important is the ability to lead a constructive dialogue (I will call it a *Black Sea dialogue*). This could prevent some of above-mentioned problems before they happen. 'An honest and open dialogue about democracy and the basic elements of good governance within the secessionist regions didn't even start.'<sup>3</sup> There is a chance to improve the situation once the dialogue starts. One of the reasons why the Black Sea Region is covered by military and political confrontation lies in fact that there is no balance of powers, such as existed during the Cold War—a new one has not yet been formed. No transition period can be stable.

Looking at the example of Russia and Georgia, we can see how these former partners have introduced a visa regime with each other (which was canceled unilaterally by the Georgian side later). Ukraine–Russia relationships manifest themselves in gas, the Sevastopol naval base and the Kerch Strait problems. This all shows the presence of internal as well as external problems of the countries of the region, their unreasonable ambitions towards each other and little desire to compromise. Legal nihilism and corruption are common not only among politicians but very often among the population. The Constitution is often just a formal document and does not regulate relations between the powers inside the countries.

Throughout history the Black Sea Region has never lost its importance for Turkey. Once the Black Sea was fully surrounded by lands of Ottoman Empire and no outsiders were tolerated there. After the Cold War, Turkey formulated a policy of rapprochement rather than exclusion. It sought to create an atmosphere of security, stability, prosperity, friendship and cooperation in the region. Included in this were the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Middle East—important but complex regions. From the Turkish perspective it remains important to maintain its activity in Black Sea Region, as well as to establish dialogue, balance and stability.<sup>4</sup>

It should be mentioned that various attempts to organize the Black Sea dialogue, i.e. cooperation of Black Sea Region countries and with other players on the international arena have taken a long time and have met with little success. The problem lies in the fact that the region lacks a clear position on such issues. This makes it complicated for the region to grow economically, politically and

---

<sup>3</sup> 'Democracy and Good Governance in the Black Sea Region', p.8. Policy report 4, available at: [http://www.blackseacom.eu/uploads/media/Black\\_Sea\\_Policy\\_Report\\_IV\\_Democracy.pdf](http://www.blackseacom.eu/uploads/media/Black_Sea_Policy_Report_IV_Democracy.pdf) , last visited June 24, 2012

<sup>4</sup> Özbey, F. *Black Sea Factor in Russian–Turkish Relationships* [http://www.bilgesam.org/ru/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=285:chernomosrky-faktor-v-turetsko-rossiyskih-otnosheniyah&catid=104:analizler-rusya&Itemid=210](http://www.bilgesam.org/ru/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=285:chernomosrky-faktor-v-turetsko-rossiyskih-otnosheniyah&catid=104:analizler-rusya&Itemid=210), last visited June 30, 2012 (translated from Russian into English)

culturally. Democracy and freedom of determination of nations in the region were for many generations repressed. In addition, in the Black Sea Region we can see that there are several poles of interest situated in Moscow, Washington, Ankara and Brussels, which also is a negative indicator.

Today the most influential regional player is Russia. The main problem for the stability in the Black Sea Region in the next five to ten years is the continuation of Russia's neo-imperial policy and its desire to resume part of the influence it lost after the fall of the Soviet Union. Another strong and no less important leader is Turkey, which cooperates with Russia in all regional questions. Both Russia and Turkey want the issues related to the Black Sea to be decided jointly by Black Sea Region countries only—without the intervention of foreign forces and third parties. Together they oppose the desire of the US to extend the scope of the NATO operation Active Endeavour which aims to combat terrorism and crime in the Mediterranean and Black Seas. Turkey and Russia were for centuries vying for control over the Black Sea and now for the first time in the history former rivals are cooperating. This situation is quite remarkable, especially considering that these two countries once fought over the Black Sea, and after the Second World War the Soviet Union claimed its rights over the straits.<sup>5</sup>

However, today the regional policy of Russia contains 2 tendencies:

- a desire to regain Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia and Azerbaijan into its sphere of influence
- to use the energy card to its political advantage against energy dependent states e.g. Ukraine

The major problem is that Russia still considers any democratic changes in the Greater Black Sea Region as hostile to its national interests<sup>6</sup> and goes to great lengths to prevent those changes. Since the Cold War, Russia has suffered geopolitical losses in the region. Russia lost much of its military, political and economic forces there. Russia, which is still a strong leader due to its economic power in the sale of energy resources, and centralized management, remains an important player in the region, and seeks to regain its former strength. The increased presence of the US in the region, along with the EU and NATO enlargement; the development of competitive power transmission lines beyond the control of Russia; and the colored revolutions in the countries of the region, cause concerns for Russia. This strong leader is faced with encirclement, restriction of full freedom and the threat to national interests. Of course Russia tries to

---

<sup>5</sup> Özbey, F. *Black Sea Factor in Russian–Turkish Relationships*, available at [http://www.bilgesam.org/ru/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=285:chernomosrky-faktor-v-turetsko-rossiyskih-otnosheniyah&catid=104:analizler-rusya&Itemid=210](http://www.bilgesam.org/ru/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=285:chernomosrky-faktor-v-turetsko-rossiyskih-otnosheniyah&catid=104:analizler-rusya&Itemid=210) , last visited June 30, 2012 (translated from Russian into English)

<sup>6</sup> *Black Sea Dialogue, is it possible?* available at: <http://www.blackseanews.net/read/8969/> , last visited June 24, 2012 (translated from Russian into English)

counter all this.<sup>7</sup> For security reasons Russia sees the Black Sea as a strategic field and would perhaps even use force for this purpose. The Russian–Georgian conflict of 2008 proves this. The signing of an agreement with Abkhazia and South Ossetia on permanent military bases and the decision to place an air defense system (S-300), threatens the balance of power in the region. In 2010, Russia also extended the terms of the Black Sea Fleet in Crimea and Russian troops in Armenia until the 2040s with the possibility of a further prolongation.

The Russia–Georgia conflict forced the European Union to intensify efforts to develop a coherent Black Sea policy. Here the EU faces an internal lack of consensus concerning questions in its foreign policy. To maximize the regions transit and economic potential and thus help the region, the European Union should establish a special foreign policy with respect to the Black Sea Region as a whole rather than build relationships with each of the countries. At the same time there are many critical points expressed by some politicians who are in favor of bilateral rather than regional cooperation. A bridge between the EU and the Black Sea Region countries could be the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) or the GUAM. The BSEC has 13 members and is concerned with economic cooperation of the region's players. 'A number of workshops, trainings and exhibitions are being organized yearly within the relevant Working Group in the Member States to facilitate and promote regional trade and attract investments. They are supported by international organizations, in particular, by UNIDO and its affiliated bodies.'<sup>8</sup> Still, the lack of a constructive dialogue and pragmatism does not allow this organization to play the role of a political referee in the region, which is so vital. In addition, the BSEC has failed to provide a decent integration project, which would be interesting for the participating countries.

The reduction of integration potential between the players of the region therefore hinders trade relations. A new Marshall Plan or a similar impetus for Black Sea countries to unite is needed. Expansion of the Black Sea dialogue as a basis of multilateral relations requires the effort of the countries themselves to create a forum for political dialogue and experience exchange in the following areas: democracy development, economic integration, energy security, interpersonal contacts development, internal security, ecological issues and transportation. Development of deep and comprehensive Free Trade Agreements would enrich Black Sea cooperation. Regional contacts should be facilitated by the removal of obstacles to legitimate travel and the promotion of university exchanges.<sup>9</sup> 'A

---

<sup>7</sup> Özbey, F. *Black Sea factor in Russian–Turkish Relationships*, available at [http://www.bilgesam.org/ru/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=285:chernomosrky-faktor-v-turetsko-rossiyskih-otnosheniyah&catid=104:analizler-rusya&Itemid=210](http://www.bilgesam.org/ru/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=285:chernomosrky-faktor-v-turetsko-rossiyskih-otnosheniyah&catid=104:analizler-rusya&Itemid=210) , last visited June 30, 2012 (translated from Russian into English)

<sup>8</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Armenia, BSEC, available at: <http://www.mfa.am/en/international-organisations/BSEC/> , last visited June 24, 2012

<sup>9</sup> Summaries of EU legislation: Black Sea Synergy, available at: [http://europa.eu/legislation\\_summaries/maritime\\_affairs\\_and\\_fisheries/external\\_relations\\_enlargement/r17102\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/maritime_affairs_and_fisheries/external_relations_enlargement/r17102_en.htm) , last visited June 24, 2012

clear encouragement and sponsorship of intercultural and interfaith dialogue among the peoples of the Black Sea is needed. Cooperation between universities should be enhanced.<sup>10</sup>

A progressive initiative, which has not yet been implemented is a Black Sea European college in Sevastopol. During the round table *European Integration: monitoring and regional issues*, the first deputy chairman of the Sevastopol City State Administration, Vladimir Kazarin commented on the idea of the creation of a European college in Sevastopol. The initiative comes from the administration of city of Sevastopol. It plans to have an international faculty and students from all Black Sea countries. The main goal of the institute is to raise a generation for which artificial restrictions in communication will no longer exist. Moreover, the institute aims to bring together students with different national and language backgrounds in order to create a multicultural environment.<sup>11</sup> This would be a significant step towards the strengthening of mutual understanding between people from Black Sea countries. This new generation would bring Black Sea dialogue to a new level in the future with more respect for parties and a deeper understanding of the problems of one another.

From my point of view, the following measures are essential for effective development in the Black Sea Region:

- coordination of existing regional initiatives, institutions and mechanisms
- preciseness: the list of priority projects does not have to be too long but has to contain feasible medium-term projects
- ability to adequately react to emerging issues
- good neighborhood priority
- transparency: cooperation and dialogue should be transparent and clear to all members and partners.

In order to deal with conflicts and other outstanding issues in the region, the establishment of a high level consultation group is desirable. 'A number of confidence-building measures and a structured security dialogue on relevant issues should be established. The feasibility of an international gathering on the Black Sea, preferably at summit level, involving the regional states and international stakeholders, should be the end point for the work of the high level group.'<sup>12</sup>

Besides the above mentioned issues, Russia needs some separate mechanisms for solving its problems in the region as it is not a typical player. A very important

---

<sup>10</sup> Report of the Commission on the Black Sea: *2020 Vision on the Black Sea Region*, p.13

<sup>11</sup> Black Sea College, available at [http://www.alleya.info/novosti/news\\_detail.php?id=379](http://www.alleya.info/novosti/news_detail.php?id=379) , last visited June 24, 2012 (translated from Russian into English)

<sup>12</sup> Report of the Commission on the Black Sea, *A 2020 vision on the Black Sea Region*, p.12

step for Russia would be to take a position of a strong leader together with Turkey within the region. This leadership role should be based on respect and not on the fears of other players. Together with other regional players these strong players should take steps in favor of cooperation and stability. It should be clear that if strong players (Russia and Turkey) assert pressure on weaker parties, there is an increased risk that the weaker parties will seek support from other strong actors such as the EU and USA. This may lead to negative consequences for stronger players and a potential power loss in the region. Russia and Turkey showed a good example of cooperation in terms of Black Sea issues, which can serve as a basis for other players too. Each Black Sea country should be able to profit from the sea, mutual cooperation and independence in decision-making. Key words for Russia would be '[the increase] of democratic processes in its external policy' and 'cooperation based on mutual benefits.'

An old Turkish march begins with the words: 'Oh, Black Sea! Black Sea! These are not enemies coming; we are coming!'<sup>13</sup> Today the word 'we' which referred to Turkish people of old times could be transferred into 'we' referring to *all* people of the Black Sea region aiming for stability, unity and peace.

## **შავის ზღვის რეგიონის ქვეყნების თანამშრომლობა - შავი ზღვის დიპლომატიის და მისი პერსპექტივები**

### **აკპერ სარიევი, უკრაინა**

შავი ზღვის აუზი მსოფლიოს ერთერთი სტრატეგიულად მნიშვნელოვანი რეგიონია, რასაც განაპირობებს მისი სიახლოვე ბალკანეთის ნახევარკუნძულთან, ახლო აღმოსავლეთთან, კავკასიასა და ცენტრალურ ევროპასთან. ცივი ომის დასრულებისა და საბჭოთა კავშირის დაშლის შემდეგ შავი ზღვის რეგიონში ახალი პოლიტიკური მოთამაშეები გამოჩნდნენ. ბულგარეთისა და რუმინეთის ევროკავშირში გაწევრიანებით დასავლეთს შავი ზღვის რეგიონისკენ გზა გაეხსნა, ამან თავის მხრივ, მოცემული რეგიონისადმი გარე მოთამაშეების ინტერესების გაზრდა გამოიწვია.

შავი ზღვა საკმაოდ რთული რეგიონია, სადაც თავი იჩინა მთელმა რიგმა ისეთმა პრობლემებმა როგორებიცაა - პოლიტიკური და ეკონომიკური კრიზისები და ეთნიკური კონფლიქტები. ყოველივე ეს რეგიონში არასტაბილურ გარემოს ქმნის, რაც უარყოფით გავლენას ახდენს ტურიზმის განვითარებასა და ინვესტიციების მოზიდვაზე. აღსანიშნავია, რომ რეგიონში არ არსებობს რომელიმე ერთი, მთავარი პრობლემა- რეგიონის ყველა პრობლემა ურთიერთდაკავშირებულია. ყოველივე ეს ერთ კონკრეტულ მიზეზთან არის დაკავშირებული: ცივი ომის დროინდელი ძალთა ბალანსი რეგიონში აღარ არსებობს - ახალი კი ჯერ-

---

<sup>13</sup> Original name of the march: *Eski Karadeniz Marşı*

ჯერობით კვლავაც არ ჩამოყალიბებულა. ტრანზიტული პერიოდი კი არასდროს გამოირჩევა სტაბილურობით.

შავი ზღვის რეგიონის მნიშვნელობა თურქეთისთვის დიდია. დღესდღეობით, ამ ქვეყნის მიზანია შავი ზღვის რეგიონში ძალთა ბალანსის შექმნა და სტაბილურობის შენარჩუნება. აღსანიშნავია, რომ შავი ზღვის ქვეყნების დიალოგს მსოფლიო პოლიტიკის სხვა მოთამაშეებთან ხანგრძლივი, წარუმატებელი ისტორია აქვს. ეს მოსალოდნელიცაა, გამომდინარე იქიდან რომ ამ რეგიონში ერთმანეთს ეჯახება მოსკოვის, ვაშინგტონის, ანკარასა და ბრიუსელის ინტერესები და პოზიციები.

დღესდღეობით რეგიონის ყველაზე გავლენიანი სახელმწიფო რუსეთია. უახლოების 5-10 წლის მანძილზე რეგიონის სტაბილურობას ყველაზე დიდ საფრთხეს რუსეთის ნეო-იმპერიული პოლიტიკა და ამ ქვეყნის მიერ საბჭოთა კავშირის ნგრევით გამოწვეული გავლენის აღდგენის სურვილი წარმოადგენს.

შავი ზღვის რეგიონის მეორე, არანაკლებ მნიშვნელოვანი ლიდერია თურქეთი, რომელიც ამჟამად ყველა რეგიონალური მნიშვნელობის საკითხზე ახერხებს რუსეთთან თანამშრომლობას. როგორც რუსეთის, ისე თურქეთის ინტერესებში შედის ის, რომ ადგილობრივი პრობლემები მხოლოდ რეგიონის სახელმწიფოების მიერ იქნას მოგვარებული - მესამე მხარეებისა და უცხო ქვეყნების ჩარევის გარეშე. მთავარი პრობლემას წარმოადგენს ის ფაქტი, რომ რუსეთი რეგიონში ნებისმიერ დემოკრატიულ ცვლილებას საკუთარი ეროვნული ინტერესების საწინააღმდეგოდ მიმართულ ნაბიჯად აღიქვამს და ძალებს არ იშურებს ცდილობს მსგავსი ცვლილებების აღსაკვეთად.

რაც შეეხება სხვა აქტორებს, რუსეთ-საქართველოს ომის შემდგომ პერიოდში შეინიშნება ევროკავშირის განსაკუთრებული გააქტიურება შავი ზღვის რეგიონის ქვეყნების მიმართ თანამიმდევრული პოლიტიკის შემუშავების საქმეში. ამ მხრივ ერთგვარი „ხიდის“ როლის შესრულება შეუძლიათ ისეთ ორგანიზაციებს როგორცაა არის მაგალითად, 13 წევრისაგან შემდგარი შავი ზღვის ქვეყნების ეკონომიკური თანამშრომლობის ორგანიზაცია (BSEC), ასევე გარკვეული როლი შეიძლება შეასრულოს სუამ-მა (GUAM).

და ბოლოს შავი ზღვის რეგიონის ეფექტიანი განვითარებისათვის აუცილებელია შემდეგი ზომების მიღება: 1- არსებული რეგიონალური ინიციატივების, ინსტიტუტებისა და მექანიზმების კოორდინაცია, 2- სიზუსტე, კერძოდ რამოდენიმე პრიორიტეტული მიმართულებების შერჩევა და საშუალო-ვადიანი პროექტების ამოქმედება, 3- ახლად-წამოჭრილ პრობლემებზე ადეკვატური რეაგირება, 4- „კარგი მეზობლობა“ როგორც საგარეო პოლიტიკის პრიორიტეტი, 5- გამჭვირვალობა: თანამშრომლობა და დიალოგი ყველა წევრისა და პარტნიორისთვის გამჭვირვალე და გასაგები უნდა იყოს.

# THE EUROPEAN UNION AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS: A Stimulus for Regional Cross-Border Cooperation

By Orkhan Ali

## Introduction

The South Caucasus conflicts – South Ossetia, Abkhazia in Georgia and Nagorno-Karabakh between Armenia and Azerbaijan – have divided the region, making regional cooperation unlikely as a whole. Due to these conflicts, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia have narrowed down tripartite integration and have demonstrated a lack of willingness to cooperate with one another. Though the Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili's state-building efforts have illustrated several success stories after the Rose Revolution of 2003, especially in policy restructuring and transparent management, the overall picture is still bleak. The other two South Caucasus states lag far behind in democratic transformation of the state and eradication of corruption at the national level. A strong state is needed for a policy change towards democracy, but to what extent the state efforts will be sufficient in democratic state-building is a big question. However, the three countries have different aspirations vis-à-vis the cross-border cooperation with their diverse political, economic, social and diplomatic developments, which require an individual approach by neighboring and Western countries.

## Territorial Conflicts and the Security Complex Framework

As far as regional development is concerned, all three states are grouped under one regional security basis (termed the *security complex* by Barry Buzan) by many common issues such as occupation of territories, unresolved conflicts, refugee problems, ethnic tensions, economic dependence and safe energy transportation. Obviously, this security framework is defined by those security perceptions and concerns that are interlinked, and leads to the perception that national problems cannot reasonably be resolved apart from one another. However, democratization attempts in all three countries underwent serious drawbacks. Armenia and Azerbaijan's policy towards democratic governance failed; moreover, it gained an excuse for its suppression of bottom-up initiatives because of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

The occupation of the Nagorno-Karabakh region in Azerbaijan by Armenian military forces shadows the entire region, keeping warring parties apart from regional projects, including Georgia, and creates great uncertainty with respect to future cooperation between the three nations. The likelihood of military confrontation has only threatened to increase between Azerbaijan and Armenia, according to recent reports regarding the deaths of soldiers from both sides at the contact line. Azerbaijan is arming heavily, relying on its vast oil revenues that

allow for extensive military budget, while Armenia maintains close military relations with Russia through military pacts and deployed Russian soldiers. The oil boom, however, could reverse the *status-quo* and may convince Armenians not to trust its opponent at the negotiation table. Most dangerously, Yerevan could act pre-emptively to forestall the risk of being attacked by Azerbaijan. And obviously, as long as the conflict remains in a 'no war, no peace' conundrum, the possibility of a future military scenario cannot be ruled out.

By contrast, Georgia embraced its Rose Revolution in 2003. This movement resonated powerfully with the world and immediately secured strong support from the West. The solidification of pro-Western President Mikheil Saakashvili in power as a result significantly increased the course towards European integration. Soon, however, the new leadership began to falter in managing overly ambitious expectations. Hasty and imprudent decisions employed in resolving the conflicts in the two breakaway regions by the use of force in August 2008 ended in a fiasco for Georgia. The relations with the Kremlin plummeted, resulting in controversial recognition of de-facto independence within the Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions by Russia, thereby disrupting the territorial integrity of Georgia as a whole. Georgia's elite appears committed to modernizing the country through democratic rule but encounters significant challenges to strengthen it constructively. Nevertheless, the Saakashvili regime is keen on pursuing its program of reforms in order to rebuild confidence and standing after the August 2008 war with Russia.

### **Democratic Challenges**

More pluralistic political systems and democratic governance can successfully contribute to cross-border cooperation and provide long-term guarantees for sustainable and economically diverse growth. At the moment, Azerbaijan is characterized by a highly centralized government with monopolistic economy. Armenia lacks a sustainable democratization process, having strong interest groups outside the country. The isolation of Armenia and its economic dependence on Russia supports the informal political structures and hampers the political and economic modernization process of the country. Georgia, unlike Armenia and Azerbaijan, has marched ahead after the Rose Revolution but still faces serious deficits in good governance. Mr. Saakashvili fought against state-building through his idiosyncratic interpretation of democracy, which entailed the consolidation all power structures under his sole command. The presidential post is now the sole centre of power for executive orders. The Georgian government appears to have prioritized state-building and power accumulation, while postponing its democratic tenets. This decision has given state-building the upper hand at the expense of democracy itself.

From an economic point of view, the states of the region differ but nonetheless depend on one another. While the share of oil in Azerbaijan generates more than 70% of budget revenues, with the export of oil and petroleum products alone comprising 93%,<sup>1</sup> Georgia and Armenia's economic growth is based mainly on the construction, services, transit routes and agriculture sectors. For Armenia, remittances from Armenians living and working abroad play an important role. For Georgia, the transit of resources from the Caspian Sea to Turkey matters greatly, while for Azerbaijan, Georgia is the most important transit country for its resources to Europe. Georgia is also a crucial partner for Armenia to access regional and international markets, and approximately 70% of Armenian trade is linked to transits via Georgia.<sup>2</sup> This picture illustrates how prosperous the region could be if cross-border cooperation were enriched. At this conflict-driven region in which democratic governance is being questioned, the necessity for cross-border cooperation between Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia has never been so critically important for harmonious relations among them and growth of rapprochement between conflicting parties. Although democratization and good governance are the main points of focus of the EU policy towards the South Caucasus, the chances for change at the regional level are not easily achievable. Yet up to now, given its contextual nature, the only solution apparent for the region's development seems to be an establishment of decentralized government structures that will promote economic incentives via cross-border cooperation.

### **Democratic Governance in the South Caucasus as Way to Cross-Border Cooperation**

Democratic governance is the key element of stabilization and development in the region. Both theory and practice confirm that good governance unaccompanied by the strong involvement of its citizens will result in ineffectual measures, and there is still only partial knowledge about the relative health of governance and its impact in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. The civil society institutions and NGOs of the three countries should intensify efforts in addressing awareness gaps in decentralized governance and distribution of wealth among population equally. The problem of cross-border cooperation can be addressed by strengthening civil society organizations (CSOs), building the capacity of local NGOs and media due to the conviction that a more capable civil society are crucial for an understanding of good governance, investigating the benefit of cross-border cooperation, and finally improving transparency and the quality of public finance policy and government management. If governments understand the impact of cross-border cooperation on their welfare and its role on poverty reduction, they will be more consistent with the decentralisation commitments and interstate cooperation.

---

<sup>1</sup> Concise Picture of Azerbaijan Economy in 2012, 13 Oct., 2011. <http://cesd.az/new/2011/10/concise-picture-of-azerbaijani-economy-in-2012/>

<sup>2</sup> Meister S., *A New EU approach towards the South Caucasus*, 28 Feb., 2011, <https://aussepolitik-net.dgap.org/de/aussepolitiknet/regionen/new-eu-approach-towards-south-caucasus>

The ultimate goal here is to translate economic cooperation into political cooperation. The most pertinent example in this regard is that of the EU, which started as an economic and energy cooperative body (the European Coal and Steel Community), and over the next few decades gradually developed into a political union, one in which violence between its members has become unthinkable. This action could also be realized through involving local self-governments of the border regions of each country within the aim of creating a common market space for regional trade. Experience shows that trade and closer economic ties not only lowers the risk of conflicts breaking out but that they foster an atmosphere of tolerance and trust that is necessary for the resolution of conflicts. This cross-border cooperation among all three states can also convert economic interdependence between states into political harmony, if it is allowed to progress unchecked. Hence, incorporating the three Caucasian economies into the wider regional market would promise a better future with regionally-bound wealth.

### **The EU in Support of Good Governance**

The EU enjoys a favorable position in the region and its reputation is comparatively benign as it has significantly contributed enormous rehabilitation and infrastructure building projects, being the biggest donor organization in the South Caucasus. In order to be able to carry forward this success, the EU has to incentivize democracy and good governance in bilateral cooperation that could, in the first place, contribute to regional stability, and secondly, guarantee long-term investment opportunities for the West. This move carries a high potential of promoting economic incentives to overcome border challenges in a peaceful manner.

There is just one problem. The political profile in each of the three countries is remarkably diverse. Despite this, the EU does remain interested in promoting good governance in the region and peaceful resolution of protracted conflicts. The Russo-Georgian War in 2008 clearly showed that the EU was the only international institution literally involved in peace-making and cease-fire achievement on South Ossetia. This war forced all three countries to re-calculate their policy towards the EU. The EU also initiated two programs with the vision of integrating former Soviet countries into the European family. The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) of 2004 marked a significant step forward in support to democratization, good governance and the rule of law, which were identified as core priorities in the action plans signed with Armenia (Priority 1), Azerbaijan (Priority 2) and Georgia in 2006.<sup>3</sup> However, there are slight differences due to country contexts. Later in 2009, the EU launched its Eastern Partnership (EaP) Program in Prague to deepen the partnership with the three South Caucasus

---

<sup>3</sup> Laure Delcour & Hubert Duhot, 'Bringing South Caucasus Closer to Europe: Achievements and Challenges in ENP Implementation', *Natolin Research Papers*, 03/2011, pp.22-23

states. Democracy and good governance, economic integration, and the promotion of civil society exchange were among the key areas to be upgraded, and will go a long way towards making noticeable progress in its fulfillment of these commitments.<sup>4</sup>

## Conclusion

Overall, the EU's support for good governance and the rule of law has been constantly identified as a core priority in its relations with the South Caucasus states. Greater involvement of the EU in the region would strengthen its ability to promote good governance and principles of cross-border cooperation. The EU needs to become an active partner to offer short term incentives. However, political, economic and social developments in the region are not fully inline with the overriding security framework. The differences between the countries toward EU integration are being highlighted in the Country Reports prepared by the European Commission, where assessments on each country, especially in the field of democratization, show divergent trends. Taking this into account, the EU should avoid a one-size-fits-all approach to the South Caucasus countries and instead harmonize its stand in the region with strong incentives. The only reassurance here is the fact that the three South Caucasus countries are extremely sensitive to the democracy issue, but there are many overlapping concerns in economic and political activity that constantly threaten the balance between equilibrium and confrontation.

The EU poses a powerful alternative in the region to fill-in the democracy deficit that each country requires, and make a major breakthrough in transforming authoritarian regimes into democratic governments. Promoting good governance, rule of law and democratization in each country, and ensuring its gradual implementation, would eventually encourage cross-border cooperation between the South Caucasus countries. Local self-governance institutions and civil society in the border regions are potential drivers of change to foster confidence-building between Armenians, Azerbaijanis and Georgians and put forward different priorities, such as trade, business or transportation, to be solved by the respective countries for the reform agenda, which could indirectly address the on-going conflicts and narrow down the differences for regional and European integration.

---

<sup>4</sup> Meister, S., *A New EU approach towards the South Caucasus*, 28 Feb., 2011, <https://aussepolitik-net.dgap.org/de/aussepolitiknet/regionen/new-eu-approach-towards-south-caucasus>

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

*Concise Picture of Azerbaijan Economy in 2012*, 13 Oct., 2011.

<http://cesd.az/new/2011/10/concise-picture-of-azerbaijani-economy-in-2012/>

Meister, Stefan (2011), *A New EU approach towards the South Caucasus*, 28 Feb., 2011, <https://aussepolitik-net.dgap.org/de/aussepolitiknet/regionen/new-eu-approach-towards-south-caucasus>

Laure Delcour & Hubert Duhot, 'Bringing South Caucasus Closer to Europe: Achievements and Challenges in ENP Implementation', *Natolin Research Papers*, 03/2011, pp.1-60

## **ევროკავშირი და დემოკრატიული მმართველობა სამხრეთ კავკასიაში: რეგიონული საზღვრისპირა თანამშრომლობის პერსპექტივები**

*ორხან ალი, აზერბაიჯანი*

სამხრეთ კავკასიის ქვეყნები ერთმანეთისაგან მკვეთრად განსხვავდებიან პოლიტიკური, ეკონომიკური, სოციალური თუ დიპლომატიური კუთხით და ისინი სხვადასხვაგვარად უყურებენ საზღვრისპირა თანამშრომლობის პერსპექტივებს. მიუხედავად ამისა, სამივე სახელმწიფოს რეგიონალური უსაფრთხოების საკითხები აერთიანებთ, მათ შორის ტერიტორიების ოკუპაცია, გადაუჭრელი კონფლიქტები, ლტოლვილთა საკითხი, ეთნიკური დაპირისპირებები, ეკონომიკური დამოკიდებულება და ენერგო რესურსების უსაფრთხო ტრანსპორტირება. დემოკრატიულმა რეფორმებმა სამივე ქვეყანაში წარუმატებლად ჩაიარა. სომხეთისა და აზერბაიჯანის დემოკრატიულმა ტრანსფორმაციამ მარცხი განიცადა. შედარებით წარმატებული საქართველო კიეფექტური მმართველობის სერიოზულ დეფიციტს განიცდის.

დემოკრატიული მმართველობა რეგიონის სტაბილიზაციისა და განვითარების საწინდარია. საზღვრისპირა თანამშრომლობის პრობლემების გადასაჭრელად აუცილებელია სამოქალაქო საზოგადოების, ასევე ადგილობრივი არასამთავრობო ორგანიზაციებისა და მედიის გაძლიერება, რადგან ძლიერი სამოქალაქო საზოგადოება მნიშვნელოვანია ეფექტური მმართველობისათვის და სამთავრობო ფინანსების გამჭვირვალობის გასაუმჯობესებლად. თუკი სამხრეთ კავკასიის ქვეყნების მთავრობები გაითავისებენ, რომ საზღვრისპირა თანამშრომლობას გადამწყვეტი მნიშვნელობა აქვს კეთილდღეობისათვის და სიღარიბის აღმოსაფხვრელად ისინი უფრო აქტიურად ჩაებმებიან სახელმწიფოთაშორის მოლაპარაკებებში.

ევროკავშირს, როგორც უმსხვილეს დონორ ორგანიზაციას სამხრეთ კავკასიაში, განსაკუთრებული ადგილი უჭირავს რეგიონში. წარმატებული კურსის გასაგრძელებლად ევროკავშირმა ხელი უნდა შეუწყოს დემოკრატიისა და ეფექტური მმართველობის განვითარებას, რაც თავის მხრივ რეგიონის სტაბილურობას უზრუნველყოფს და გრძელვადიანი ინვესტირების საშუალებას მისცემს დასავლეთს. რადგან სამივე ქვეყნის მოსაზრება ევროკავშირში ინტეგრაციაზე განსხვავებულია, ევროკავშირს სჭირდება არა ერთი უნივერსალური, არამედ სამივე ქვეყანაზე ინდივიდუალურად მორგებული მიდგომა. ევროკავშირი წარმოადგენს ერთადერთ რეალურ ძალას, რომელსაც შეუძლია სამხრეთ კავკასიის ქვეყნებში დემოკრატიის დეფიციტის შევსება და ავტორიტარული რეჟიმების დემოკრატიულ მთავრობებად გარდაქმნა.

რეგიონის განვითარების ერთადერთი გზა დეცენტრალიზებული სამთავრობო სტრუქტურების შექმნაა, რომლებიც ხელს შეუწყობენ ეკონომიკურ ინიციატივებს. საბოლოო მიზანი კი ეკონომიკური თანამშრომლობის პოლიტიკურ თანამშრომლობად გარდაქმნაა. როგორც გამოცდილება გვიჩვენებს ვაჭრობა და მჭიდრო ეკონომიკური კავშირები არა მხოლოდ ამცირებენ კონფლიქტების საფრთხეს, არამედ ისინი შემწყნარებლობისა და ნდობის ატმოსფეროს ქმნიან, რაც აუცილებელია არსებული კონფლიქტების მოსაგვარებლად. ეფექტური მმართველობის, კანონის უზენაესობის და დემოკრატიული ტრანსფორმაციის გაძლიერება ხელს შეუწყობს სამხრეთ კავკასიის ქვეყნებს შორის საზღვრისპირა თანამშრომლობის განვითარებას.

# THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ENPI CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAM IN THE BLACK SEA REGION: A Tool to Enhance Cooperation at a Regional Level

By Anastasiya Stelmakh

## Introduction

Though borders can be a source of distrust and inequality, they can also transform cross-border relations into a positive process if successfully guided under the eye of a powerful mediator. This is so even if the borders in question are as heterogeneous and divisive as is the case within the Black Sea region. Currently, it is the European Union (EU) who appears to have the ability to introduce viable projects and stable direction in the region, which in turn can be further developed and enhanced by the regional actors themselves.

## The ENPI within the Black Sea Basin

The EU's experience in region-building is vast and is undoubtedly its preferred policy of fostering regional stability. Indeed, the EU's approach can be seen as one of the most effective ones in the West. Two decades ago, the EU faced vast challenges within its own geographical vicinity. A number of new states had recently come into existence, which meant threats, as well as opportunities, for the Union. The decision to expand the policy of region-building was necessitated as a tool to stabilize the periphery of the Union itself. The *European Security Strategy*, which was adopted long before the expansion of the EU had reached the shores of the Black Sea, stated that:

Even in the era of globalization, geography is still important. It is in the European interest that countries on our borders are well governed... It is not in our interest that enlargement should create new dividing lines in Europe. We need to extend the benefits of economic and political cooperation to our neighbors in the East while tackling political problems there.<sup>1</sup>

Before the introduction of the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument program (ENPI), the EU approached the Black Sea region by means of

---

<sup>1</sup> The Council of the European Union. 2003. *A Secure Europe in a Better World - European Security Strategy*: 7-8, [cited 12 December 2003]. Available from: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf>

two political initiatives: the Black Sea Synergy program (BSS) of 2007<sup>2</sup> and the Eastern Partnership (EaP) of 2009<sup>3</sup>. The BSS aimed to resolve problems at a regional level using existing institutional structures, whereas the EaP was created to assist Black Sea countries in reaching European standards in conduct. Though different in their aims, both indicated a raised attentiveness on the part of the EU regarding the region of the Black Sea. However, these initiatives proved incoherent in relation to each other. The necessity for a newer, more coherent and territorially unifying initiative to enhance cross-border cooperation in the Black Sea emerged.

The Black Sea Basin program was listed among 15 joint operational programs (9 of which dealt with land borders, 3 with maritime routes, and 3 with sea basins). Thanks to the EU's support of the Black Sea Cross-Border Cooperation under the European Neighborhood Policy, 10 Black Sea nations<sup>4</sup> received new impetus for more active cooperation. The principle of territorial cooperation was introduced as a basis for EU regional policy. Hence, it would enable the development of transnational, inter-regional and cross-border cooperation.

The ENPI was intended to foster cross-border cooperation with a designated budget of €18.8 million.<sup>5</sup> The ENPI offered support to designated Black Sea areas in three strategic areas: the enhancement of economic and social development based on common resources; the sharing of resources and competencies for environmental protection and conservation; and cultural and educational initiatives for the establishment of a common cultural environment in the Black Sea basin.

This paper will preliminarily evaluate the success of the ENPI CBC in the Black Sea region, and then examine some inherent obstacles that are blocking further

---

<sup>2</sup> *Black Sea Synergy* launched in 2007 was considered to be complementary to EPNP. Its main strategy was 'to put the Black Sea region on the radar screen of the EU as a single distinct policy area, a unit of analysis and not a vague geographic space'. BSS designated sectoral partnership in environment, energy and transport, but as additional funding was not provided, ENPI was left to finance the projects.

<sup>3</sup> *EaP*, launched in 2009, proposed differentiation principle and bilateral measures with the aim to create the Free Trade Agreement, Neighborhood Economic Community and a 'mobility and security' pact. The more ambitious aim of achieving political association and economic integration was added to the agenda. Furthermore, EaP offered 'institutional building programs' at the bilateral level. The projects are to be financed from ENPI funds (budget – €350 million).

<sup>4</sup> Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova.

<sup>5</sup> Total budget includes €17,305,944 financed by ENPI plus 10% of national co-financing, which amounts to an additional €1,557,537. See, *Black Sea Cross Border Cooperation in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy*, [cited 5 June 2012]. Available from: [www.blacksea-cbc.net](http://www.blacksea-cbc.net). The amount was revised and increased to €25,696,516. See, Joint Operational Programme 'Black Sea Basin 2007-2013'. Newsletter No. 6, 2012: January, [cited 25 May 2012]. Available from <http://www.blacksea-cbc.net/index.php/eng/content/download/10275/258699/file/Sixth%20Newsletter.pdf>

successful implementation of the program. Though the ENPI is one of the few programs which aims to address the regional problems through cross-regional cooperation, its challenges should be identified in order to better understand ways in which to improve it.

### **ENPI Shortfalls**

The first aspect is that the budget of the ENPI CBC earmarked for the Black Sea region for the years 2007-2013 amounted to just €18.3 million. (This is, of course, prior to the revision of the budget in 2011, which raised the allocated funds to €25.7 million.) It was the smallest such budget allocation of its kind in comparison with other sea basin programs. For example, the Mediterranean Basin's budget was marked at 173.6 million EUR, and the Baltic Sea's at €237 million. For a region like the Black Sea, the funds allocated (both prior to 2007 and again in 2011) seem inadequate for the implementation of effectively-scaled projects.

Another important aspect is a lack of engagement with all the regional actors. From an implementation point of view, as Azerbaijan did not sign the financial agreement, they were excluded from the list of states eligible to receive funds from the program. They can still participate as an 'associate partner' with their own funding; however, this non-engagement weakened the effectiveness of the program from its very beginning.

In comparison with other sea basin programs, the Black Sea CBC program did not differ much in terms of objectives. However, transportation and communication networks must become a key objective for the Black Sea region as a whole. Those kinds of projects, under the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), appeared long before the EU launched its CBC initiative. They were important instruments for the improvement of regional cross-border cooperation. Currently, the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank has allocated funds for projects with a special emphasis on transport and communication development.<sup>6</sup> Including this objective within the Black Sea CBC program itself would allow beneficiaries to get greater financial support for the projects and to enable more investment in this sector by benefitting various funds including national and international ones.

In contrast to the Baltic and Mediterranean Sea regions, the Black Sea region suffers from low rates of economic and social development. With an average GDP of €833 (excluding EU-member regions) in the Wider Black Sea area, economic and

---

<sup>6</sup> Luica, Pamela. *Black Sea Trade and Development Bank economic growth instrument in the region*, [cited 13 May 2012]. Available from: <http://www.railwaypro.com/wp/?p=9100>

social projects are undeniably of vital importance.<sup>7</sup> Not surprisingly, 51% of the proposal applications were related to social and economic welfare enhancement.

The program is a relatively new project that is only now beginning to show preliminary results. After the first call for proposals came to a close in October 2009, merely 13 of the 173 proposal projects were awarded financial support. Eleven projects were presented to the EU member states, and only two projects to Armenia and Moldova. EU member states are greatly preferred over non-EU members. Though the rate of co-financing amounts to just 10% of the total eligible costs by the committed states, it appeared to tenuously linked to its purported future beneficiaries, the non-EU members. After the call for proposals, three-fourths of the designated regions had submitted projects. Those not mobilized at the time made two requests for partnerships. This again confirms the idea that regional actors are good instruments by which to mobilize acts within their own territories. The Black Sea region has shown active engagement with the projects dedicated to environmental innovation. So far, these 13 ongoing projects seem to be a promising beginning that may eventually reach the higher engagement and spending that the Baltic Sea program currently enjoys.<sup>8</sup>

In general terms, cross-border cooperation from a geographical point of view faces many difficulties. They tend to be less-populated areas, and their peripheral location decreases the potential for economic and political activity. As a result trade relations are bureaucratically much more complicated and non-transparent, while transport and communication networks are usually underdeveloped and underfinanced.

## **Regional Challenges**

Even if we view EU cross-border programs in the Black Sea region as a progressive tool for addressing problems at the regional level, there were at least four mitigating factors that negatively impacted its effectiveness. First of all, the lack of political will or finances to cover national co-financing from the overall budget of the ENPI CBC program resulted in EU member states being favored over non-EU members. Second, political animosity, separatism, protracted

---

<sup>7</sup> For comparative purposes, average GDP in the Baltic Sea region equals €1,994 and €3,882 in the Mediterranean Sea region. Hence, the Black Sea region seems to be the most junior region. Op. cit., *European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument Cross-Border Cooperation. Strategy Paper 2007-2012. Indicative Programme 2007-2010*, p. 8. [cited 6 June 2012]. Available from: [http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/country/enpi\\_cross-border\\_cooperation\\_strategy\\_paper\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/country/enpi_cross-border_cooperation_strategy_paper_en.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> Again, for comparative purposes, the Baltic Sea commands 80 projects, and the Mediterranean Sea commands 34 projects.

conflicts, and unconsolidated statehood resulted in resistance to fully-fledged implementation of the projects of cultural, economic, social, environmental cohesion of the Black Sea states. Third, inexperience with such cross-border cooperation impedes the effective participation of the non-EU countries. Previous cross-border initiatives had very limited financing, while also lacking technical expertise, support and innovative leadership to launch specific projects. Finally, cross-border initiatives were imposed by the countries and institutions outside the region, which led to a 'bandwagon effect', rather than an active initiating and supporting of the projects from within.

The above-mentioned challenges could and should be tackled in the future. It is vitally important that the projects developed by ENPI find continuation at the national level. Black Sea countries should show greater support to newly emerging civil society. Better differentiation of the objectives of the program, and even revision of the objectives by expanding communication and transportation provisions, will increase its efficiency. Allocation of additional funds will enable a greater number of beneficiaries to initiate and carry out the projects. The lack of education over the strengths and merits of effective participation in the program should be minimized, which will directly affect the mobilization of the partners. From a bureaucratic point of view, the involvement of Turkey under one platform (not under IPA) will increase its participation. And though the program itself does not aim to resolve secessionist conflicts, it can certainly strengthen confidence in the region.

## **Conclusion**

The ENPI programs are visible proof of the ongoing policy of the EU to support coherent and stable peripheries in its immediate vicinity. The Black Sea program assists in maintaining friendly relations among the Black Sea states, united under one framework. Some regions in the Black Sea basin prefer to cooperate with their immediate neighbors rather than within the wider neighborhood. However, the principle of territorial cooperation that this program represents proves to be assisting in decreasing development gaps between EU and non-EU states. It must be remembered that this macro-regional project is still in its embryonic stages. The Black Sea region itself should be categorized as an ongoing project that is in the process of integrating on many levels. Further success of the program will lead to the shift from tackling soft issues to tackling hard ones. The Black Sea CBC program, different in aims and implementation from both the multilateral

approach of the Eastern Partnership and the intergovernmental approach of the Black Sea Synergy initiatives, stands firmly on territorial and regional cooperation. A resounding success of this program would prove that the territorial approach would complement the eastern Neighborhood policy with the coherence needed to ensure the success of future EU-led initiatives.

## **სასაზღვრო თანამშრომლობის პროგრამის (ENPI) ეფექტიანობა შავი ზღვის რეგიონში: რეგიონალურ დონეზე გაქვითვაში თანამშრომლობის იარაღი**

### **ანასტასია სტელმახი, უკრაინა**

საზღვარი, როგორც წესი, ორ მეზობელ ქვეყანას შორის დაძაბულობის წარმოშობის წყაროა, მაგრამ ძლიერი შუამავლის დახმარებით შესაძლებელია მეზობელი ქვეყნების ურთიერთობები ორივე მხარისათვის სასარგებლოდ წარიმართოს.

სწორედ ასეთ ძლიერ შუამავალს წარმოადგენს შავი ზღვის რეგიონში ევროკავშირი, რომელიც სხვადასხვა ინიციატივით ცდილობს დაარეგულიროს რეგიონის პოლიტიკური დაძაბულობა. ევროკავშირი ჯერ კიდევ ევროპის მეზობლობისა და პარტნიორობის პროგრამის ამოქმედებამდე აქტიურად იყო ჩართული ამ საქმეში, რაც ისეთი პოლიტიკური ინიციატივებით გამოიხატა, როგორებიცაა შავი ზღვის სინერჯის პროგრამა (BSS) და აღმოსავლური პარტნიორობა (EaP). მაშინ როდესაც სინერჯის პროგრამა რეგიონის პრობლემების მოგვარებას რეგიონალურ დონეზე ცდილობდა ერთიანი ინსტიტუტებისა და სტრუქტურების დახმარებით, აღმოსავლური პარტნიორობის მიზანს წარმოადგენდა რეგიონის ქვეყნების ქცევებისა და ურთიერთობების ევროპული სტანდარტებისათვის მიახლოება.

სამწუხაროდ, ორი ინიციატივა ერთმანეთთან აბსოლუტურად შეუთავსებელი გამოდგა და დღის წესრიგში დადგა ახალი, მდგრადი ინიციატივის განხორციელება, რომელიც წარმატებით შეუწყობდა ხელს შავი ზღვის რეგიონის ქვეყნების თანამშრომლობას. ამგვარად, ევროკავშირის სამეზობლო პოლიტიკის (ENPI) ფარგლებში წარმოიშვა შავი ზღვის საზღვარშორისი თანამშრომლობის ინიციატივა, რამაც რეგიონის 10 ქვეყანას საშუალება მისცა ახალ ფორმატში განეახლებინათ დიალოგი. ინიციატივის მიზანს წარმოადგენდა რეგიონის ეკონომიკისა და სამოქალაქო საზოგადოების განვითარება, ბუნებრივი რესურსების დაცვა და კონსერვაცია, კულტურულ-საგანმანათლებლო ინიციატივები და შავი ზღვის რეგიონში საერთო კულტურული გარემოს შექმნა.

მიუხედავად შორსმომავალი მიზნებისა, ENP-ს სუსტი მხარეებიც გააჩნია: პირველ რიგში, ეს არის პროგრამის შეზღუდული ბიუჯეტი, რაც 2007-13 წლებში მხოლოდ 18.3 მილიონ ევროს მოიაზრებს და მსგავსი მასშტაბის პროექტებიდან ყველაზე მცირე ბიუჯეტია. მეორე: რეგიონის ყველა ქვეყანა არ არის ბო-

ლომდე ჩართული პროგრამაში. მაგალითად, აზერბაიჯანმა უარი განაცხადა ფინანსურ შეთანხმებაში მონაწილეობაზე, და შესაბამისად პროგრამის ფარგლებში დაფინანსებას ვერ მიიღებს. მსგავსმა ფაქტებმა პროექტის ეფექტიანობა თავიდანვე შეამცირა. ამასთანავე, პროგრამის მონაწილე ქვეყნები დაფინანსების მოპოვების მხრივ არათანაბარ სიტუაციაში აღმოჩნდნენ: გამომდინარე იქიდან, რომ დაფინანსება პირადაპირ ევროკავშირიდან მომდინარეობს, მასი მიღების შანსი მეტი აქვთ შავი ზღვის რეგიონის იმ ქვეყნებს, რომლებიც ევროკავშირში არიან განწევრიანებული.

პოლიტიკური შუღლი, სეპარატიზმი, გაყინული კონფლიქტების არსებობა, მყიფე სახელმწიფოებრიობა- ხელსაყრელ გარემოს არ ქმნის ნებისმიერ პროექტის განხორციელებისთვის. ევროკავშირის არანევერ ქვეყნებს ნაკლებად გააჩნიათ მეზობლებთან აქტიური თანამშრომლობის გამოცდილება, რაც პროექტში მათ აქტიურობას უშლის ხელს. ნარსულის გამოცდილება ც არასახარბიელო აღმოჩნდა: წინა ინიციატივები რეგიონის გარეთ არსებული ქვეყნებისა და ორგანიზაციების მიერ იყო თავს მოხვეული, და შავი ზღვის რეგიონის ქვეყნები მათ არა საკუთარი სურვილით, არამედ იძულების წესით ასრულებდნენ. მათ არ ჰქონდათ გაცნობიერებული აღნიშნული ინიციატივების ნამდვილი მნიშვნელობა.

ზემოთთქმულიდან გამომდინარე, აუცილებელია მოხდეს როგორც საზოგადოების ისე პოლიტიკური ელიტის ცნობიერების ამაღლება, რათა ევროკავშირის მიერ წამოწყებულმა სამეზობლო პოლიტიკის ინიციატივამ მაქსიმალური შედეგი აჩვენოს. მართალია, ჯერ კიდევ მრავალი პრობლემაა გადასაჭრელი როგორ რეგიონალურ, ისე სახელმწიფოებრივ დონეზე – მაგრამ რეგიონის ქვეყნებისა და ევროკავშირის თანმიმდევრული პოლიტიკის განხორციელებით შესაძლებელია ყველასათვის სასურველი შედეგის მიღწევა და რეგიონში სტაბილური გარემოს შექმნა, რაც მის ეკონომიკურ განვითარებას შეუწოებს ხელს.

# CLOSE BORDERS IN AN ERA OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION: A Possible Role for Soft Policy Tools and the EU in the Turkey-Armenia Deadlock

By Gökçe Perçinoğlu

## Introduction

The countries of the Black Sea Region face multifaceted and deep-rooted conflicts dating back to the collapse of the Soviet Union, most commonly in the form of unresolved territorial disagreements. Conflicts such as those of Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabakh, and Transnistria affect both their national states, as well as non-regional players that may lie anterior to the internal conflicts. Cross-border cooperation between the states is thus adversely affected through the hindrance of good social and economic relations between all parties.<sup>1</sup>

## Turkish-Armenian Relations

When it comes to Turkey and the Wider Black Sea region, the most pressing issue is that of the interlinked conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh. This particular issue also involves Azerbaijan and Armenia, whose inter-mutual relations are characterized by armed conflict, closed borders and isolated territories. Resolution of the conflict has become an important requirement for the normalization of Turkish-Armenian relations, where a closed border and long-lingering deadlock affect progress in cooperation between the two nations.

The 2009 protocols between Turkey and Armenia successfully promoted official dialogue between the two after two decades of very limited diplomatic communication. Whereas the first protocol confirmed the mutual recognition of existing borders and the desire to mark their reopening, the second one recommended three concrete steps to be taken for the development of diplomatic relations. Yet the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict blocked the normalization process and remains the central obstacle to opening the border and establishing diplomatic relations.<sup>2</sup> It seems unlikely that the protocols will be revived in their present form. The challenges are various: a lack of dialogue and understanding between the two sides, Turkey's relations with Azerbaijan, the ongoing Nagorno-

---

<sup>1</sup> Matheeva, Anna. "Conflicts in the Wider Black Sea Area" in (eds.) Hamilton, Daniel and Mangott, Gerhard. *The Wider Black Sea Region in the 21st Century: Strategic, Economic and Energy Perspectives* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2008)

<sup>2</sup> Baran, Zeyno. "Turkey and the Wider Black Sea Region" in (eds.) Hamilton, Daniel and Mangott, Gerhard. *The Wider Black Sea Region in the 21st Century: Strategic, Economic and Energy Perspectives* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2008); p. 99

Karabakh conflict itself, an often traumatic common history between the two, and further potential border disputes.<sup>3</sup>

Nagorno-Karabakh implicitly impacts on Turkey's relations with Georgia and Russia as well. A close border with Armenia limits Turkey's room for maneuver in the region and creates heavy dependence on Georgia as the main gateway to Azerbaijan and the Central Asian countries. This makes the stability in Georgia even more important for Turkey. Russia's dominance over the process and influence on Armenia is also an implicating factor in Turkey's decision-making considerations.<sup>4</sup>

The current status quo in the Turkey-Armenia deadlock is deeply entrenched and may not be settled in the near future. This means the closed border will continue to be a further roadblock to enhanced regional cooperation. The Turkish-Armenian problem necessitates a long-term strategy where conflict resolution goes hand-in-hand with open dialogue, more engagement at the public and economic levels, and continued integration of both countries into European Union structures.<sup>5</sup> For such a strategy, this paper will analyze alternative ways of restoring human interaction and creating efficient and sustainable relations in the Black Sea region, with regards to Turkey and Armenia. In this respect, the role of soft policy tools such as economy and energy, second-track diplomacy such as civil society efforts, and the role of the EU will be discussed.

### **The Role of the Economy**

The economy has always been a good soft tool to enhance cross-border cooperation because it is one of the safest ways of restoring relations. It can be a way to compel both countries to open the border, and it can increase cooperation even if the border remains closed. At the public level, the economy is one of the accepted ways of establishing relations. According to the *Caucasus Barometer*, conducted annually in Armenia with 2000 people, 45% of Armenians approve of

---

<sup>3</sup> Görgülü, Aybars; Iskandaryan, Alexander and Minasyan, Sergey. *Assessing the Rapprochement Process* (Istanbul: TESEV Publications, May 2010) available at: <http://www.tesev.org.tr/en/publication/turkey-armenia-dialogue-series-assessing-the-rappro>; p.7

<sup>4</sup> Cornell, Svante E.; Jonsson, Anna; Nilsson, Niklas and Häggström, Per. *The Wider Black Sea Region: An Emerging Hub in European Security* Sweden: Silkroad Studies, December 2006 available at: [www.silkroadstudies.org/new/docs/.../0612Blacksea\\_P.pdf](http://www.silkroadstudies.org/new/docs/.../0612Blacksea_P.pdf); p.7 and Phillips, David. *Diplomatic History: The Turkey-Armenia Protocols*. (Columbia University: March 2012) available at: [hr.columbia.org/peacebuilding/diplomatic\\_history.pdf](http://hr.columbia.org/peacebuilding/diplomatic_history.pdf); p.10

<sup>5</sup> *Indeed the main pillars of civil society in Turkey, which was quite weak in the 1990s, only gained significant boost after the EU accession process. See: Cuhadar, Esra and Punsmann, Gultekin, Burcu. Reflecting on the Two Decades of Bridging the Divide: Taking Stock of Turkish-Armenian Civil Society Activities. (TEPAV Publications: January 2012) available at: http://www.tepav.org.tr/en/yyayin/s/481,; p.15.*

doing business with Turks.<sup>6</sup> A similar study titled *Foreign Policy Perceptions in Turkey*, conducted in 2010 with 1000 people, revealed that 49% of the Turkish people supported Turkish-Armenian economic rapprochement.<sup>7</sup>

In comparison to \$2.15 billion with Azerbaijan, and \$1.05 billion with Georgia, Armenia's trade volume with Turkey was only \$300 million in 2009.<sup>8</sup> Armenian businesses import products from Turkey into Georgia and then bring them to the Armenian market from Tbilisi. According to the country manager of the World Bank in Armenia, figures predict that when the border with Turkey re-opens, imported goods will be cheaper and transportation costs will be cut by 20%.<sup>9</sup> As for Turkey, the opening of the border is important in terms of accelerating the development of Eastern Anatolia, which is its least developed region. The port of Trabzon, which suffered a decline in importance, could become an attractive destination once again if Anatolia becomes a crossroads of north-south and east-west trade following the opening of the border.<sup>10</sup>

The opening of border has the potential to transform the region not only for Turkey and Armenia but also for other actors. Europe's heavy dependence on Russia's oil and gas is a strategic challenge; mega-energy projects depend heavily on Georgia as a transit destination. Stabilization of relations among Azerbaijan, Turkey and Armenia are strategic priorities for many actors and hence has the potential to bypass the existing conflicts and create cross-border cooperation channels.

The big question remains how much influence the economy can exert towards opening up the border. As of 2010, despite Turkey being Georgia's largest trade partner, Turkey's trade balance with Georgia did not even constitute 1% of Turkey's total trade volume.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless the existing cross-border projects

---

<sup>6</sup> *Caucasus Barometer*, 2010, Armenia, available at: <http://www.crrccenters.org/caucasusbarometer/online/>

<sup>7</sup> Akgün, Mensur; Gundogar Senyucel, Sabiha; Gorgulu, Aybars and Aydin, Erdem. *Foreign Policy Perception in Turkey*. (TESEV, İstanbul, 2011); p.30

<sup>8</sup> "Turkey-Armenia trade volume reaches 300 million USD" TABDC Website February 8, 2010.

[http://www.tabdc.org/index.php?subaction=showfull&id=1265625488&archive=&start\\_from=&ucat=11,45&](http://www.tabdc.org/index.php?subaction=showfull&id=1265625488&archive=&start_from=&ucat=11,45&)

<sup>9</sup> De Waal, Thomas. *Armenia and Turkey: Bridging the Gap*. (Carnegie Endowment Policy Brief, October 2010) available at: <http://carnegieendowment.org/2010/10/05/armenia-and-turkey-bridging-gap/m5d>

European Initiative Liberal Academy, Tbilisi (EI-LAT). *Georgian-Turkish Free Trade Agreement 2008: Implications Two Years After*. (March 2011) available at:

<http://iliablog2011.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/geo-turkish-fta-2008.pdf> ; p.3

<sup>10</sup> Görgülü, Aybars; Levack, Jonathan and Percinoglu, Gokce. *Turkey's Trade Policy Towards Europe, the South Caucasus and Armenia* (2011), available at: <http://armturkdialogue.net/tag/tepav/>; p.15 (Referring to: Nathalie Tocci, 'The Case for Opening the Turkish-Armenian Border', TEPSA (July 2007), <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/expert/eStudies/download.do?file=18288>)

<sup>11</sup> European Initiative Liberal Academy, Tbilisi (EI-LAT). *Georgian-Turkish Free Trade Agreement 2008: Implications Two Years After*. (March 2011) available at: <http://iliablog2011.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/geo-turkish-fta-2008.pdf> ; p.26

such as Caucasian Cheese<sup>12</sup> conducted by business organizations show that there are ways of cooperation even in a restricted environment. “Cross-border trade and joint production may well provide beneficial contributions for regional cooperation as they have the potential to provide mutual incentives and increase interdependence among communities.”<sup>13</sup>

### **Civil Society Efforts**

When it comes to Turkey-Armenia relations, second-track diplomacy and civil society efforts in easing the effects of the conflict are also significant. Even if the legal and institutional problems are solved, such as the opening of the border, the normalization of relations may not be fully achieved without reconciliation and confidence-building at the societal level. In this respect, the activities undertaken by think-tanks seem to aim at eliminating the mental barriers in the minds of both communities.

Since the football diplomacy days of 2007, Turkish think-tanks have become more active in the normalization of relations between Turkey and Armenia. Prior to that, civil society efforts to normalize and reconcile Turkish-Armenian relations had been underway for the previous decade and a half. TEPAV research identified 64 different initiatives between 1995 and 2010.<sup>14</sup> 2001, 2005 and 2008 witnessed a sharp increase in the number of projects initiated. These years also coincide with the times when there was an effort on the track one level.

Practitioners believe that the projects have contributed to the breaking of the taboos in their respective societies, successfully building relations, as well as building capacity within the civil society and organizations to better address the issue.<sup>15</sup> In this respect, the apology campaign, the projects regarding cultural heritage, the bus tours, journalist and youth exchanges, the numerous numbers of roundtables with experts, and the joint reports conducted in both countries are worth mentioning.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup> The Caucasian Cheese project is a joint cross-border initiative where Turkish and Armenian dairy producers exchanged cheese recipes and came up with the idea of creating a new Caucasian Cheese brand along with joint cheese exhibitions. For more information: Sunday's Zaman, 23 July 2010. <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-216906-100-cheese-diplomacy-making-progress-in-caucasus.html>

<sup>13</sup> Cuhadar and Punsmann, 2012: p.49

<sup>14</sup> Ibid; p.10

<sup>15</sup> Ibid; p.42-43

<sup>16</sup> Additionally “according to Burcu Gültekin Punsmann of TEPAV, Gül has endorsed a notional plan to restore the Ani Bridge, and has asked TEPAV to conduct a feasibility study on rebuilding it.” Philips, 2012: p.104

These efforts not only contribute to the democratization processes in their respective countries but also try to create an agenda around the resolution of the conflict. Indeed, since the collapse of the protocols in 2010, there seems little political appetite to revisit the issue of relations with Armenia anytime soon.<sup>17</sup> Civil society efforts seem to be the only means to create a discussion platform on the issue. In such an environment, however, the effects and sustainability of civil society efforts will necessarily remain limited. Such an environment does not present an attractive picture for potential and existing funders and donors either, which puts new projects at risk.

### **The Role of the European Union**

The EU also can play a role in further developing cross border cooperation within the region. Turkey's interests in the South Caucasus overlap with the EU's interests since both sides want stability, energy security, open borders and increased economic cooperation in the region.<sup>18</sup> The Wider Black Sea region, especially the South Caucasus, is an area of interest for the EU. Political and economic instability in the region would threaten European security and energy supplies in the long run. The growing dependency of European countries for energy resources compels the EU to diversify its energy supplies.<sup>19</sup> For Turkey, disorder in the South Caucasus is also worrisome as the region is a transit for oil and natural gas exports from the Caspian Sea to Europe, and Turkey aims to become an energy hub. This is why sustainable relations with all parties in the South Caucasus remains a necessity for Turkey. The opening of the Turkey-Armenia border could mitigate the overall situation in the region and benefit all players.

Although the EU is a new comer in the region its ability to induce change in its neighbors and to promote its own material interests through civilian tools has the potential to create impetus in conflict resolution. Finalizing the Union's borders and promoting stability and security beyond that frontier paved the way to the formulation of new regional initiatives such as the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) or the latest Eastern Partnership (EaP).

Both the ENP and EaP serve the purpose of stabilizing the EU's periphery without accession. The ENP is a hybrid form of external policy and gives the EU the

---

<sup>17</sup> Aybars et. al, 2011; p.10

<sup>18</sup> Bac and Gorgulu, 2011; p. 2

<sup>19</sup> Ibid; p.13. "It is expected that Europe's gas supply in 2020 will be more than 600 BCM and some EU states will strategically dependent of Russian Gazprom which is a serious security challenge." <http://europe.theoil Drum.com/node/3283>

necessary framework and means to deal with instability in the wider region. With this aim in mind, it offers partnerships to the countries of Eastern Europe, the Middle East, North Africa and the South Caucasus. On the other hand, the EaP proposes concrete projects (including energy security, border protection, crisis management, democracy and good governance) to ensure a gradual integration of Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine into the economic, legislative and political spheres of Europe.<sup>20</sup>

The formulation of new regional initiatives deserves mentioning because the broad question is how successful both the ENP and EaP in the South Caucasus will be, and whether it has the efficient tools and strategies to help the resolution of diverse problems. The crucial point is whether these initiatives will be able to create a momentum for an improvement of Turkey-Armenia relations. Integrating Armenia into EU structures might create leverage for the EU to push for a solution on the issue. The situation is reversed when it comes to the EU's dealings with Turkey. Ever since the accession process stalled, the EU's leverage in Turkey diminished. Therefore it is important to get Turkey's accession process back on track again so that the EU's voice can be heard once more in the political sphere.

## **Conclusion**

This paper tried to analyze alternative tools for both restoring the relations between Turkey and Armenia and to create an impetus for opening the border. Economic cooperation and civil society efforts are crucial for societal reconciliation and creating momentum. The possible role of the EU should also not be underestimated, especially if the EU achieves a stronger leverage in both countries. Although there are some limitations on its effectiveness, it still has the potential to create the push for solving the deadlock.

Of course, none of these tools can be as effective as the initiatives of the two governments themselves for a solution. Unfortunately, the subject of relations with Armenia has not been at the top of Turkey's agenda recently. The Turkish government's concerns are drawn elsewhere to developments in the Middle East, as well as to domestic challenges. Likewise, Armenia's domestic concern seems to be primarily the upcoming presidential elections of February 2013. In such an environment, few politicians are inclined to make risky or bold steps. This is why, until the two governments decide to sit at the same table for formal discussions on opening the border, the role of civil society actors, economic dynamics, and

---

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.; p.4-6

interested third parties should be emphasized instead. As it is said, "Reconciliation is a lot like riding a bicycle. You fall off the moment you stop pedaling."<sup>21</sup>

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

Akgün, Mensur; Gundogar Senyucel, Sabiha; Gorgulu, Aybars and Aydin, Erdem. *Foreign Policy Perception in Turkey*. (TESEV, İstanbul, 2011)

Baran, Zeyno. "Turkey and the Wider Black Sea Region" in (eds.) Hamilton, Daniel and Mangott, Gerhard. *The Wider Black Sea Region in the 21st Century: Strategic, Economic and Energy Perspectives* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2008)

Caucasus Research Resource Centers. *Caucasus Barometer, Armenia* (2010) available at: <http://www.crrcenters.org/caucasusbarometer/online/>

Cornell, Svante E.; Jonsson, Anna; Nilsson, Niklas and Häggström, Per. *The Wider Black Sea Region: An Emerging Hub in European Security* (Sweden: Silkroad Studies, December 2006) available at: [www.silkroadstudies.org/new/docs/.../0612Blacksea\\_P.pdf](http://www.silkroadstudies.org/new/docs/.../0612Blacksea_P.pdf)

Cuhadar, Esra and Punsmann Gultekin, Burcu. *Reflecting on the Two Decades of Bridging the Divide: Taking Stock of Turkish-Armenian Civil Society Activities*. (TEPAV Publications: January 2012) available at: <http://www.tepav.org.tr/en/yayin/s/481>

De Waal, Thomas. *Armenia and Turkey: Bridging the Gap*. (Carnegie Endowment Policy Brief, October 2010) available at: <http://carnegieendowment.org/2010/10/05/armenia-and-turkey-bridging-gap/m5d>

European Initiative Liberal Academy, Tbilisi (EI-LAT). *Georgian-Turkish Free Trade Agreement 2008: Implications Two Years After*. (March 2011) available at: <http://iliablog2011.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/geo-turkish-fta-2008.pdf>

Görgülü, Aybars; Iskandaryan, Alexander and Minasyan, Sergey. *Assessing the Rapprochement Process* (Istanbul: TESEV Publications, May 2010) available at: <http://www.tesev.org.tr/en/publication/turkey-armenia-dialogue-series-assessing-the-rappro>

---

<sup>21</sup> Philips; p.99.

Görgülü, Aybars; Levack, Jonathan and Percinoglu, Gokce. *Turkey's Trade Policy Towards Europe, the South Caucasus and Armenia* (2011), available at: <http://armturkdialogue.net/tag/tepav/>

Matheeva, Anna. "Conflicts in the Wider Black Sea Area" in (eds.) Hamilton, Daniel and Mangott, Gerhard. *The Wider Black Sea Region in the 21st Century: Strategic, Economic and Energy Perspectives* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2008)

Müftüleri Baç, Meltem and Görgülü, Aybars. "Turkey and the European Union: Partners in Foreign Policy Cooperation in the South Caucasus" *New Approaches to European Union's Foreign Policy*, Wilga, Maijer and Karolewski, Pawel (eds.), New York: Palgrave (forthcoming)

Phillips, David. *Diplomatic History: The Turkey-Armenia Protocols*. (Columbia University: March 2012) available at: [hrcolumbia.org/peacebuilding/diplomatic\\_history.pdf](http://hrcolumbia.org/peacebuilding/diplomatic_history.pdf)

Uzun, Ezgi. *Emerging Actors of Foreign Policy: The Roles of Think-Tanks in the Turkish Armenian Rapprochement Process* (Unpublished paper, April 2012)

## **ჩაკეტილი საზღვრები ურთიერთთანამშრომლობის ეპოქაში: სავერდოვანი პოლიტიკისა და ევროკავშირის შესაქლო როლი თურქეთ-სომხეთის პრობლემის მოგვარების საქმეში**

**გოკჩე ფეჩინოღლუ, თურქეთი**

შავი ზღვის რეგიონის ქვეყნების უდიდეს გამოწვევას წარმოადგენს იმ კონფლიქტების მოგვარება, რომლებმაც საბჭოთა კავშირის დაშლის შემდეგ იჩინა თავი. აღნიშნული კონფლიქტების წარმოშობა როგორც წესი, გადაუჭრელ ტერიტორიულ დავებს უკავშირდება. აფხაზეთის, სამაჩაბლოს, მთიანი ყარაბაღის და ტრანსნისტრიას კონფლიქტების არსებობა გავლენას ახდენს როგორც უშუალოდ იმ ქვეყნებზე, სადაც ისინი წარმოიშვა, არამედ მთლიანად საერთაშორისო თანამეგობრობაზე, რომლის ინტერესები ასე თუ ისე შავი ზღვის რეგიონს უკავშირდება.

როდესაც საუბარია თურქეთისა და ვრცელ შავი ზღვის რეგიონზე, არ შეიძლება გვერდი ავუაროთ მთიანი ყარაბაღის თემას. ეს კონფლიქტი განსაზღვრავს თურქეთის საგარეო პოლიტიკას არამარტო კონფლიქტის მონაწილე ქვეყნებთან - სომხეთთან და აზერბაიჯანთან, არამედ მეზობელ საქართველოსა და რუსეთთანაც. ამჟამად თურქეთის საზღვარი სომხეთთან ჩაკეტილია, პოლიტიკური ურთიერთობები კი მინიმუმამდეა დაყვანილი. სომხეთთან საზღვრის ჩაკეტ-

ვა საქართველოს – როგორც სატრანზიტო ქვეყანას შეუცვლელს ხდის თურქეთისთვის. საქართველო ხომ აზერბაიჯანსა და აზიის სხვა ქვეყნებთან დამაკავშირებელი მთავარი გზაა. აქედან გამომდინარე, თურქეთისთვის მნიშვნელოვანია საქართველოში შენარჩუნებულ იქნას სტაბილურობა – ამ მხრივ კი ბევრი რამ რუსეთზეა დამოკიდებული. რუსეთს, ამავდროულად დიდი გავლენა აქვს სომხეთზე, რაც თურქეთს მიერ ასევე გასათვალისწინებელი ფაქტორია.

თურქეთისა და სომხეთის საზღვრის გახსნას გადამწყვეტი მნიშვნელობა ექნებოდა არა მარტო ამ ორი ქვეყნისთვის, არამედ მთელი რეგიონისთვის. მაგალითად, ევროპა რომელიც წარსულში მთლიანად იყო დამოკიდებული რუსულ ნავთობსა და გაზზე, აქტიურად ეძებს ენერჯის ალტერნატიული წყაროებს. ამოქმედდა მეგა პროექტები, სადაც ცენტრალური ადგილი უკავია საქართველოს, როგორც სატრანზიტო ქვეყანას. ამ პროექტებიდან პრაქტიკულად გათიშული აღმოჩნდა სომხეთი, რომლის საზღვრებიც ჩაკეტილია როგორც თურქეთის, ისე აზერბაიჯანის მხრიდან.

თურქეთის, სომხეთისა და აზერბაიჯანის ურთიერთობათა დარეგულირება ბევრი საერთაშორისო აქტორის ინტერესებში შედის. ამიტომ, საზღვრების გახსნით და ვაჭრობის აღდგენით გაიზრდება ამ სამ ქვეყანას შორის არსებული კონფლიქტის მშვიდობიანი გზით მოგვარების ალბათობა და გამარტივდება სამ ერს შორის კეთილმეზობლური ურთიერთობის დამყარება. საბოლოო ჯამში, თურქეთისა და სომხეთის პრობლემის მოგვარებისათვის აუცილებელია გრძელვადიანი სტრატეგიის შემუშავება, სადაც კონფლიქტის მოგვარების პროცესს თან ახლავს ღია დიპლომატია, საზოგადოების ჩართულობა, საერთო ეკონომიკური პროექტები, ევროკავშირში ინტეგრაციის პროცესების გაგრძელება და სხვა.

ევროკავშირს განსაკუთრებული როლის შესრულება შეუძლია არსებული კონფლიქტის მოგვარების საქმეში. როგორც ევროკავშირი, ისე თურქეთი დაინტერესებულია შავი ზღვის რეგიონში სტაბილურობის შენარჩუნებით, ენერჯო რესურსების სტაბილური გადინებით, ღია საზღვრებითა და ეკონომიკური თანამშრომლობით. ევროკავშირის ინტერესებს განსაკუთრებით კარგად წარმოადგენს მისი რეგიონალური ინიციატივები: ევროპის სამეზობლო პოლიტიკა (ENP) და აღმოსავლური პარტნიორობა (EaP). როგორც ერთი, ისე მეორე წამოწყება მიმართულია ევროკავშირის სამეზობლოს სტაბილიზაციაზე ამ ქვეყნების ორგანიზაციაში განვერიანების გარეშე.

გადამწყვეტი მნიშვნელობა აქვს იმას, მოახერხებს თუ არა მოცემული ინიციატივები თურქეთისა და სომხეთის ურთიერთობების გაუმჯობესებას. ამ შემთხვევაში გასათვალისწინებელია ისიც, რომ ევროკავშირში თურქეთის შესვლის პროცესის გაჭიანურებასთან ერთად, ამ ქვეყანაში ევროკავშირის ავტორიტეტმა იკლო, შესაბამისად, საჭიროა ინტეგრაციის პროცესის განახლება, იმისათვის რათა ევროკავშირმა დაიბრუნოს გავლენა თურქეთზე და დადებითი გავლენა იქონიოს თურქეთისა და სომხეთის გაყინული კონფლიქტის მოგვარების პროცესზე.

## **PROBLEMS HINDERING CROSS BORDER UNDERSTANDING IN THE BLACK SEA REGION AND SOUTH CAUCASUS: CAN THEY BE TACKLED?**

*By Aydan Muradova*

Cross border cooperation plays an important and sometimes essential role in the state's wellbeing and should be promoted. It is different from all other forms of cooperation especially nowadays when integration and globalization processes are taking the lead. Successful cross border cooperation must be in the interests of every state, because no state would wish to live in a hostile relationship with its neighbors. Today it is very important to enhance regional cooperation, because no state can provide its population with a successful existence if it prefers isolation instead of cooperation. Therefore cross border cooperation should be a priority in every state's policy. But unfortunately today we witness problems that hinder cross border cooperation.

In this article I will review the problems that hinder cross border cooperation in the Black Sea Region and South Caucasus. Cooperation between the states of this region is a relatively recent phenomena and this is not surprising because the region is well known for the dynamic changes experienced as a result of the collapse of the USSR. Complexity and diversity of the Black Sea Region and South Caucasus have attracted the attention of many experts to the region in the recent decades. My main goal is to give my perspective on the obstacles hindering cross border cooperation in the region, and in conclusion I will present my view on how these obstacles can be diminished.

### **Ethnic conflicts as the main obstacle for cooperation in the region**

Ethnic conflicts in the Black Sea Region and South Caucasus have ancient historical and cultural roots and this is one of the reasons why their resolution is so difficult to achieve. Today the main reason why the resolution process is so complicated is because these conflicts are extremely politicized. After the collapse of the USSR, ethnic differences have become notably vivid. This is mainly because every nation wanted to use this exceptional opportunity in order to gain its independence after a long period of dependence. Inevitably this led to some problems. Territorial arguments became the main agenda. Defining the borders of new independent states was a new challenge. This challenge started to threaten peace and security in the region. So the decay of the Soviet Union led ethnic tensions to rise again. Self determination issues of various nationalities began to arise: the conflict between the Georgians and the Ossetians, Georgians and the Abhazians, the Transcaucasus conflict between the Armenians and the Azeris on Nagorno-Karabakh, and problems in Transnistria region. These conflicts led to the inimical relations between the above mentioned states. Unfortunately, some of the

ethnic conflicts in this region have demonstrated horrifying scenes of violence to the worldwide community.

It is necessary to mention that the existence of these ethnic conflicts serves as a key security challenge in the region. To some extent these conflicts also create 'polarization between the conflict-ridden states (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova) on the one hand and the consolidated "western and southern" countries of the Black Sea Region (Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, Greece) on the other.'<sup>1</sup> However, some think that these conflicts are not all truly ethnic in origin and are often fuelled by an amalgam of local elite and business interests, as well as to some extent Russian interest in keeping a foot in the door of what has come to be known as the 'near abroad.'<sup>2</sup>

The ethnic unrest has had a very negative impact on the economic situation of the region. If there were no ethnic conflicts in the region many more countries of the region could benefit from the tremendous economic opportunities that the Caspian Basin provides. For instance, due to its aggressive policy and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Armenia is isolated from all regional projects dealing with the transportation of Caspian resources. It is enough to mention the 'contract of the century' signed between Azerbaijan and the International Oil Consortium on September 20, 1994, which simply excluded Armenia from this project. Obviously the resolution of ethnic conflict could have helped to improve cross border cooperation, particularly in the economic area between the states of this region.

As it is clear one of the major obstacles for cross border cooperation in the Black Sea and South Caucasus Regions are ethnic conflicts. Ethnic conflicts have transformed the region into one of the hot spots of the world. As long as the ethnic conflicts exist, no understanding in the cross border cooperation is going to be achieved.

### **External interference in internal problems: an obstacle or not?**

Ethnic conflicts play an important role in hindering cooperation in the Black Sea Region and South Caucasus, but there are some other factors that cause problems in cross border cooperation. It is important to mention that after the collapse of the USSR, some of the countries of the region wished to maintain regional cooperation and to realize cross border projects. But the strategic importance of the Black Sea Region and South Caucasus attracted western attention to this region immediately. This resulted in the interference of international players in the

---

<sup>1</sup> Pontus Group, (2010). *Assessment of Strategic and Political Challenges to the Development of a Regional Partnership Capacity in the Black Sea Region*.

<sup>2</sup> Halbach Uwe. 'Der Kaukasus in neuem licht. Die EU und Rußland in ihrer schwierigsten Nachbarschaftsregion.' *SWP-Studien* 2005/S 35, November 2005.

internal processes of the region—of course this included the conflicts too. Even though everyone wants the conflicts to be resolved (or at least claim so), each participant pursues its own interests.

The attention focused on the region is due to its significant geopolitical situation—the pathway linking the European Union to Central Asia (the east-west corridor), and the pathway connecting Russia to the Mediterranean, the Middle East, and the southern hemisphere (the north-south corridor), intersect in the Black Sea Region. Consequently, this gave a start to the competition for influence in this region. Each country has specific objectives, and the competition has economic, political, ideological and religious dimensions. As such, there is potential for a variety of conflicts among regional rivals.<sup>3</sup> That means that cross border cooperation in the region is frequently interrupted and sometimes even controlled by a third party.

The proof of this is the fact that the EU has become a serious geopolitical player in the Black Sea Region, not to mention Russia's interest in this region. Russia still cannot accept the fact that all the countries that used to be under its wing for such a long period of time are no longer obeying it and are in search of new changes where Russia is not a key player. Some of these countries have even tried to adopt independent democratic pro-western policies by ignoring and not paying attention to Russia's position (for example, Georgia).

The Black Sea Region is of considerable strategic importance for the United States of America. According to Ariel Cohen, expert in Russian and Eurasian studies, the Black Sea Region can be a launching platform for military reconstruction, and stabilization operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and possibly Iran, as well as for the protection of energy shipping lanes between the Caspian Region and Western markets. It is also Europe's new southeastern border. Thus, both the EU and the United States have strong interests in safeguarding the movement of some goods, preventing the movement of others, and maintaining a presence in the Black Sea Region.<sup>4</sup>

The attention of the international community turned to the region due to its substantial strategic geographic location and of course owing to its rich natural resources. However, the international competition for access to these affluent oil and gas reserves had both positive and negative effects on the regional ethnic conflicts. External involvement in the regional conflicts is very often interpreted as mediation, peacekeeping, and a security sustaining initiative in the region, but everything is much more complicated. For example, the Russian Federation while claiming a role as mediator in the Georgia–Abkhazia and Georgia–South Ossetia

---

<sup>3</sup> Aydin, M. 'Black Sea and the Caucasus Region: Causes of Instability and Ways to Deal with them'. *Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, No. XXX, 2000.

<sup>4</sup> Cohen, A. *US Strategy in the Black Sea Region*. Heritage Foundation. December 2006.

conflicts, provides political, humanitarian and economic support to Abkhazia and South Ossetia. According to Vlad Socor, Moscow's policy paradigm with respect to these conflicts can be defined as controlled instability.

Russia also tries to keep its dominant position in the region by playing a key role in the Nagorno–Karabakh conflict. It is the co-chief of the Minsk Group of the OSCE along with the USA and France. It is important to mention that cooperation between the Minsk group co-chairs has often been very difficult and of course this has created obstacles for the negotiation process too. The negotiation process around the Transnistrian conflict hasn't brought to any concrete results either. Russia, through its support for Transnistrian separatists, has provoked serious dissatisfaction from Romania. The negotiation process has five plus two format—consisting of Russia, Moldova, Transnistria, Ukraine and the OSCE, plus the EU and the US as observers. All the above mentioned demonstrates that external interference in the regional ethnic conflicts has not brought about any substantial results, except the creation of stagnation in the resolution process, and keeping the situation in the region under the control of the leading international actors.

## **Conclusion**

Clearly, in the Black Sea Region and South Caucasus, the obstacles for cross border cooperation appeared after the collapse of the Soviet Union. It is important to mention that after the end of the Cold War era and the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was a desire for a period of stability and prosperity—instead instability and conflicts have flared up. As a result, a new specific challenge for the world and European leaders today is how to respond to the emerging ethno-national conflicts in the new international environment.

Today it is a fact, that the ethnic conflicts in the post-Soviet arena have many parties involved in their solving procedure. I think that too much external interference in the internal matters of the states sometimes can be one of the obstacles in the cross border cooperation. However I do agree that in some cases external interference is a must, because otherwise the situation might obtain tragic consequences.

We have to admit that the international environment has changed, and the relationship between international organizations and conflicting parties has changed too. Another obstacle is that international organizations are not as effective in conflict prevention as they should be. No significant actions are being taken. Most of the time the decisions of the international organizations are dependent on the cooperation of their leading members. Very often the actions are not effective because of the lack of common interest in the problem. So the existing instruments of solving these types of conflicts are far from perfect.

In order to improve cross border cooperation it is important to solve the ethnic conflicts first. Talks on settlement must be held. It is common knowledge that the possibility of conflict will not decrease until the average person has an adequate shelter over his or her head, enough food to eat, and a job with a steady income—this is becoming a major problem. I think that cross border cooperation can be strengthened with the help of dialogue between the states—the ethnic nationalities should have a dialogue and come to a peaceful solution to the problems. It is a fact that the resolution of this type of conflict on the official level is taking too much time and mostly no significant decisions are being made—none of the conflicting parties want to agree on the proposed compromise conditions. That’s why I am a supporter of Track II diplomacy in which non officials engage in dialogue with the aim of conflict resolution.

Ethnic conflicts in the Black Sea Region are case sensitive, and majority of them have a very painful legacy—that’s why even if the governmental officials do reach consensus, it will not guarantee peace between nations. This explains why mutual understanding and mutual recognition of nations is the main basis for achieving success in conflict resolution. This can help to raise awareness, and find different ways to solve the problems. The dialogue can help to prevent the escalation of the conflict. Nothing can be as effective in conflict resolution as dialogue. From my perspective this is the main source of how the problem can be tackled.

## **შავი ზღვის რეგიონსა და სამხრეთ კავკასიაში საზღვრისპირა თანამშრომლობის ხელისშემშლელი პრობლემები: შესაძლებელია თუ არა მათი მოგვარება?**

### **აიდან მურადოვა, აზერბაიჯანი**

საბჭოთა კავშირის ნგრევის შემდეგ შავი ზღვის რეგიონში თავი იჩინა ეთნიკურმა დაპირისპირებამ. ეს ერთის მხრივ, განპირობებული იყო იმით, რომ ყველა ერი ცდილობდა გამოეყენებინა ხელსაყრელი მომენტი და საბჭოთა იმპერიის ნგრევისთანავე მოეპოვებინა დამოუკიდებლობა. შედეგად, რეგიონში თითქმის ერთდროულად იფეთქა რამოდენიმე ეთნიკურმა კონფლიქტმა.

ეთნიკური კონფლიქტების არსებობა უარყოფითად აისახება შავი ზღვის რეგიონის ეკონომიკურ განვითარებაზე. რომ არა ეთნიკური დაპირისპირება, რეგიონის ქვეყნები მეტ მოგებას ნახავდნენ კასპიის ზღვის ბუნებრივი რესურსების ათვისების საქმეში. მაგალითად მთიანი ყარაბაღის კონფლიქტიდან გამომდინარე სომხეთი პრაქტიკულად გამოეთიშა კასპიის ზღვის ენერჯო რესურსების ტრანსპორტირებასთან დაკავშირებულ ყველა პროექტს ამის გამო მნიშვნელოვან შემოსავლის წყაროს კარგავს. თამამად შეიძლება ითქვას - ვიდრე რეგიონში ეთნიკური კონფლიქტები არ მოგვარდება, სამეზობლო თანამშრომლობაზე ლაპარაკიც კი ზედმეტია.

ბოლო წლებში აღსანიშნავია რეგიონისადმი ევროკავშირის დამოკიდებულების შეცვლა. ეს ხდება იმიტომ, რომ ორგანიზაციის გაფართოების შემდეგ ევროკავშირის სამხრეთი საზღვარი უშუალოდ შავ ზღვაზე გადის. მოცემულ ფაქტს უარყოფითად აღიქვამს რუსეთი, რომელიც ჯერ კიდევ ვერ შეგუებია იმას, რომ კარგავს გავლენას შავი ზღვის რეგიონის ქვეყნებზე. რუსეთისთვის მიუღებელია, რომ ამ რეგიონში მიმდინარეობს პროცესები, რომლებიც მის კონტროლს არ ექვემდებარება. მაგალითად: რუსეთი, რომელიც ოფიციალურად შუამავლის როლს ასრულებდა საქართველოს ხელისუფლებასა და აფხაზეთსა და ცხინვალის რეგიონის დეფაქტო მხარეებს შორის, რეალურად სეპარატისტების პოლიტიკური, ჰუმანიტარული და ეკონომიკური დახმარებით იყო დაკავებული. რუსეთის პოლიტიკა რეგიონის კონფლიქტების მოგვარების საქმეში შეიძლება მარტივად დავახასიათოთ როგორც „მართული დესტაბილიზაცია“.

შავი ზღვის რეგიონმა სტრატეგიული მნიშვნელობა შეიძინა ამერიკისთვის: ამ რეგიონიდან ადვილად არის შესაძლებელი ავღანეთში, ერაყში, ან საჭიროების შემთხვევაში ირანში სამხედრო ოპერაციების განხორციელება. რეგიონში დამკვიდრებით აშშ-ს შეუძლია უზრუნველყოს კასპიური ნავთობის შეუფერხებელი მინოდება დასავლურ ბაზრებზე. ასე რომ, ევროკავშირის მსგავსად ამერიკაც დაინტერესებულია რეგიონში პოზიციების განმტკიცებითა და აქაური პოლიტიკური და ეკონომიკური პროცესების მართვით.

ზოგადად რომ ვთავათ მიმდინარე ეთნიკურმა კონფლიქტებმა ღრმა კვალი დატოვა ადგილობრივი ერების ცნობიერებაში. ოფიციალურმა პირების მიერ მიღწეული შეთანხმებები სტაბილურობის გარანტიას არ წარმოადგენს იქამდე, ვიდრე არ მოხერხდება ნდობის აღდგენა, ურთიერთგაგება და ერთმანეთის ლეგიტიმური პოზიციების აღიარება. კონფლიქტის გადაჭრის საუკეთესო გზა ერებს შორის დიალოგის განახლებაა.

## THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE ARMENIAN–TURKISH RECONCILIATION PROCESS

*By Arpi Atabekyan*

‘Who will give the recipe? Who is our doctor?

Armenians are Turks’ doctor, Armenians’ doctors are Turks.

Dialogue is the only prescription, we are each other’s doctors.

There is no solution other than this...’

(Hrant Dink)

The word *border* can have different meanings in different contexts, but for the majority of the Armenian people it is associated with the Armenian–Turkish border. The first time I went to the Armenian–Turkish border to see the Armenian historical old capital Ani from the Armenian side, I understood the seriousness of the existing borders. I was so young and thought that I could simply cross the River Aras and go into Ani for a while. At that time I could not understand why you had to travel through the whole of Turkey in order to get to Ani, when it was so close. Perhaps that day changed my whole life as I eventually decided to undertake Turkish studies in order to research Turkish–Armenian relations, problems and perspectives.

The issue of the closed Turkish–Armenian border, as you remember, was officially discussed in 2009, through the Turkish–Armenian protocols, and it seemed that the reopening of the border would be a reality within months. However, after a short time, the process was stopped indefinitely and now the Turkish and Armenian governments have returned to the same situation that has existed for years.

After the end of the reconciliation process I thought more about the timing. Of course, there is the issue of the closed borders and the absence of the diplomatic relations—but before solving these two important issues, people need to get in touch with each other. The majority of the Armenian and Turkish people do not know each other. Many Turkish people have never met any Armenian people and many Armenian people have never met any Turkish people—that is why they do not know how to react when they see the people from these neighboring countries.

Actually the solution to this problem seems to rest with the various youth organizations that are developing projects and which are making valuable connections within the frameworks of these programs. Through these programs, friendships are being formed and people are getting to know each other better. While I understand that only a small section of the society from both sides is

included in these kinds of activities, I think that there is no alternative than to learn from each other.

Similarly, there are many tourists coming from Turkey to Armenia and vice versa—this is another way of learning. While this is also a positive step, I would prefer both the young activists and the tourists to experience the different regions of both countries—to understand, that there is not only Yerevan or Istanbul, but that there are other modern cities, and that the people of these cities can be quite different from each other. However, when weighing up the advantages and disadvantages, the shortcomings and positive sides, overall these projects are beneficial in regard to promoting mutual understanding. In the last three or four years there have been many interesting projects that have been important in the process of breaking down stereotypes, information exchange, and improved access to each other.

If we are discussing the problems in the region, for me, the main issues are the closed border between Armenia and Turkey, and the recognition of genocide. The solution to these problems lies in the activities of civil society organizations, in projects, and in communication between the different parts of the society from both sides.

I would mainly like to focus on the perspectives and opportunities for further development of the Turkish–Armenian reconciliation process through the active role of the civil society. The reconciliation process began with the signing of the Turkish–Armenian protocols, which dealt with the establishment of diplomatic relations and the development of dialogue between the two countries. In the year of the signing of the Turkish–Armenian protocols, there were large protests, mainly in Yerevan. In addition to these protests, articles and news items were published, discussing and demonstrating the advantages and the disadvantages of the opening up of the borders. In academic societies, many scholars and researchers were divided into two camps, each with different ways of thinking and different approaches to the issue. During the same year and some years before, youth programs on the Turkish–Armenian rapprochement processes were being organized.

These responses arose due to some uncertain statements in the protocols regarding the denial of genocide and rights on the protection of the cultural heritage. Further, there was pressure from the Republic of Azerbaijan regarding the Karabakh conflict. Azerbaijan argued, that without a resolution to the Karabakh conflict, the Turkish Republic must not develop its relations with Armenia or open the border.

Here my main focus and stress on the issue is that both before the signing of the protocols and after, the pressure from the society was so great, that the government had to take into consideration the voice and the opinion of its people.

Two years passed and nothing happened in the reconciliation process—the process was stopped by the Armenian government. After this step I thought that no more projects, no more simple meetings between the Armenian and Turkish communities would take place. However, I was wrong, because once again the civil society in Armenia and Turkey proved that even without any official relations, they could come together again, make discussions on some mutual topics, and build better relationships.

As a background of the essay I have chosen sources, with which I have been familiar previously. The theoretical concept is based on the article 'The International' in *Evolution* by Robert W. Cox. He mainly discusses civil society within the structure of early empires and compares this structure with the modern states. The movements and activities, that were taking place in Armenian society can easily be explained by the concepts of Cox:

Civil society differs from both 'Empire' and the state system in that it functions as a decentered network rather than as a disciplined hierarchical structure. Modern information technology in the form of the Internet and the cell phone has helped it to develop and to mobilise for action. This loose flexible character is an asset in being able to bring together a diversity of groups around some central issue. It is also a weakness by making it difficult to articulate a clear programme of action because of this very diversity; and also by leaving the movement open to disruption by agents provocateurs or to being co-opted by well-financed and well organised state or ideological interests either domestic or foreign. Civil society is inherently opposed to the centralising and homogenising force of 'Empire' but is always vulnerable to being subverted or manipulated.<sup>1</sup>

For the Armenian–Turkish reconciliation process, as a theoretical framework, I would prefer firstly to use the German concept *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*<sup>2</sup>, which means coming to terms with the past. The idea is that tragedies of history can only be prevented from happening again if they are first analyzed thoroughly. Those who forget the past are condemned to repeat it. The past must be accepted as it was and accounted for. Responsibilities for crimes must be understood and their underlying ideologies condemned. A country must have the courage to look back and come to terms with its past in order to be liberated from it and then to be able to move forward.

Many scholars and researchers have concluded that the reconciliation process is something that should be realized as a result of the cooperation of both sides. In the Turkish–Armenian case, it is the civil society of both sides that is effectively working, developing relations or trying to break the stereotypes among societal representatives.

---

<sup>1</sup> R. Cox, 'The International' in *Evolution*, *Millenium, Journal of International Studies*, 2007, p. 10

<sup>2</sup> 'Prospects for Reconciliation, Theory and Practice, Yerevan, 2010', p. 20

During the first period of the Armenian–Turkish reconciliation process everybody was actually focused on politics, negotiations between governments and diplomatic relations. It seemed at that time that nobody really thought about the role of the civil society. Alexander Iskandaryan, who has been the Director of Caucasus Institute (CI) since January 2005 compares the attitude and strategies of Armenia and Turkey towards the reconciliation process. He suggests that Armenia’s incentives for rapprochement are very concrete and practical, but also rather pressing. Turkey’s rapprochement is based on its international image and its desire for success as a regional player. He argues that Armenia’s motivation can be considered as tactical, whereas Turkey’s motivation is more of a strategic nature.<sup>3</sup> However, when the governments stopped working and most of the load was placed on the civil society, it became obvious that the society itself was the key actor in these relations.

In this view of rapprochement by Iskandaryan, the most important role belongs to the strategic and tactical discourses. Though it is also considered to be very important, in my opinion this is the last stage of the reconciliation process. The cooperation of the civil society, with the help of civil society organizations will bring the governments to a more effective dialogue.

The signing of the protocols and the failure of the reconciliation process showed that neither the Armenian nor Turkish society is ready to open the borders after more than a hundred years lacking in relations—the continuation of the activities and meetings between the societies proved that. It seems that there is a lack or a gap of information or communication and that only after filling that gap will it be possible to come together again.

My argument in this paper and about the reconciliation process in general is that actually this process was led mostly by the civil society in Armenia and Turkey. I would like mostly to emphasize the fact that Armenia is a young republic and the civil society building processes are rather new for the state. So, the sudden outburst of demonstrations by the society have been led by the consciousness of the people, who realized that they are the very people, who can solve problems and decide on their future for themselves. The same way, no one is protesting against any mutual projects between Armenia and Turkey, because the same civil society representatives and organizations are planning and taking part in these activities, trying to find various solutions.

## References:

Cox, R. (2007). ‘The International’ in Evolution, *Millenium: Journal of International Studies*.

---

<sup>3</sup> ‘Prospects for Reconciliation, Theory and Practice, Yerevan, 2010’, p. 39

Govier, T.(2003). 'What is Acknowledgement and Why is it Important', *Dilemmas of Reconciliation: Cases and Concepts*, edited by Carol A. L. Prager and Trudy Govier, pp. 65-89. Waterloo, Ontario (Canada): Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Hakobyan, A. (2007). *Everything is Heading to Reconciliation*, Haykakan Zhamanak, January 24.

Kharatyan-Araqelan, H. & Neyzi, L. (2011). 'Prospects for Reconciliation, Theory and Practice: Proceedings of the International Workshop, Yerevan, 2010'. <http://anadolukultur.org/kitaplar/Prospects%20for%20Recon.EN.pdf>

'Protocol on Development of Relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Turkey' (2009). [http://www.armeniaforeignministry.com/pr\\_09/20091013\\_protocol.pdf](http://www.armeniaforeignministry.com/pr_09/20091013_protocol.pdf)

## **სამოქალაქო საზოგადოების როლი თურქულ-სომხური კონფლიქტის მოგვარებაში**

### ***არფი ათაბეკიანი, სომხეთი***

თურქეთსა და სომხეთს შორის ჩაკეტილი საზღვრის პრობლემის განხილვა და შერიგების პროცესი ოფიციალურად 2009 წელს თურქეთ-სომხეთის პროტოკოლის ხელმოწერით დაიწყო. პროტოკოლი მიზნად ისახავდა დიპლომატიური ურთიერთობების ჩამოყალიბებას და ორ ქვეყანას შორის მოლაპარაკების დაწყებას. ყველა მიიჩნევდა, რომ რამდენიმე თვეში საზღვრის გახსნა რეალობა გახდებოდა, თუმცა პროტოკოლზე ხელის მოწერისთანავე მოსაზრებები გაიყო ორივე ქვეყანაში, განსაკუთრების კი სომხეთში, პროცესი განუსაზღვრელი დროით გადაიდო და თურქეთიცა და სომხეთიც წლების წინანდელ მდგომარეობას დაუბრუნდა.

ყოველივე ამის მიზეზი გახდა ზოგიერთი გაურკვეველი განაცხადი პროტოკოლში. ეს ეხებოდა გენოციდის უარყოფასა და კულტურული მემკვიდრეობის დაცვის საკითხს. ასევე მნიშვნელოვანი როლი ითამაშა აზერბაიჯანის გავლენამ თურქეთზე რომ არ ეთანამშრომლა სომხეთთან ყარაბახის კონფლიქტის მოგვარებამდე. შედეგად პროცესი საბოლოოდ სომხეთის მთავრობამ შეწყვიტა.

დღესდღეისობით ორ ქვეყანას შორის არსებული მთავარი პრობლემა ჩაკეტილი საზღვარი და დიპლომატიური ურთიერთობების არარსებობაა. ასევე მწვავედ დგას გენოციდის აღიარების საკითხიც. ამ პრობლემის გადაწყვეტაში მთავარი როლი სამოქალაქო საზოგადოებას ეკისრება. მრავალი ახალგაზრდული ორგანიზაცია მუშაობს ამ კუთხით. ბოლო სამი-ოთხი წლის განმავლობაში ბევრი საინტერსო პროექტი შედგა, რომლებსაც დიდი მნიშვნელობა ჰქონდა სტერეოტიპების რღვევისა და ინფორმაციის გაცვლის პროცესში. მიუხედავად დადებითი და უარყოფითი მხარეებისა, ეს პროექტები უაღრესად მნიშვნელოვანია დაპირისპირებული მხარეების დასაახლოებლად.

ძველი ტრაგედიების ხელახლა განმეორების თავიდან ასაცილებლად აუცილებელია მათი წარმოშობის მიზეზების ძირფესვიანად გაანალიზება. ასევე მნიშვნელოვანია ტაქტიკური და სტრატეგიული დისკუსიები, რადგან სომხეთის შერიგების ინიციატივა ძალიან კონკრეტული და პრაქტიკულია, მაშინ როცა თურქეთის მიდგომა უფრო სტრატეგიულ ხასიათის ატარებს.

როგორც მრავალმა მკვლევარმა დაასკვნა, შერიგების პროცესი დამოკიდებულია ორივე მხარის აქტიურ თანამშრომლობაზე რადგან მხოლოდ ინფორმაციული ვაკუუმის ამოვსების შემდეგ იქნება შესაძლებელი ორი ქვეყნის ისევ დაახლოვება.

სომხეთისა და თურქეთის სამოქალაქო საზოგადოებამ უკვე დაამტკიცა, რომ ყოველნაირი ოფიციალური ურთიერთობების გარეშეც შესაძლებელია თანამშრომლობა, ურთიერთსასარგებლო თემების განხილვა და უკეთესი ურთიერთობების ჩამოყალიბება. ეს კი ორი ქვეყნის მთავრობას უფრო ეფექტური დიალოგისკენ უბიძგებს.

## TRACK TWO DIPLOMACY IN THE NAGORNO–KARABAKH CONFLICT: AN INFRASTRUCTURE FOR PEACE

*By Akhmed Gumbatov*

Since the break-up of the Soviet Union, the Wider Black Sea Region has increasingly attracted attention as an important hub of European security. A number of recent enlargements of the EU and NATO have brought the blocs directly to the Black Sea, making the area of primary concern to them. In addition, the region is an important gateway for NATO's access to Afghanistan. Finally, considering Europe's growing energy demands along with a willingness to decrease its dependence on Russian hydrocarbons, the Black Sea Region represents an alternative corridor to supply energy resources from the Caspian and the Middle East.

Despite the growing importance and attention to the region, the Black Sea area has continuously experienced a number of unresolved ethno-territorial conflicts. Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia, Transnistria in Moldova and Armenian occupied Nagorno–Karabakh in Azerbaijan all have a *de facto* independent status. The recent Russian–Georgian war of 2008 over Abkhazia and South Ossetia demonstrated the unsteadiness and vulnerability of the region's security architecture.

Remaining unsettled, the *frozen* conflicts have dramatically divided and impeded the development of the region. Instead of paving the way for cross regional partnerships, the states were forced to close the borders and undertake various isolation policies causing a dramatic socioeconomic and politico-military impact on the region. The resulting lack of a stable regional security system, means that it is impossible to entirely realize the area's geo-economic and transport potential.

Perhaps, one of the most bloody and intractable conflicts undermining positive developments the Black Sea Region has been the Nagorno–Karabakh war between Azerbaijan and Armenia. In this article, I will particularly focus on the conflict resolution process of the Nagorno–Karabakh problem from the perspective of unofficial diplomacy. I argue that current official governmental diplomacy adopted towards the resolution of the Karabakh conflict is inefficient, and is unable to address the problem. Without engaging informal, non-governmental actors in the resolution process, it is impossible to conclude a peace agreement and ensure its sustainable implementation.

In the Armenian–Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno–Karabakh, dating back in its modern form to 1988, international mediation has failed to bring about peace while the political leaderships of both countries are unwilling and unable to make

any concessions. Since a Russian brokered ceasefire was signed in 1994, Nagorno-Karabakh, while internationally recognized as Azerbaijan's territory,<sup>1 2</sup> has remained under Armenian occupation by de facto.

Prolonging the conflict harms both Baku and Yerevan, but each side hopes that the status quo will harm the other more. The Armenians assure themselves that prolonging the conflict will lead to the recognition of Karabakh by the international community and force Azerbaijan to accept the realities on the ground—that hope is enough for the Armenian establishment to close its eyes to the resultant catastrophic situation for the economy, demography, and development inside the country. So far however, no single state has recognized the independence of Nagorno-Karabakh.

In turn, the Azerbaijani side believes that the continued flow of oil money will allow the country to achieve a strategic offensive superiority which would enable it to solve the conflict at an appropriate moment. Nobody, however, can answer the question how long this situation can be sustained. It is not hard to see how a tense situation can devolve into conflict. Thus, Azerbaijan's military spending in 2011 exceeded \$3 billion, which is more than Armenia's entire budget.<sup>3</sup> Actually, compared to its relatively small \$130 million defense budget in 2003, Baku made the largest percentage increase in military spending in the world in 2011.<sup>4</sup>

Meanwhile, the conflicts can be seen as *Damocles' sword* hanging over the public in those countries, making them susceptible to manipulation. The governments, as well as the societies, are trapped in a vicious cycle of *no peace, no war* while this *frozen* conflict drains economic resources and political energies from their already weak, impoverished societies. In addition, the conflict and absence of cooperation undermines the path of the south Caucasian countries towards Euro-Atlantic integration.

To address the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, both Baku and Yerevan have traditionally prioritized governmental mediation and conflict management tools while downplaying the role of unofficial, non-governmental, channels. In the conflict resolution field, official governmental diplomacy is labeled as *Track One*, whereas *TrackTwo* diplomacy refers to the 'unofficial, informal interaction between members of nations, with the goals of developing strategies, influencing public opinion, and organizing human and material resources in ways that help

---

<sup>1</sup> Four UN Security Resolutions (822, 853, 874, 884) have been passed throughout the Nagorno-Karabakh war

<sup>2</sup> *Statement of the Co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group*, OSCE, <http://www.osce.org/mg/49564>

<sup>3</sup> *Nagorno-Karabakh Situation*, European Parliament Workshop 2012, June 12, 2012, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009\\_2014/documents/sede/dv/sede200612expertspresentations\\_/sed e200612expertspresentations\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/sede/dv/sede200612expertspresentations_/sed e200612expertspresentations_en.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*

resolve the conflict.<sup>1</sup>

Any peace agreement on Nagorno–Karabakh would require concessions from both sides. Considering the current mood among Azerbaijanis and Armenians, it will be extremely hard to compromise at the top level. Thus, according to the CRRC Caucasus Barometer survey, 70 percent of Armenians disapprove of friendship with Azerbaijanis, while more than 90 percent of the Azerbaijani population share the same feeling vis-à-vis Armenians.<sup>6</sup> Negative images of the enemy developed and promoted by bias state-controlled media have only reinforced the feelings of hatred and mistrust. As a result, for the young generation of Azerbaijanis and Armenians who have grown up after the 1990s, it will be difficult to overcome the stereotypes and images of *the other* that they have been fed for the last twenty years.

Further development of this animosity would detrimentally affect future generations and make settlement of the conflict impossible. In such a situation, any agreement establishing a compromising, definite solution will create dissatisfied masses willing to sabotage the peace process. As Stuart Kaufmann put it, ‘the fate of Armenia’s President Levon Ter-Petrossian, who was ousted when he tried to pursue a compromise peace in the Karabakh conflict, provides an object lesson for would-be peacemakers who get too far ahead of public opinion.’<sup>7</sup>

The current *Track One* approach adopted in the resolution of the Nagorno–Karabakh conflict has been and will be ineffective. Even if the leaders are ready to make any concessions, public opinion will constrain their capacity to compromise. The problem is that the conflict has stopped being a struggle for land—it has become an indivisible part of the political, cultural, and social development in both societies. To resolve the conflict and ensure its sustainability, reaching a peace agreement will never be enough. ‘Solutions reached through negotiation may be simply expedient and not imply any change of heart. And this is the crux of peace. There must be a change of heart. Without this no settlement can be considered secure.’<sup>8</sup>

Thereby, the Nagorno–Karabakh conflict, having deep roots in ideational factors with negative stereotypes vis-à-vis each other, should be gradually transformed at

---

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Montville, *Transnationalism and the Role of Track-Two Diplomacy*, eds. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1991

<sup>6</sup> *Will You Be My Friend? Gauging Perceptions of Interethnic Friendship in the South Caucasus*, Caucasus Research Resource Centres, October 11, 2010, <http://crrc-caucasus.blogspot.com/2010/10/will-you-be-my-friend-gauging.html>

<sup>7</sup> Stuart Kaufman, *Peace-building and Conflict Resolution in Nagorno–Karabakh*, PONARS Policy Memo 164, University of Kentucky, October 2000, [http://www.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/ponars/pm\\_0164.pdf](http://www.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/ponars/pm_0164.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse, Hugh Miall, *Contemporary conflict resolution*, Polity Press, 2010, Second Edition, p 217

all levels, including grassroots, i.e. *Track Two*. Without accepting and engaging informal actors, it will be impossible to rebuild the social capital, which in its turn will become an infrastructure for sustainable peace. As Diana Chigas stressed, 'Unless the middle and grassroots levels have the capacity and will to support and sustain peacemaking efforts undertaken at the top levels, repolarization of the conflict is likely when inevitable setbacks occur.'<sup>9</sup>

Unofficial groups of individuals can be engaged in many ways: workshops, seminars, academic exchanges, various training and advocacy activities, etc. Being with the *enemy* at breakfast, and meeting with them later at an unofficial evening event could dramatically re-humanize the conflict and help the participants to understand that they share similar values and feelings.

The European Union and the United States should be more active in supporting unofficial channels in the conflict settlement process of Nagorno–Karabakh. Although there are a number of West-supported initiatives, the impact of the NGO sector is far from satisfactory as their budgets remain limited.

Outreach and efficiency of peace building measures can be dramatically increased through various Internet based tools. Considering the fact that the youth increasingly spend more time on the Internet, online solutions can successfully target the younger generations of the respective countries.

Both Baku and Yerevan should realize that people-to-people diplomacy should be incorporated into the overall conflict resolution strategies. This will create a favorable ground among the populations at the grassroots level, which, in turn, will promote conflict settlement processes.

Actually, the people-to-people approach should be actively applied in all other conflict management strategies of the Wider Black Sea area. Although the conflicts vary from one to another, the dominance of the *Track One* diplomacy in the resolution process is obvious in the region. Considering the Black Sea area's relatively underdeveloped civil society, external assistance would play a crucial role in boosting cross border civil dialogue.

Finally, it should be noted that *Track Two* should not be taken as a replacement for official *Track One* diplomacy. On the contrary, grassroots initiatives should be an integral part of the overall conflict resolution process of the Nagorno–Karabakh and other conflicts of the Black Sea Region. Ideally, informal channels should prepare common ground for concessions from the elite, as well as ensure sustainable post-settlement development.

---

<sup>9</sup> Diana Chigas, *Track II (Citizen) Diplomacy*, Beyond Intractability, August 2003, <http://www.beyondintractability.org/bi-essay/track2-diplomacy>

In conclusion, a resolution of the frozen interethnic conflicts would eventually have an impact on democratic development in the countries of the Black Sea area. In the case of a successful solution, the countries of the region would be able to pursue development without external help. A failed resolution of the conflicts will consequently lead to the failure of democratization. It will create favorable conditions for the countries to slip into establishing strong autocratic regimes requiring arms races and harsh rhetoric. Such a situation in the region could ignite, one day, the beginning of a new, fierce war, the consequences of which are very hard to predict.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Diana Chigaz, 'Track II (Citizen) Diplomacy', *Beyond Intractability*, August 2003, <http://www.beyondintractability.org/bi-essay/track2-diplomacy>

Joseph Montville, *Transnationalism and the Role of Track-Two Diplomacy*, eds. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1991

*Nagorno-Karabakh Situation*, European Parliament Workshop 2012, June 12, 2012, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009\\_2014/documents/sede/dv/sede200612expertsresentations\\_/sede200612expertsresentations\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/sede/dv/sede200612expertsresentations_/sede200612expertsresentations_en.pdf)

Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse, Hugh Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*, Polity Press, 2010, Second Edition, p 217

*Statement of the Co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group*, OSCE, <http://www.osce.org/mg/49564>

Stuart Kaufman, *Peace-building and Conflict Resolution in Nagorno-Karabakh*, PONARS Policy Memo 164, University of Kentucky, October 2000, [http://www.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/ponars/pm\\_0164.pdf](http://www.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/ponars/pm_0164.pdf)

*Will You Be My Friend? Gauging Perceptions of Interethnic Friendship in the South Caucasus*, Caucasus Research Resource Centres, October 11, 2010, <http://crrc-caucasus.blogspot.com/2010/10/will-you-be-my-friend-gauging.html>

## **მთიანი ყარაბაღის კონფლიქტი და სახალხო დიპლომატია: მშვიდობის ინვრასტრუქტურა**

### **ახმედ გუმბათოვი, აზერბაიჯანი**

საბჭოთა კავშირის დაშლის შემდეგ ეთნიკური კონფლიქტები შავი ზღვის რეგიონის განუყოფელი ნაწილი გახდა. შექმნილმა გარემომ ქვეყნები აიძულა საზღვრები ჩაეკეტათ და იზოლაციონისტური პოლიტიკის გატარება დაეწყოთ რასაც მნიშვნელოვანი სოციალურ-ეკონომიკური დანაკარგები მოჰყვა.

სომხეთსა და აზერბაიჯანს შორის დაწყებული მთიანი ყარაბაღის კონფლიქტი 1988 წელს წარმოიშვა. ამ დროიდან მოყოლებული, კონფლიქტის მოგვარების ყველა საერთაშორისო მცდელობა მარცხით დამთავრდა, ხოლო პოლიტიკურმა ლიდერებმა დათმობებზე წასვლა ჯერჯერობით ვერ შეძლეს. როგორც ერთი, ისე მეორე მხარე ცდილობს მაქსიმალურად გააჭიანუროს კონფლიქტის მოგვარება. სომხეთს იმედი აქვს, რომ საბოლოოდ საერთაშორისო საზოგადოება მოახდენს ყარაბაღის აღიარებას, მაშინ როდესაც აზერბაიჯანი ხელსაყრელ მომენტს ეძებს რათა კონფლიქტის მოგვარებისთვის ძალისმიერ ხერხებს მიმართოს. ამაზე მეტყველებს ის ფაქტი, რომ ბაქო ყოველ წელს უზარმაზარ თანხას ხარჯავს შეიარაღებაზე (პრაქტიკულად, აზერბაიჯანის მიერ წელიწადში იარაღზე დახარჯული თანხა სომხეთის წლიურ ბიუჯეტს უტოლდება).

სამწუხაროდ, ვერც ერთი მხარე აცნობიერებს იმას, რომ გაყინული კონფლიქტი მათ სახელმწიფოებს უდიდეს ეკონომიკურ ზარალს აყენებს და ამავდროულად პოლიტიკურ რესურსსაც შთანთქავს. მოსახლეობის ცხოვრების დონის გაუარესებასთან ერთად მცირდება ევროატლანტიკურ სტრუქტურებში ინტეგრაციის შანსები. აღსანიშნავია, რომ სომხეთიც და აზერბაიჯანიც კონფლიქტის მოგვარების პროცესში მხოლოდ ოფიციალურ მოლაპარაკებებს – ტრადიციულ დიპლომატიას სცნობს, მაშინ როდესაც სახალხო დიპლომატია ყურადღების გარეშეა დარჩენილი. ეს უაღრესად მნიშვნელოვანია თუ გავითვალისწინებთ ორ საზოგადოებაში ერთმანეთისადმი დაგროვილ ნეგატიურ განწყობას. პოლიტიკურ მაგიდასთან რომ შედგეს კიდევც გარკვეული მოლაპარაკება, ორი ქვეყნის ოფიციალურ პირებს ნამდვილად გაუჭირდებათ მიღწეული შეთანხმების განხორციელება, რადგან მათი საზოგადოებები ერთიმეორისადმი უაღრესად არაკეთილგანწყობილია.

შესაბამისად, პირველ რიგში აუცილებელია ორ საზოგადოებას შორის მოხდეს „ყინულის გაღობა“, რაც როგორც წესი ხდება გაცვლითი პროგრამების, სემინარების, ტრენინგ-პროგრამების საშუალებით. კონფლიქტის მოგვარებაზე დადებითად აისახებოდა აშშ-სა და ევროკავშირის გააქტიურება. მართალია, უკვე მოქმედებს რამოდენიმე პროგრამა, მაგრამ მთლიანობაში არასამთავრობო სექტორი, სხვადასხვა მიზეზების გამო, ძლიერი არ არის. მთლიანი ყარაბაღის კონფლიქტის მოგვარებას უდიდესი მნიშვნელობა აქვს როგორც სომხეთის, ისე აზერბაიჯანისათვის. ეს ერთადერთი გზაა მომავალში სამხრეთ კავკასიის რეგიონის განვითარებისათვის.

# CROSS-BORDER AND CROSS REGIONAL COOPERATION FOR MENDING THE INVISIBLE DIVIDES

*By Tamar Gzirishvili*

## **Introduction**

The Black Sea region is an area which entails multiple cultures, an abundant amount of resources, and the potential to stand as a strong political actor on the global arena. The formation of a common vision for the region has a lot to do with the issue of borders, energy security, and economic interdependence. Unfortunately, the concerns that could serve as an effective method for enhancing the cooperation among the states of the Black Sea region serve as impediments as well. The military conflicts in the South Caucasus are an example of such obstacles. Since cross-border cooperation is not an end in itself, but a possible tool for fixing the problems of the region, cooperation among the states can play a pivotal role in transforming the existing conflicts. Such cooperation must be directed not at resolving the conflicts per se, but at building the capacity of the internal actors to engage in the conflict transformation themselves. Supporting the formation of a strong civil dimension, engaging the young professionals in the initiatives addressing the issue of the divided societies, and rising public awareness on the concerns that pertain to the conflicts is key to the positive transformation.

All three of the abovementioned changes can be brought about by increased funding from the international organizations in order to support new grassroots initiatives, by establishing communication among the civil society representatives across the borders of the Black Sea region, and by facilitating cross-border conferences, where the participants build the capacity to lobby in their own states for implementing government policies directed at the engagement of the conflicting parties, rather than isolation. Not only can this type of cross-border and cross-regional cooperation contribute to the transformation of the conflicts, it can also further enhance the ability of the region to establish itself as a strong and competitive area.

## **Unresolved Conflicts: Abkhazia**

The conflicts in Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Nagorno-Karabakh are not just tragic in their essence, they also serve as one of the biggest impediments to the mutual prosperity of the nations of the Black Sea region. As the Commission on

the Black Sea stresses, “the area’s unresolved conflicts retard economic development and have the potential to flare up into wider conflagrations.”<sup>1</sup> The existing conflicts spill over into the economic, political, social and cultural issues, and require an approach that tackles multiple matters concurrently. The ethnic identity component of the conflicts is important, particularly in Georgia’s breakaway region of Abkhazia.

Tensions in Abkhazia have persisted in the region throughout the 70 years of the existence of the Soviet Union.<sup>2</sup> Following its breakup, the eased control over censorship and Gorbachev’s liberal reforms in the 1980s gave way to the emergence of increased nationalism, thus spurring the appearance of separatist movements in the region. These separatist developments, combined with the civil unrest in Georgia, resulted in the war of the 1990s, which led to Tbilisi losing control over the Abkhazian region. As Russia brokered a ceasefire agreement between Sokhumi and Tbilisi, it also secured “under mandate from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)” the presence of Russian peacekeepers on Georgian territory “along the Enguri River separating Abkhazia from Georgia proper”, a spur to continuous tensions since then.<sup>3</sup> Even though no major instances of violence recurred in Abkhazia following that deployment, a true peace did not materialize. The dividing line between Abkhazia and Georgia proper remains closed, IDPs still reside in Tbilisi, economic engagement is almost non-existent, political dialogue is absent, and the societal gap between the Abkhaz and ethnic Georgian community is bigger than ever: “There is a whole new generation of young people who have grown up in the twenty years since the war and who have no experience of co-existence with Georgians.”<sup>4</sup> In pursuing a meaningful transformation of this conflict, collaboration among the countries of the Black Sea region might serve not only as an end in itself, but as a means to greater cooperation across the borders.

### **Multiple Layers to the Conflict**

It must not be forgotten that the Abkhaz conflict is not solely either an ethnic or a geopolitical dispute; it has aspects of both, and furthermore entails multiple layers within each. The first layer encompasses Abkhaz-Georgian relations, which is largely shaped by its ethnic component. At the second layer of the conflict,

---

<sup>1</sup> Commission on the Black Sea. “A 2020 Vision for the Black Sea Region,” ([www.blackseacom.eu](http://www.blackseacom.eu)): pg. 12

<sup>2</sup> Beaulieu, Kyle Alexander. *The Georgia-Abkhazia Conflict, Critical Factors Shaping the Present Stalemate*. University of North Carolina, 2008: p.1-51

<sup>3</sup> Lynch, Dov, *Why Georgia Matters*; Institute for Security Studies, 2006; pg. 19

<sup>4</sup> Akaba, Natella and Khintba, Irakli., *Transformation of the Georgian-Abkhaz Conflict: Rethinking the Paradigm*. Conciliation Resources and European Union, 2011; pg. 34

Russian-Georgian relations further define and extend the issue. This is most readily illustrated by the August war of 2008, when military clashes between the Russian and Georgian forces in South Ossetia resulted in the increased Russian military presence in Abkhazia, as well as the recognition of Abkhazia's independence by the Russian Federation.<sup>5</sup> At the third layer of the conflict, the dynamics of the relations between Russia and the West itself inevitably influences the course of development in the region. As many experts argue, the clearest example of such an influence was the Western recognition of Kosovo in 2008, which angered Russia and led to the Russian interference in South Ossetia, followed by the recognition of the two breakaway regions of Georgia: "During the August 2008 war in South Ossetia and in the subsequent Russian recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent states, Russian authorities repeatedly made explicit references to the 'Kosovo precedent' and consciously mimicked the rhetoric of NATO during the 1999 Kosovo war."<sup>6</sup> These three layers are intertwined, and any development at one layer inevitably affects the other two. For this reason, the efforts of the civil and political initiatives must be directed at all three levels of the conflict. Nevertheless, it is the first layer, the Abkhaz-Georgian dimension of the conflict, where the efforts across the borders can be utilized the most for a positive transformation of the region.

### **Georgian-Abkhaz Political and Civil Divergence**

The Georgian-Abkhaz alone aspect has many further considerations to it. There is the political element, where leaders decide the fate of future developments either unilaterally or at the Geneva talks. This dimension of the conflict involves issues concerning the political status of the breakaway regions, the signing of the non-use of force agreements, and an overall political strategy of Tbilisi towards Abkhazia (and South Ossetia). On the official level, the solutions often face a deadlock, largely due to the intransigent non-recognition of any authority in the breakaway regions by the officials in Tbilisi. An example of such a deadlock is the continuous demands of the Abkhaz and Ossetian leaders towards Georgia proper asking for the signing of a bilateral agreement on non-use of force. In 2010, Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili declared unilaterally at the European Parliament that Georgia would not use force against its breakaway regions. (Moreover, Georgia's Ministry of Internal Affairs and Ministry of Defense decided to reduce the number of Georgian forces around the breakaway regions in order to

---

<sup>5</sup> Ministry of Foreign of Foreign Affairs Republic of Abkhazia. "Bilateral treaties and agreements between the Republic of Abkhazia and the Russian Federation | The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Abkhazia."

<sup>6</sup> Nielsen, Christian Axboe. "The Kosovo precedent and the Rhetorical Deployment of Former Yugoslav". *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*; March-June 2009; pg. 171

justify the claim).<sup>7</sup> However, despite Russian and the separatist regions' insistence that Georgia should sign the agreements with Abkhazia and South Ossetia, no bilateral agreements have been signed aside from unilateral declarations.<sup>8</sup> Such bilateral agreements would be seen by Tbilisi as a step towards the formal recognition of the breakaway regions, and is thus avoided by all means.

In addition to the political element, there is also the civil aspect of the Georgian-Abkhaz layer of the conflict, where the civil society organizations engage in the initiatives that bring the divided Georgian community together. This second dimension brings the cross-border and cross regional cooperation aspects to the fore. As the issue of ethnic identity, along with the clashing perspectives of the Abkhaz and Georgian sides, seems to be at the core of the problem of this layer, creating a point of contact between the Abkhaz and Georgian society and eventually forming the common vision of history is pivotal to transforming perceptions of the conflict. As Tobias Greiff comments on the somewhat similar alienation of the societies in South Ossetia, without achieving post-war reconciliation among the South Ossetians and ethnic Georgians since the events of 2008 "no positive and sustainable peace can grow."<sup>9</sup> This requires a strong civil society, increasing the number of conferences on the issues related to the territorial disputes, and raising public awareness on the matters surrounding the societal divide. Interestingly, the limited efforts by Georgian and international NGOs are already in place but have a long way to go if the transformation is to be achieved.

### **Cross-Border and Cross Regional Dialogue**

International organizations such as the Conciliation Resources, the Berghof Foundation in conjunction with the International Center on Conflict and Negotiation, as well as individuals such as Susan Allan Nan at George Mason University launch continuous initiatives aimed at facilitating a dialogue between Abkhaz and ethnic Georgians, as well as Georgians and South Ossetians. Such a dialogue is a good example of the cooperation across the boundary lines, which attempts to bolster the involvement of the Georgian civil society in the transformation of the conflicts: "During the meeting, participants considered the current situation [and] various initiatives aimed at building understanding and

---

<sup>7</sup> Charap Samuel and Welt, Cory. *A More Proactive U.S. Approach to the Georgia Conflicts*. Center for American Progress, 2011

<sup>8</sup> International Crisis Group. "Georgia-Russia: Learn to Live like Neighbors" 2011; pg. 4-5.

<sup>9</sup> Greiff, Tobias. "South Ossetia - from a frozen to a hot conflict". *Politlounge*; pg.13.

trust between Georgian and South Ossetian societies.”<sup>10</sup> However, the initiatives are limited in number and scope. They are not well publicized, and are rarely the subject of discourse in Georgian society. Moreover, the participants are either the experts who have already established the contact with the ‘other side’, or the limited number of young individuals who are seldom encouraged to share their experience with the wider public. Thus, despite the benefit of the existence of such initiatives, the larger impact is lost. For this reason, more regional involvement of the countries of the Black Sea neighborhood might be the key to creating a bigger impact.

The transformation of the conflict at the level of Abkhaz-Georgian relations (where the societal divide is a complicating factor) requires a significant contribution from grassroots initiatives. As the political processes are complicated by the issue of status, a probability of military escalation in the conflict, and the legal aspects of the agreements, it is the civil society that needs to take the lead. The states of the Black Sea region cannot get involved directly into managing each other’s political affairs in the conflicts. However, they can contribute to the formation of a stable and strong civil society, and thus increase its capacity to get involved in the conflict transformation. Along with strengthening the civil society organizations, the younger generation, as well as the general public, must be encouraged to get actively involved in the issues surrounding the conflicts. Such mobilization of society requires:

- funding new initiatives directed at implementing confidence-building measures among the divided societies in the conflicting states
- creating stronger networks between the main civil society actors across the borders of the Black Sea countries in order to enable the exchange of information, resources, and experience regarding various projects
- facilitating discussion on the issues surrounding the territorial disputes by holding cross-cultural conferences regarding the conflicts in the region.

These measures can not only bolster the involvement of the young generation and the general public in the transformation of the conflict but also increase the capacity of the relevant civil society actors to impact at the political level by influencing government policies directed at the resolution of the conflicts.

---

<sup>10</sup> *Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution*, “Continuation of the Dialogue series ‘Point of View’ for Georgian-South Ossetian Mutual understanding and Trust”; June 22, 2010.

## Conclusion

As ethnic and territorial conflicts are endemic in the Black Sea region, Abkhazia being only the most publicized of them, establishing cooperation among the countries of the Black Sea region as well as cross-regional collaboration can be a first step towards creating commonly accepted approaches to similar conflicts. Disputes in South Ossetia, Abkhazia, Nagorno-Karabakh, and Transnistria are by no means identical. However, they do share to some extent certain issues: lack of economic engagement, political and social isolation, militarization, and self-determination agendas. By creating stronger ties among the civil society organizations in the countries of the Black Sea region, and by sharing the experience of previously successful projects, as well as the resources that the civil society organizations have at their disposal, effective approaches can be identified and pursued. This kind of cross-border cooperation among the civil society actors, if handled effectively, bolsters the involvement of the public, and increases the number of grassroots initiatives that aim at collaboration across the invisible divides. As the states of the Black Sea region have varying degrees of development at the civil level, cross-border cooperation will aid weaker states in forming a stronger overall civil society. Cooperation across the borders of the Black Sea region will not only be a desirable end in itself, it will become an effective tool that will enable the region to consolidate its potential as a prosperous and strong regional entity.

## შრტიერთთანამგრომლოზა უხილავი გარიერების დასამსხვრევად

### თამარ გზირიშვილი, საქართველო

შავი ზღვის რეგიონს გააჩნია საერთაშორისო მასშტაბით მნიშვნელოვან მოთამაშედ ჩამოყალიბების პოტენციალი, თუმცა მისი ეკონომიკური განვითარების მთავარ ხელისშემშლელ ფაქტორად რჩება კონფლიქტების არსებობა. მიუხედავად იმისა, რომ რეგიონის ყველა კონფლიქტი ინდივიდუალურია, მათი საერთო მახასიათებელია ეთნიკურობა. ეს კომპონენტი განსაკუთრებით მნიშვნელოვანია საქართველოს სეპარატისტულ რეგიონთან – აფხაზეთთან მიმართებაში.

აფხაზეთის კონფლიქტის მოგვარების გზებზე საუბრისას ყურადღება უნდა გამახვილდეს ერთ ფაქტზე: აფხაზეთის ომის დასრულების საქმეში შუამავლის როლი იკისრა რუსეთმა, რომელის დამოუკიდებელი სახელმწიფოების თანამეგობრობის (დსთ) მანდატით შევიდა აფხაზეთში და სამშვიდობო მისიის განხორციელებას შეუდგა. მართალია, მოდევნო წლებში ადგილი აღარ ჰქონია მხარეებს

შორის სერიოზულ დაპირისპირებას, მაგრამ რუსეთის არსებობა სეპარატისტულ რეგიონში მიზანმიმართულად და რეგულარულად ქმნის ორმხრივ დაძაბულობას, რაც ხელს უშლის კონფლიქტის რეალურ მოგვარებას და მხარეებს შორის მშვიდობის დამყარებას. თბილისსა და სოხუმს შორის პრაქტიკულად არ არსებობს ეკონომიკური კავშირი, არ მომხდარა იძულებით გადაადგილებულ პირთა დაბრუნება ძველ საცხოვრებელ ადგილებზე, არ მიმდინარეობს პოლიტიკური დიალოგი, ორი საზოგადოება ერთმანეთისგან სრულიად გათიშულია. ცხადია, რომ კონფლიქტის მოგვარების მხრივ წინსვლა არ შეიმჩნევა.

აფხაზეთის კონფლიქტზე საუბრისას ყურადღებაა გასამახვილებელი იმ ფაქტზე, რომ მოცემული კონფლიქტი რამოდენიმე ელემენტისგან შედგება. პირველი- ესაა თბილისისა და სოხუმის ურთიერთდამოკიდებულება, სადაც დიდ როლს თამაშობს ეთნიკური განსხვავებები. მეორე ელემენტია რუსეთ-საქართველოს დაძაბული ურთიერთობა, რის კარგ მაგალითსაც 2008 წლის რუსეთ-საქართველოს ომი წარმოადგენს. მესამე ფაქტორია რუსეთის დამოკიდებულება დასავლეთთან, მათ შორის დასავლეთის მიერ კოსოვოს აღიარების ფაქტი, რამაც რუსეთის გაღიზიანება გამოიწვია და რის შედეგსაც ამ უკანასკნელის მიერ აფხაზეთისა და სამხრეთ ოსეთის დამოუკიდებლობის აღიარება წარმოადგენს. აღნიშნული სამი ელემენტი ერთმანეთზეა გადაჯაჭვული რაც კიდევ უფრო ართულებს აფხაზეთის კონფლიქტის მოგვარების ეფექტიანი გზების ძიებას.

აღსანიშნავია ბოლო წლებში საქართველოს მცდელობა, სხვადასხვა ცალმხრივი ინიციატივებით გადადგას პირველი ნაბიჯი და წავიდეს დიალოგზე: მაგალითად, საქართველოს პრეზიდენტის განცხადება, კონფლიქტების მოგვარების მიზნით ძალის გამოუყენებლობის შესახებ. აქტიურობას იჩენს საერთაშორისო საზოგადოებაც: მათი ინიციატივით ხორციელდება სხვადასხვა პროექტი კონფლიქტის მხარეებს შორის დიალოგის წამოწყების მიზნით. სამწუხაროდ, მოცემული დიალოგები შეზღუდულ ხასიათს ატარებს, იშვიათად ხდება მათი გაშუქება და არასაკმარის გამოხმაურებას ჰპოვებს ფართო საზოგადოებაში. შესაბამისად აუცილებელია ამ კუთხით მეტი აქტიურობის გამოჩენა: პირველ რიგში, უნდა გაიზარდოს მსგავსი ინიციატივების დაფინანსება, რაც შესაძლებელს გახდის მივიღოთ რეალური შედეგი. სასურველია რეგიონში შეიქმნას ინფორმაციის, რესურსებისა და გამოცდილების გაზიარების ერთიანი სისტემა, რაც დიალოგის წარმოქმნის კარგ წინაპირობას შექმნის. და ბოლოს, საჭირო იქნება ტერიტორიული დავების განხილვისათვის ხელსაყრელი გარემოს შექმნა და მოლაპარაკებების ხელშეწყობა.

# THE GEORGIAN-ABKHAZ CONFLICT: REBUILDING THE TRUST AMONG DIVIDED FAMILIES OF GEORGIAN-ABKHAZ SOCIETIES

*By Lia Putkaradze*

## **Introduction**

This research paper will discuss a realistic approach for the de-facto integration of Abkhazia into the territory of Georgia by proposing the goal of rebuilding trust among divided families in the Georgian and Abkhazian societies. The positive long-term relationships and cooperation between Georgians and Abkhazians that would result could transform the region. In order to implement this initiative, this paper will look at building mutually beneficial relationships between the region countries, while opening a sustainable path toward progressive development of cross-border cooperation in the region. A brief historical overview of the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict will be evaluated, and different approaches to conflict resolution in the region will be elaborated thereafter.

Different legal frameworks and programs have been adopted in order to strengthen cross-border cooperation within the Black Sea region, such as the Black Sea Basin Joint operational program,<sup>1</sup> Black Sea Synergy,<sup>2</sup> Baltic Sea Basin<sup>3</sup> and Eastern Partnership programs<sup>4</sup>. Establishment of better cooperation assists the development of governance and institutional structures. However, countries within this framework of cross-border partnerships display different levels of combined resources, and this can undermine their mutual economic, political and socio-cultural development.

The Black Sea region contains numerous existing frozen conflicts: Transdnier in Moldova, Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia, and Nagorno-Karabakh in Armenia-Azerbaijan. The last twenty years within the region is characterized by aggressions in disputed areas that appears to deviate from the old Soviet models of society development, fashionable to Soviet analysts until the end of 1980s. (They responded to actual ethno-political conflicts by dismissing them as the processes of historical materialism unfolding in the West.)

---

<sup>1</sup> Black Sea Basin Joint Operational Program 2007-1013, <http://www.blacksea-cbc.net/>

<sup>2</sup> Black Sea Synergy Program, [http://eeas.europa.eu/blacksea/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/blacksea/index_en.htm)

<sup>3</sup> See the report of Baltic Sea Basin Program, [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/regional-cooperation/enpi-cross-border/programmes/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/regional-cooperation/enpi-cross-border/programmes/index_en.htm)

<sup>4</sup> See the webpage [http://eeas.europa.eu/eastern/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/eastern/index_en.htm)

American Phillip Wright characterized these regional conflicts as the confrontation of disparate social units within the whole. They pursue distinct aims, regardless of whether the aim in question is beneficial in the long run for the collective. In Wright's opinion these types of conflicts can be divided into four stages: 1.) their initial incompatibility; 2.) growing tension; 3.) mounting pressures without the use of force; 4.) and finally military intervention/civil war for the purpose of unilateral action. Each stage represents a change in the existing political dynamic. Additionally, each stage forces the sides to recalculate their interests.

Georgians and Abkhazians have lived in the same geopolitical niche, sharing a closely interwoven history. Indeed, they had forged a common political identity in previous eras. Nonetheless, Abkhazia was never merely a passive recipient of such political processes:

The significance of the Abkhaz role in the state union of feudal Georgia and the creation of a single Georgian kingdom in the 11th to 15th centuries is evidenced by the fact that many sources refer to this kingdom as 'Abkhazia', in which Georgians and Abkhaz shared many socio-political and cultural associations. However, in the 20th century, especially during the Soviet period, new social phenomena caused a rift in the previously harmonious relations between Georgia and Abkhazia.<sup>5</sup>

The deployment of troops led to a large-scale military conflict in 1992-1993, during which Georgia lost control over its autonomous republic. The war caused an exodus of the Georgian half of the population from Abkhazia and drastically changed the balance of power in the region. The Abkhaz side saw themselves as the victors, while Georgian authorities wanted revenge. Compromises which had been acceptable prior to the war were no longer tenable.

### **Of Unions and Secession**

"I am making the assumption that the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict is in essence a dispute about national self-determination and the desired status of the nations involved" – Dr. Oliver Wolleh.<sup>6</sup>

Wolleh's formulation casts the dispute as particularly modern, where two sides have different interpretations of their recent history and development that are

---

<sup>5</sup> EU-Caucasus Dialogue on Georgia-Abkhaz Relations: *Understanding Conflict, Building Peace*, November 2012

<sup>6</sup> Dr. Oliver Wolleh, M.Sc. in political science from the "London School of Economics and Political Science," PhD on peace-building strategies in Cyprus at the "Freie Universität", Berlin, Germany in 2000.

specific to their own situations. The Abkhazians had long sought their independence from Georgia. For our present purposes, the fall of the Tsarist Empire in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century inaugurates the most recent phase of this separatist history. Negotiations conducted at the time were unsuccessful, and Abkhazia formally became part of newly independent Georgia in June 1918.<sup>7</sup>

The 1921 invasion of Tbilisi by the Red Army ended Georgian independence and offered the Abkhazians a chance at independent recognition as the Soviet Socialist Republic of Abkhazia (SSR Abkhazia). This was formalized in March 1921, and they were given equal status with the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR Georgia). A few months later, in December 1921, a confederation agreement was concluded by these two union republics establishing military, political and financial union, but subordinating the Abkhazian SSR to the Georgian SSR in all three areas.<sup>8</sup> The Georgian view of the situation was that Abkhazia never stopped being a part of Georgia during the period of transition. By contrast, the Abkhazians held that the Abkhazian SSR existing between March and December 1921 had always held equal status to the Georgian SSR. The “Union Agreement”, which in the Abkhazian interpretation was imposed by force, was perceived by Abkhazians as further entrenchment of Georgian hegemony over them. In 1931 Abkhazia, still a *de jure* union republic, lost even this status and, in accordance with the Soviet hierarchy of nationalities, was downgraded to the status of an “autonomous republic” within the Georgian SSR.<sup>9</sup>

The military coup against the first President of Georgia after the fall of the Soviet Empire, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, took place in December 1991 and the rebel faction emerged victorious in January 1992, taking power in the form of a military council.<sup>10</sup> In July 1992 the Abkhazian leadership, in the absence of Georgian deputies, reinstated the draft Abkhazian constitution of 1925 and unilaterally

---

<sup>7</sup> Gerber, 1997; p.122. In the Abkhazian interpretation, Abkhazia was occupied by the Georgian army in June 1918. The “Abkhazian fight for independence” ended only when the Bolsheviks took control of Southern Caucasus and the Georgian SSR recognized the Abkhazian SSR (see Shamba, 2002). Today’s Republic of Georgia derives its legitimacy from the then Georgian Democratic Republic (see Nodia, 1999, p.20).

<sup>8</sup> Lakoba, 1999; Gerber, 1997, p. 123

<sup>9</sup> Oliver Wolleh, A difficult to Encounter – The formal Georgian-Abkhazian Dialogue Process

Distinction is made between three levels within the Soviet hierarchy of nationalities. *Union republics* had the highest status, followed by *autonomous republics* and *autonomous regions* at the lowest level. Each national group receiving the right to form one of these political units was called a “titular nation”.

<sup>10</sup> Tengiz Kitovani and Jaba Ioseliani, leaders of Gamsakhurdia’s former/disloyal presidential guard (“National Guard”) and the paramilitary group “Mkhedrionis” respectively, took part in the coup. It marked the start of an internal armed battle for power between Gamsakhurdia and his supporters on the one side and the rebels and later Shevardnadze on the other. Gamsakhurdia’s armed followers moved back to Mingrelia (Western Georgia) whilst Gamsakhurdia fled via Abkhazia to Armenia and later Chechnya.

declared that Abkhazia was no longer a part of Georgia.<sup>11</sup> This was naturally interpreted by Tbilisi as an outright declaration of secession.<sup>12</sup> In August 1992, Eduard Shevardnadze, the man who succeeded Gamsakhurdia, gave the order for Georgian troops to advance on Abkhazia. The official aim of this military action was ostensibly to protect the railway lines through Abkhazia from terrorism<sup>13</sup> and to free Georgian government officials who had been taken hostage<sup>14</sup>. Troops primarily comprising paramilitary groups advanced on the Abkhazian capital of Sukhumi. Even during this initial phase, the Georgian military and paramilitary forces committed serious atrocities against the civilian population. It is difficult to assess whether the attempted occupation of Abkhazia was the Georgian leadership's goal from the outset, or whether a lack of control of the heterogeneous Georgian military units led to independent action on their part.<sup>15</sup>

### **Demographics and War**

The war changed the demographic structure of Abkhazia drastically. Before the war, Abkhazia had a population of around 525,000, 45% of whom identified themselves as Georgian and 17% as Abkhazians. The remaining 36% of the population comprised of a variety of ethnic groups.<sup>16</sup> Around 250,000 Georgians left the autonomous republic during the ensuing war. In the years following the war, significant numbers of the population in Abkhazia emigrated. According to a UN study, the Abkhazian population stood at between 180,000 and 220,000 in 1998.<sup>17</sup> At the end of 2011, the Georgian government had registered about 236,000 IDPs displaced since the 1990s in areas under its control. (Legislative amendments at the end of 2011 narrowed its IDP definition further, to include only those fleeing an area occupied by a foreign state.) There were also an estimated 20,000 IDPs in

---

<sup>11</sup> The Abkhazians failed to push this draft through in 1925.

<sup>12</sup> Moeskes, 2000, p.39; Nodia (1997-1998, p.34 – 35) sees the Abkhazian reinstatement of the 1925 draft constitution as a counter-reaction to the fact that the Georgians had previously brought their 1921 constitution back into force.

<sup>13</sup> Kokeev, 1993, p. 14.

<sup>14</sup> Coppieters, 1999, p.8.

<sup>15</sup> Nodia, 1998, p.10.

<sup>16</sup> These figures are based on the 1989 census and show that the pre-war population of Abkhazia practically halved in the direct aftermath of the war. Besides the fleeing and displaced Georgians, other ethnic groups left the country during the war. Large parts of the Jewish population left for Israel and Pontian Greeks emigrated to Greece. Parts of the Russian and Armenian populations left Abkhazia as well. Last but not least also Abkhazians left the country. According to a 1998 UN Needs Assessment Mission, the Abkhazian population stood at between 180,000 and 220,000 at this time. However, Abkhazian sources claim that the number of Abkhazians in Abkhazia is higher presenting a figure of around 300,000 inhabitants (see Coppieters, 1999, p.19).

<sup>17</sup> Both the number of refugees and displaced persons cited above and the level of the pre-war Abkhazian population are disputed by the Abkhazian side, which presents a much higher Abkhazian population figure of 300,000 (see Coppieters, 1999, p.19).

South Ossetia. The number of IDPs from Abkhazia was unknown since their situation was never monitored; however, some 50,000 people who fled Abkhazia in the 1990s had returned to their place of origin in the Gali district in Abkhazia.<sup>18</sup>

IDPs from Abkhazia are potentially a valuable means to building peace within Georgian society. Surveys show that they generally favor pragmatic approaches to conflict resolution and are in favor of practical peace building and activities geared towards reconciliation. They are not a predominantly belligerent group: 59% believe the conflict cannot be resolved by force. A quarter of respondents, however, do not rule out the military option. Only 6% believe that the conflict can be resolved by force, while 20% think the conflict could be resolved by force as a last resort. At the same time, the majority supports bilateral conflict resolution activities between Tbilisi and Sokhumi. 59% would support signing a 'non-use of force' agreement with Abkhazia and 58% would support commencing negotiations with the *de facto* Abkhaz authorities about Abkhazia's status. If direct negotiations with the *de facto* Abkhaz authorities were to restart, only a quarter of the respondents would prioritize status discussions. Nearly half want issues of security along the ceasefire line to be addressed. Unrestricted travel of Georgians to Abkhazia scored low at a mere 24%. The issue of trade development between Georgian and Abkhazians scored only 5%. This latter statistic is particularly noteworthy, given that trade is generally believed to be a useful tool for building up cross-conflict contacts. Only 2% of Georgians cited trade as a motivation for visiting Abkhazia.<sup>19</sup>

### **IDPs and Trust-Building NGOs**

In response to such dismal statistics, one of the most effective tools towards promoting cooperation and partnership among divided families of Abkhaz-Georgian societies is to rebuild trust between IDPs and those living in Abkhazia. There is an NGO program based in Zugdidi in Georgia with the aim of uniting Georgian-Abkhaz families. It has links with a sister NGO program in Abkhazia and through their partnership they have managed to restore relationships between around 4,000 families. In a context of extremely weakened Georgian-Abkhaz dialogue at the governmental level, the key role should be played by civil society representatives and their efforts need to be increased.

---

<sup>18</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Center,  
[http://www.internal-](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpCountries)/F62BE07C33DE4D19802570A7004C84A3?OpenDocument&expand=2.1&link=19.2.1&count=10000#19.2.1)

[displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpCountries\)/F62BE07C33DE4D19802570A7004C84A3?OpenDocument&expand=2.1&link=19.2.1&count=10000#19.2.1](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpCountries)/F62BE07C33DE4D19802570A7004C84A3?OpenDocument&expand=2.1&link=19.2.1&count=10000#19.2.1)

<sup>19</sup> *Displacement in Georgia, IDP attitudes to conflict, return and justice*; Magdalena Frichova Grono; April 2011

Civil society has more freedom than government, [which is] such an important commodity in societies affected by conflict and stuck in narratives that demand conformity to zero-sum positions... Civil society actors involved in confidence building need to be integrated in the community and to work in coalition.<sup>20</sup>

In general, the public diplomacy needs to be re-activated in order not to lose its momentum and public interest and should serve as an actor providing wide participation of the society.<sup>21</sup>

### **Some Proposed Solutions**

The first step in addressing the situation on a governmental level is to reestablish the Black Sea Regional Forum for Dialogue and Partnership, which could foster dialogue among regional and extra-regional actors. Secondly, there should be a high level consultative group to challenge the underlying basis of the conflict. Additionally, a neutral international body for the monitoring of trade and financial flow in the region should be established. Better policies to improve the business environment and facilitate greater economic activity across the borders could be developed and launched. This must include successful cooperation among the NGOs from the conflicting sides.

Next, regular policy dialogues between relevant officials should be held, and EU representatives should be invited in order to emphasize defense of human rights and the enhancement of democracy. Liberalization processes should also be endorsed (including on issues such as discrimination by ethnicity and religion). It is furthermore necessary to draw attention to the importance of the Russian Federation's involvement in the negotiation processes and utilize EU decision-making experience with regard to the Baltic, the Balkans, and the Danube region.

Promoting interaction between different groups (especially youth, journalists, political experts) from conflicting communities and initiating dialogue between Georgian and Russian civil society actors remains a key policy. The involvement of civil society in defining the conflict resolution strategy means including civil society actors in the negotiation processes and providing transparency in decision-making. In addition, effective use of donors' resources by allocating funds towards income-generating spheres is necessary. Next, need-assessment research should be conducted with IDPs in order to determine their priorities, and to establish suitable mechanisms of projects. This involves free access to information

---

<sup>20</sup> *Civil Society and Confidence Building*, Marc Behrendt, Vienna, Austria, 30 May 2011

<sup>21</sup> *Civil Society Recommendations Georgia*, ENP MTR, Tbilisi 2009

and organizing different professional trainings (social enterprise; business operation; management, trade). Lastly, any successful project must strive to establish cooperation with the private sector.

## Conclusion

The conflicts have reached a level of protraction that demands long-term and multiple responses. Constructive conflict-transformation must be based on just and sustainable opportunities for development for all the communities involved. Neighboring big powers play an important role with respect to any settlement. Rebuilding trust among the divided Georgian and Abkhaz families can be an example for other countries to take responsibility for their futures into their own hands.

## აფხაზეთის კონფლიქტი: ურთიერთ ნდობის აღდგენა ქართულ და აფხაზურ საზოგადოებას შორის

### ლია ფუტკარაძე, საქართველო

ქართველებისა და აფხაზების ურთიერთობას მრავალსაუკუნოვანი ისტორია აქვს, მეტიც, ამ ორ ერს ერთ გეოპოლიტიკურ პირობებში უხდებოდა ცხოვრება და მათ საერთო თვითშეგნება აერთიანებდა. პრობლემები ქართველებსა და აფხაზებს შორის პირველად რუსეთში ცარიზმის დამხობის შემდეგ გაჩნდა. სამხრეთ კავკასიაში კომუნიზმის გავრცელების პირველ წლებში აფხაზეთს რესპუბლიკის სტატუსიც კი მიენიჭა (თუმცა რამოდენიმე წელში აფხაზეთს რესპუბლიკის სტატუსი ჩამოერთვა და ავტონომიად იქცა). 1992 წელს აფხაზეთმა ცალმხრივად აღადგინა 1925 წლის კონსტიტუცია და დამოუკიდებლობა გამოაცხადა, იმავე წელს საქართველოს იმდროინდელმა პრეზიდენტმა, ედუარდ შევარდნაძემ აფხაზეთში შეიარაღებული ძალების შეყვანის ბრძანება გასცა. დაიწყო აფხაზეთის ომი, რამაც რადიკალურად შეცვალა რეგიონის ძალთა ბალანსი. ძირეული ცვლილება განიცადა აფხაზეთის დემოგრაფიულმა სტრუქტურამ: თუკი აქ ომამდე მოსახლეობის 45 პროცენტს ქართველები შეადგენდნენ, ხოლო ეთნიკური აფხაზების პროცენტული მაჩვენებელი 17 პროცენტს არ აღემატებოდა, ომის შემდეგ განხორციელებული ეთნიკური წმენდის შედეგად ქართველები აფხაზეთში უმცირესობად იქცნენ.

არ შეიძლება არ აღინიშნოს ის დადებითი ეფექტი, რაც აფხაზეთის კონფლიქტის მოგვარებას ექნება არამარტო საქართველოსთვის, არამედ მთელი რეგიონისთვის. ამ კუთხით მნიშვნელოვანი ნაბიჯები გადაიდგა არასამთავრობო ორგანიზაციების დონეზე, რომლებიც ორიენტირებულია ქართული და აფხაზური

საზოგადოებების დაახლოებასა და ნდობის აღდგენაზე, მუშაობა მიმდინარეობს დაახლოებით 4000 შერეულ (ქართულ-აფხაზურ) ოჯახთან. ასეთი მიდგომა გასაგებიცაა: როდესაც პოლიტიკურ დონეზე დიალოგს შედეგები არ მოაქვს, მოლაპარაკებები შეიძლება გასცდეს ოფიციალურ დონეს და საქმეში ჩაერთოს ე.წ. „სახალხო დიპლომატია“.

რაც შეეხება სამთავრობო დონეს: კონფლიქტის მოგვარებისათვის აუცილებელია რამოდენიმე ღონისძიების გატარება. პირველი: აუცილებელია შავი ზღვის რეგიონალური ფორუმის დაარსება, რომლის ჩარჩოშიც მოხერხდება მხარეებს (როგორც რეგიონში არსებული, ისე საერთაშორისო სუბიექტები) შორის დიალოგის წარმართვა და ამ კუთხით თანამშრომლობა. მეორე: აუცილებელია საკონსულტაციო ჯგუფის ჩამოყალიბება, რომელიც იმუშავებს კონფლიქტის წარმოშობის მიზეზების სიღრმისეულ ანალიზსა და მათი აღმოფხვრის გზების მოძიებაზე. მესამე: უნდა წარმოიქმნას ნეიტრალური საერთაშორისო ორგანიზაცია, რომელიც დააკვირდება და გააკონტროლებს რეგიონში მიმდინარე ფინანსურ და ეკონომიკურ პროცესებს. ასევე: აუცილებელია კონფლიქტის მონაწილე მხარეებს შორის ბიზნესისა და ვაჭრობის განვითარების კუთხით აქტიური პოლიტიკის გატარება. საჭიროა ამ პროცესში არასამთავრობო სექტორის ჩართვა.

აფხაზეთის კონფლიქტის მოგვარების საქმეში დადებით როლს შეასრულებდა ლიბერალიზაციის პროცესის დაჩქარება, კერძოდ ევროკავშირის წარმომადგენლების მონვევა რეგიონში ადამიანის უფლებების დაცვისა და დემოკრატიზაციის პროცესზე დასაკვირვებლად. აქვე, გასათვალისწინებელია რუსეთის გავლენა აფხაზურ პოლიტიკაზე და შესაბამისად, გარდაუვალია რუსეთის ჩართვა მოლაპარაკებების პროცესში. დასასრულ, უნდა ითქვას, რომ ნებისმიერი კონფლიქტის მშვიდობიანი გზით მოგვარებისათვის აუცილებელია ისეთი შეთანხმების მიღწევა, რომელიც კონფლიქტის მონაწილე ყველა მხარისთვის მოგებიანი იქნება და მისცემს მხარეებს განვითარების საშუალებას.

# CONFIDENCE BUILDING AMONG THE YOUTH OF THE BLACK SEA REGION THROUGH VOLUNTEERISM

By Hovhannes Stepanyan

## Introduction

Volunteerism as a concept can be expressed in a number of ways, ranging from 'the use of or reliance on voluntary action to maintain an institution, carry out a policy, or achieve an end' to a theoretical basis for action that 'regards the will as the fundamental principle of the individual' and society.<sup>1</sup> Volunteerism has many other recognized definitions, some of which are collected below in Table 1, as formulated by various international organisations whose fundamental activities are based on volunteerism. However, for the purposes of this essay it is appropriate to concentrate on President John F. Kennedy's classic American formulation where volunteering is seen as a means of serving in the cause of peace by living and working in developing countries.<sup>2</sup> Although this statement was made in 1960 when the U.S. Peace Corps was being established, the concept it represents has proven itself an outstanding tool for promoting cross-border cooperation and regional integration. Consequently, it can also be applied to the current Black Sea region.

Youth has always been a decisive factor for building the future. This is recognized by all the governments of the world, as witnessed by numerous strategic programs aimed for youth development implemented both by the public and private sectors. One of the European Union's recent policy analysis papers emphasizes that 'youth is the future, and timely and effective investment in youth is the key to making that future prosperous, both economically and socially'.<sup>3</sup>

In view of the above, the terms *youth* and *volunteerism* jointly possess the capacity for constructing a new regional paradigm of cross-border understanding. One of the academic studies put out by Elsevier covering the impacts of volunteering concludes that youth volunteers, in comparison to adult volunteers, are more relationship oriented, thus creating higher levels of flexibility when choosing a

---

<sup>1</sup> Definitions of voluntarism at <http://www.bartleby.com/61/44/V0144400.html> and <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/voluntaristic>.

<sup>2</sup> As cited in the official website of U.S. Peace Corps [URL: <http://www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm?shell=about>]

<sup>3</sup> Barrington-Leach *et al.*, "Investing in Youth: an empowerment strategy", 2007 [URL: [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/policy\\_advisers/publications/docs/Investing\\_in\\_Youth\\_25\\_April\\_fin.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/policy_advisers/publications/docs/Investing_in_Youth_25_April_fin.pdf)]

model based on a number of confidence building measures.<sup>4</sup> As a result, a better harmonious environment is created for future developments, mutual understanding and accessibility.

### **Promoting Intraregional Volunteerism in the Black Sea Region**

Youth volunteerism has a uniting power, which is currently not fully utilised in the Black Sea region. The region itself encompasses a disjointed intersection of cultural, geopolitical and commercial interests where, unfortunately, the sense of commonality and ownership by the various nations of the region are not fully shared between each other. Its disharmony has been recognized on various levels. Neutral observers state that a strong, independent civil society in the Black Sea region has yet to develop, and that promoting civil dialogue among the youth will ensure greater impact of citizens on governance, development and security at regional level in the future.<sup>5</sup> Others extend this idea by recommending that the so-called ‘sophisticated youth’ of the Black Sea region be sought out and brought into closer dialogue.<sup>6</sup> The presumed objective of these dialogues is that, among other things, youth exchanges would intensify regional integration through re-enforcement of the reality that cooperation, solidarity, mutual responsibility and understanding are the cornerstones for ensuring democracy, peace and prosperity in the Black Sea region.<sup>7</sup>

Various volunteering programs around the world are being successfully implemented by spreading cultural understanding and peace among various nations. These programs are being carried out by various prominent organisations, some of which are listed in the table below, together with citations about their primary mission statement(s) on the concept itself.

---

<sup>4</sup> Haski-Leventhal D. et al., “Youth volunteering for youth: Who are they serving? How are they being served?”, *Children and Youth Service Review*, July 2007, Vol. 30, issue , pp.834-846.

<sup>5</sup> Assembly of European Regions [URL: [http://www.aer.eu/fileadmin/user\\_upload/SitePreserve/CBC\\_Project\\_idea.3.1.pdf](http://www.aer.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/SitePreserve/CBC_Project_idea.3.1.pdf)]

<sup>6</sup> In this context “sophisticated youth” means those young academics and young professionals who applied for various regional youth events and were selected according to their paper-proposals and outstanding ideas. Additionally, a further selection criterion of these people is their background and achievements, which show that these youngsters have the potential of becoming future leaders.

<sup>7</sup> Citation from *Black Sea Youth Forum Declaration*, 2-5 November 2008, Istanbul, Turkey

**Table 1: Various volunteering organizations and their definitions of Volunteerism**

	<i>Volunteering Organisation</i>	<i>Primary mission statement concept</i>
1.	United Nations Volunteers	Volunteerism is a powerful means of engaging people in tackling development challenges, and it can transform the pace and nature of development. Volunteerism benefits both society at large and the individual volunteer by strengthening trust, solidarity and reciprocity among citizens, and by purposefully creating opportunities for participation.
2.	U.S. Peace Corps	Volunteerism is serving your country [ <i>the United States</i> ] in the cause of peace by living and working in developing countries, <i>with the following three goals:</i> 1. Helping the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women. 2. Helping to promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served. 3. Helping to promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.
3.	European Voluntary Service	Volunteering should promote universal peace, dialogue, tolerance and solidarity; will contribute to building long-lasting and solid partnerships; should include exchange of youth work expertise and know how; should give the participants a better understanding of their own situations and cultures and help them explore their identities; should contribute to developing the voluntary sector and civil society.
4.	Global Volunteer Network	Volunteering is connecting people with communities in need, with a particular focus on vulnerable women and children by supporting the work of local community organizations.
5.	International Volunteer Programs Association	Volunteering is an opportunity to lend a hand to those who are working to improve life in their communities.
6.	International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement	Red Cross volunteers are united by their service and the feeling that in changing others' lives, their lives are also changed.
7.	Austrian Volunteers International	Volunteering is the involvement in people-centered development projects and programs in a wide range of countries by focusing on reducing poverty, providing health and education services, promoting human rights and gender equality, and protecting the environment.
8.	Volunteer Service Organisation (VSO UK)	Volunteerism is bringing people together to share skills, build capabilities, promote international understanding and action, and change lives to make the world a fairer place for all.
9.	Armenian Volunteer Corps	Volunteering is turning good intentions into meaningful action through a service that transforms the world.
10.	Teach and Learn with Georgia	Inviting English speakers to volunteer in Georgian schools and live in Georgian communities, serving as language teachers, communication partners, and cultural ambassadors with the purpose of improving the English language skills of Georgian students, teachers and families.

[Source: compiled from the official websites of the organizations listed in the table]

Among the various positive changes that the volunteers of these assorted programs have achieved, there is a clear indication that volunteerism has a real power behind it oriented towards tangible accomplishments and building bridges towards progress as understood in the classic Western sense. For example, an American Peace Corps volunteer in Georgia has developed and narrated four informational documentary films highlighting the history, landscape and attractions of her remote village, leading to an increased public awareness. This brought a great deal of attention to her village, leading to numerous positive changes outlined elsewhere.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, a United Nations volunteer assisted in updating village disaster mitigation plans in India, thus raising the emergency awareness actions for the local inhabitants.<sup>9</sup> Elsewhere, a German Red Cross volunteer facilitated an occupational life planning session for the young mothers in various regions of Eastern Europe, thus strengthening the gender balance in the local labour market.<sup>10</sup> A British volunteer from VSO closely worked with the regional government authorities in Peru, which led to the passing of an anti-discrimination legislation in the country.<sup>11</sup> There are of course similar success stories right across the spectrum that can be listed outlining similar aims and goals.

The definitions of volunteerism shown in the above table are at times broad and open-ended. There are, in fact, no single simple definitions of volunteerism that can be promoted with any universal certainty. This aspect varies even inside the organizations themselves, and such variations are also shaped by the perceptions of the individuals in each of the cases who participates in them. It is a highly flexible and dynamic concept in that sense, which translates into a vast resource of great strength in the expression of its ideals.

### **The Need for a New Youth Volunteer Organization**

Many other analogous organisations can be added to the list of volunteering organisations mentioned in Table 1. Nonetheless, it would not be possible to find a similar organisation which stably and successfully enables the youth of the Black Sea region to serve as volunteers in any one of the countries of the South Caucasus.

---

<sup>8</sup> *Peace Corps Times*, Issue 2, 2012, p.5

<sup>9</sup> *UNV in Action*, 2012, p.5

<sup>10</sup> Red Cross – EU office [URL: <http://www.redcross-eu.net/en/National-and-EU-activities/Red-Cross-Success-Stories/BeLeM-Occupational-Life-Planning-for-Young-Mothers/>]

<sup>11</sup> Official website of Volunteer Service Organisation, UK [URL: <http://www.vso.org.uk/story/33857/making-discrimination-illegal-in-peru->]

A successful proposed such organisation, which could provisionally be titled the Black Sea Regional Volunteer Corps, should be able to target the youth and early-career young professionals that are identified as future leaders and decision makers – the aforementioned sophisticated youth – and who display a potential to perform an integral role in promoting partnership among governmental, academic, civil society, NGOs, as well as many other overlapping layers in the region. Skill development, positive experience exchange and expansion of regional professional networking would be among the beneficial aspects of such an initiative.

Accordingly, such a program can be established by the goodwill and financial contributions provided by the governments of the Black Sea region, various foundations and trust funds, international organisations, EU funds, such as earmarked for the youth exchanges in the framework of European Neighbourhood Policy initiatives, etc. Such funds would finance the basic costs of the volunteers, regarding their travel, living allowance, orientation trainings, housing, and other such expenses.

However, due to government involvement, it would be prudent to make sure that states do not politicize such a suggested volunteer organisation in any way. The young volunteers of this type of suggested program would then achieve an excellent understanding of the Black Sea region free of political machinery, and with their work would contribute to the various aspects of regional development. Thereafter, in their future careers, in whatever capacity they choose to fulfil their roles in civil society, they would have broader understanding of the Black Sea region derived from actual experience and the complex reality of having participated firsthand in the process itself, and it is hoped that they would be able to express interesting ideas of regional cooperation and integration. The alumni of this program, due to their wider regional understanding, would have the capacity to distinguish and prioritize those national interests that align with Black Sea regional priorities, which in turn could serve as a backbone for elaborating harmonized regional developing strategies that would indeed be more realistic than those compared with existing ones.

One of the key objectives of such a proposed initiative could be the holistic focus on regional common values and mutually acceptable interests and behaviour, instead of concentrating on nationalistic differences, narrow interests and state-oriented ambitions. In this respect, the European Union itself can furnish an outstanding example. Moreover, this initiative can evolve the emergence of regional joint symbols, such as a flag, anthem, landmarks and characteristics,

which would have the capacity to strengthen the regional common identity of the people and pave the way towards mutually beneficial cooperation and synergies.

Indeed, the Black Sea region is not only limited to its maritime countries, but also includes the neighbouring landlocked states and regions, that are incorporated socially, economically and politically. Consequently, the European Union considers the Black Sea region as an integral area, inclusive of its maritime and inland regions, and maintains a dynamic regional partnership policy.<sup>12</sup> In this light, for the success of future EU and Black Sea regional cooperation, it is imperative that the countries of the Black Sea region see themselves as an integrally united area.

## **Conclusion**

The Black Sea region, which is mostly seen as a developing region that needs permanent external investments for its further development, can accumulate enough financial means, both from its internal and external financial sources, for implementing the joint projects of regional significance, which could unite the people of the region, as well as build regional trust, such as through the operation of the aforementioned Black Sea Volunteer Corps. The prioritisation of regional interests is the key towards achieving the desired regional prosperity. This, in turn, can be reached through open dialogue, mutual tolerability, cultural dialogue and constant peace. In this respect, any type of youth-oriented initiative that would provide skill-building and hands-on experience for regional understanding should be actively promoted. This can be achieved through the suggested volunteering program which would serve as a soft-diplomacy tool where, through its participants volunteering activities, host communities would benefit from closer interaction, increased mutual cultural comprehension and dynamic achievements.

The placement sites of the volunteers can be established based on detailed asset mapping, conducted jointly by the academic and civil society, NGOs, media, and governmental organisations. These organizations would collectively identify the strengths of the applicant volunteers and would carry out a needs-based analysis. The volunteers, either individually or with a group of mixed nationalities, would visit these sites, reside there for a defined period, and carry out their work in cooperation with the host country's nationals for the benefit of peace, development and partnership. Such activities could be conducted all around the Black Sea region by the people of the Black Sea region themselves.

---

<sup>12</sup> Commission of the European Communities 2007 – *Black Sea Synergy: A New Regional Cooperation Initiative* [URL: [http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/com07\\_160\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/com07_160_en.pdf)]

## **შავი ზღვის რეგიონის ახალგაზრდობას შორის ნდობის აღდგენა მოხალისეობის ინსტიტუტის საშუალებით**

### **ჰოვანეს სტეფანიანი, სომხეთი**

მოხალისეობა და ვოლუნტარიზმი მრავლისმომცველი დინამიური ცნებაა. ის გულისხმობს ნებაყოფილობით ქმედებას ამა თუ იმ პოლიტიკური კურსის ხელშესაწყობად თუ ეკონომიკური და სოციალური მიზნების მისაღწევად, თუმცა ძირითადი აზრი ერთია - ადამიანის ნების გადამწყვეტ ფაქტორად აღიარება.

მოხალისეობა მჭიდრო კავშირშია ახალგაზრდობასთან, რადგან ახალგაზრდების ვოლუნტარიზმს გამაერთიანებელი ძალა გააჩნია, ეს შესაძლებლობა ჯერ-ჯერობით სრულად არაა გამოყენებული შავი ზღვის რეგიონში, რადგან არ არსებობს ისეთი ორგანიზაცია, რომელიც საშუალებას მისცემს შავი ზღვის რეგიონის ახალგაზრდობას სტაბილურად და წარმატებულად იმსახურონ, როგორც მოხალისეებმა სამხრეთ კავკასიის ქვეყნებში. თუმცა შესაძლებელია მსგავსი ორგანიზაციის შექმნა, რომლის მიზანი იქნება იმ ახალგაზრდა პროფესიონალების მოზიდვა, რომლებიც მომავალი ლიდერები არიან და აქვთ პოტენციალი ხელი შეუწყონ სამთავრობო, აკადემიურ, სამოქალაქო და არასამთავრობო ორგანიზაციებს შორის თანამშრომლობას. ასეთი ინიციატივების ძირითადი მიზანი უნდა იყოს საერთო ღირებულებებისა და ინტერესების ხაზგასმა და არა ეროვნულ განსხვავებებზე კონცენტრირება.

შავი ზღვის რეგიონი მუდმივ საგარეო ინვესტიციებს საჭიროებს განვითარებისთვის. შესაბამისად, მოხალისეთა პროგრამები შეიძლება დაარსდეს შავი ზღვის რეგიონის მთავრობების, ასევე სხვადასხვა ფონდების, საერთაშორისო ორგანიზაციებისა და ევროკავშირის ფონდების კეთილი ნებითა და ფინანსური ხელშეწყობით. თუმცა ამ ინიციატივებში მთავრობების ჩართულობის გამო აუცილებელი იქნება მუდმივი კონტროლი, რათა ეს ორგანიზაციები არ გახდნენ პოლიტიკურად მიკერძოებულები.

ნეიტრალური დამკვირვებლების აზრით, შავი ზღვის რეგიონში უნდა განვითარდეს ძლიერი და დამოუკიდებელი სამოქალაქო საზოგადოება. რეგიონის ქვეყნების ახალგაზრდობას შორის დიალოგი კი ხელს შეუწყობს ისეთი სამოქალაქო საზოგადოების ჩამოყალიბებას, რომელიც გავლენას მოახდენს სამოქალაქო მმართველობაზე და გააძლიერებს რეგიონალურ ინტეგრაციას. ასევე ხელს შეუწყობს იმის გათავისებას, რომ თანამშრომლობა, თანაგრძნობა, პასუხისმგებლობა და ურთიერთგაგება შავი ზღვის რეგიონში დემოკრატიის განვითარებისა და მშვიდობის შენარჩუნების ქვაკუთხედს წამოადგენენ. დროული და ეფექტური კაპიტალდაბანდება ახალგაზრდობაში გადამწყვეტი ფაქტორია რეგიონის სამომავლო ეკონომიკური და სოციალური განვითარებისთვის.

# WATER MANAGEMENT IN THE KURA-ARAS RIVER BASIN AS A PLATFORM FOR CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS

By Yana Zabanova

## Introduction

As a region, the South Caucasus is more aptly characterized by its many dividing lines, rather than by its unifying factors. In the two decades since Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia gained independence from the Soviet Union, the region's three unresolved territorial conflicts have grown even more intractable. Today, closed borders and diverging geopolitical orientations dominate the political landscape, while people-to-people contacts across the conflict lines are very rare. Although the South Caucasus has attracted growing attention from the West and regional powers like Russia, Turkey and Iran, the issues that have been prioritized by these external actors, namely energy and security, are highly divisive in themselves.

This essay will focus on the potential of using alternative, "soft" issues such as environmental protection and water management as a platform for cross-border cooperation in the South Caucasus. By virtue of geography, a suitable object for such cooperation in the region would be the water resources of the Kura-Aras (Araks) river basin, which covers most of the territory of the South Caucasus. History shows that cooperation in the area of water management can be successful even in the context of political conflict and war. This was the case, for example, with Jordan and Israel's "Picnic Table talks" (1950's) on the use of the Jordan River's waters. In Southeast Asia the Mekong Committee, established in 1957, succeeded in coordinating water development among Lower Mekong nations such as Laos, Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam, even throughout the Vietnam War.<sup>1</sup> Another positive example is the Indus River Commission which survived two wars between its members, India and Pakistan.<sup>2</sup> Certainly, in each of these cases water issues were so important that all sides realized the necessity to negotiate an agreement. This is not yet the case in the South Caucasus today, where environmental issues are viewed as of lower importance. Nevertheless, the attention to the problems of the Kura-Aras basin is expected to increase in the future, given the growing levels of water pollution and the accelerating impact of climate change. While environmental cooperation alone will not solve the region's conflicts, it may become a valuable exercise in bringing together scientists, civil

---

<sup>1</sup> Jeffrey W. Jacobs, "Mekong Committee History and Lessons for River Basin Development," *The Geographical Journal*, vol. 161, issue 2, July 1995, p. 135.

<sup>2</sup> Alexander Carius, "Environmental Peacebuilding", Study commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), January 2006, Adelphi Consult, Berlin, p. 12.

society groups, young people and local communities to jointly address a shared problem.

### **Kura-Aras basin: importance and key issues**

The transboundary Kura-Aras basin has a surface area of some 188,000 sq km, covering the entire territory of Armenia, over 60% of Azerbaijan and most of Eastern Georgia, as well as parts of northwest Iran and northeast Turkey (the latter is where both rivers originate). The Kura, 1364 km in length, flows through Georgia and Azerbaijan into the Caspian Sea. The Aras is 1264 km long and is the Kura's largest tributary. It flows from Turkey and forms the natural border between Turkey and Armenia, Iran and Armenia and Iran and Azerbaijan. The two rivers join in Azerbaijan.<sup>3</sup>

The Kura-Aras basin is vital for the entire South Caucasus region, providing water for agriculture, industry, and power generation, as well as drinking water. Despite its relatively modest share in the economies of the South Caucasus republics, agriculture alone uses up two-thirds of the basin's available water resources. There are some differences, too: Armenia and Georgia use most of the basin's water resources for irrigation and industrial needs, whereas Azerbaijan relies on the two rivers for half of its drinking water and 60% of its irrigation needs. The water resources of the basin are also used for hydropower generation, with the region's largest dam located on the Kura River at Mingechevir, Azerbaijan.<sup>4</sup>

One of the key problems affecting all South Caucasus riparian states – and the Caspian Sea, in which the Kura and Aras flow – are high pollution levels in the basin. These are caused by untreated municipal and industrial wastewater, heavy pesticide and fertilizer use, and mining activities leading to metal contamination.<sup>5</sup> Wastewater treatment plants are few and technically obsolete. Water pollution has a more severe impact on Georgia and especially Azerbaijan, since they are located downstream and thus are more dependent on their neighboring states for water resources. In addition, the accelerating process of climate change is expected to lead to further deterioration of water quality and availability in the Kura-Aras basin as a result of rising average temperatures and decreasing annual precipitation volumes.<sup>6</sup>

The benefits to be derived from regional cooperation in the area of improving water quality are clear. However, there are presently no regional agreements and no permanent intergovernmental body governing water management issues

---

<sup>3</sup> German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and KfW Development Bank, "Adaptation to Climate Change in the Kura-Aras River Basin: River Basin Snapshot", September 2010.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

among the South Caucasus states. During the Soviet period, there were two major water treaties focusing on the Kura-Aras basin: the 1927 treaty between the USSR and Turkey agreeing on a 50/50 use of all shared waters and establishing a joint boundary water commission, and the 1957 bilateral agreement between the USSR and Iran on the use of the Aras River waters. Having gained independence in 1991, the three South Caucasus republics have so far failed to sign such an agreement among themselves.

### **Cooperation as a solution?**

An optimal way to manage pollution and water use issues in the Kura-Aras basin would be to sign an intergovernmental agreement, establish a special permanent water commission, and introduce the so-called system of "river basin management," which views the river basin as a natural geographical and hydrological unit, regardless of political and administrative boundaries. This best-practice system features a regularly updated "river basin management plan" that provides a framework for monitoring and coordination activities. Such an approach is already in use in Western European transboundary river basin districts, including the Maas/Meuse, Scheldt/Schelde and Rhine basins.<sup>7</sup> While it is preferable that the impulse for deepening water cooperation come from within the region, given the realities of the South Caucasus, it is clear that for now this responsibility will have to be taken by an external actor acceptable to all parties, such as the EU or some other international organization.

Over the past decade, the problems of the Kura-Aras basin have been addressed, both directly and indirectly, in a number of initiatives and projects funded by Western donors, including UNDP, USAID, the EU, NATO, OSCE, and others. Despite some positive outcomes, a lasting solution for managing the Kura-Aras river basin - in the form of a regional agreement and a permanent intergovernmental water commission- has not yet become reality. Another problem has been the short-term, ad hoc nature of the projects which usually lasted for several years only, with little or no follow up provided. Combined with the multiplicity of donors, the short-term format resulted in the partial duplication of efforts and diluted the projects' visibility and impact. For instance, in 2004, USAID launched a four-year South Caucasus Water Program aimed at improving the management of shared water resources. In parallel, the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC), which is a partnership platform of six international organizations, implemented the South Caucasus River Monitoring program, which was completed in 2008. While both USAID's and ENVSEC's projects produced valuable data and encouraged cooperation among technical experts, they did not manage to establish a permanent body responsible for river

---

<sup>7</sup> European Commission, „Introduction to the new EU Framework Directive,” [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/info/intro\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/info/intro_en.htm)

monitoring, nor did they succeed in engaging senior policy officials from the three South Caucasus countries.<sup>8</sup>

Some efforts were undertaken by the European Union, which implemented the project “Transboundary River Management Phase II for the Kura River basin” (2008-2010). The project’s aim was to establish a system of transboundary monitoring and information management, as well as to train staff from national environmental ministries and to raise public awareness on water quality issues. Yet another institution active in the area of water management this area has been the UNDP: from 2005 until 2007, it implemented a project on reducing transboundary degradation in the Kura/Aras River Basin, bringing together experts from the region and publishing national and regional reports on the issue. More recently, from 2008 until 2011, the UNDP implemented a 2.9 million USD project entitled “Regional Partnership for Prevention of Transboundary Degradation of the Kura-Aras River” financed by the Global Environment Facility. The project produced a draft strategic action program outlining a long-term approach to river management and policy recommendations at the national and regional levels.

### **Using the existing EU Water Framework Directives to achieve results**

In order to address the issue of water quality in the Kura-Aras river basin more effectively, it is necessary to move away from short-term, stand-alone projects towards a more sustainable, long-term format which would also envision setting up a regional coordination body. This is where the EU, which has been promoting water cooperation within its own borders, is beginning to play a more active role. In 2000, the EU adopted the so-called Water Framework Directive (EU WFD), which calls for introducing water management systems based on river basins. For European states, WFD contains clear milestones and a timeline. Given that WFD was formulated on the basis of best practices in the area of water management, its objectives and milestones can be used, with minor modifications, for ENP countries including Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. One of the current projects implemented by the Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus (REC Caucasus), one of the most authoritative, independent non-profit environmental organizations in the region, focuses on developing national road maps on sustainable management of the Kura-Aras river basin. The idea is to incorporate the EU Water Framework Directives into ENP National Action Plans, as well as to establish a regional coordination body which would meet regularly to track progress on the road maps.<sup>9</sup> This approach has several benefits: it uses the

---

<sup>8</sup> Anja Wittich and Achim Maas, “Regional Cooperation in the South Caucasus: Lessons for Peacebuilding, from Economy and Environment”, Adelphi Research, April 2009, p. 19.

<sup>9</sup> Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus, “Creation of Enabling Environment for Integrated Management of the Kura-Aras Transboundary Rivers Basin”, <http://www.rec-caucasus.org/profile.php?id=1315224097&lang=en>

existing best practices as formulated in the EU WFD and introduces them in the already existing institutional framework, such as the European Neighbourhood Policy; it builds on the generally positive attitudes towards the EU which exist within the region – and which may help bring senior officials on board; it envisions the creation of road maps and setting up a body entrusted with monitoring and follow-up, which could help engender a healthy spirit of competition among the participating states. As part of the ENP National Action Plans, the Water Directive road maps would be periodically discussed with EU representatives and thus gain greater importance visibility. Finally, the REC Caucasus, the institution entrusted with helping develop the national road maps, is a recognized independent organization with an established reputation and accumulated expertise on environmental issues (REC Caucasus was established in 1995 and brings together representatives of all South Caucasus countries).

## **Conclusion**

The transboundary Kura-Aras river basin covers most of the territory of the South Caucasus and plays a vital role in providing the region with water resources for agricultural, industrial, and power generation use. At the same time, the basin's water resources suffer from high pollution levels, which endanger communities across the region. The ongoing process of climate change is expected to further exacerbate the problem. The best way to address the water quality problem would be to create an agreement on water use, set up a regular monitoring body, and to use the best practice in river basin management as developed in the EU Water Framework Directive. While many international organizations have implemented projects on river monitoring in the South Caucasus, they have mostly been short-term, ad hoc, and lacked the involvement of the highest levels of political leadership. The current project implemented by the REC Caucasus has a potential to avoid these shortcomings, introducing the principles of the EU Water Framework Directives into an existing institutional infrastructure of the European Neighborhood Policy.

## **წყლის რესურსების მართვა მტკვრისა და არაქსის აუზში – კლათფორმა საზღვრისპირა თანამშრომლობისთვის სამხრეთ კავკასიაში**

**იანა ზაბანოვა, რუსეთის ფედერაცია**

გარემოს დაცვა და წყლის რესურსების სწორად მართვა სამხრეთ კავკასიაში ეფექტური საზღვრისპირა თანამშრომლობის გარანტია, რადგან როგორც ისტორია გვიჩვენებს თანამშრომლობას წყლის მართვის სფეროში დადებითი შედეგი მოაქვს, მიუხედავად პოლიტიკური კონფლიქტებისა და ომისშედეგში გართულებებისა.

გეოგრაფიული მდებარეობიდან გამომდინარე, თანამშრომლობისთვის ყველაზე შესაფერისი ობიექტი მტკვრისა და არაქსის აუზია, რომელიც სამხრეთ კავკასიის ტერიტორიის უმეტეს ნაწილს მოიცავს და სასიცოცხლო როლს ასრულებს სასოფლო-სამეურნეო სავარგულების, ინდუსტრიული ობიექტებისა და ელექტროენერჯის წარმოებისთვის საჭირო წყლის რესურსების მიწოდებაში, ასევე სასმელი წყლით მომარაგებაში. ამავდროულად აღსანიშნავია, რომ მტკვრისა და არაქსის აუზი განიცდის მალალი ხარისხის დაბინძურებას, რაც საფრთხეს უქმნის რეგიონის მოსახლეობას. კლიმატის ცვლილება კი სავარაუდოდ უფრო გაამწვავებს არსებულ პრობლემას.

მტკვრისა და არაქსის აუზში დაბინძურების ხარისხისა და წყლის რესურსების გამოყენების სამართავად ყველაზე ოპტიმალური გზა მთავრობათაშორისი ხელშეკრულების გაფორმებაა, ასევე აუცილებელია რეგულარული მონიტორინგის განმახროციელებელი ორგანოს შექმნა და ევროკავშირის გამოცდილების გამოყენება. თუმცა ბევრმა საერთაშორისო ორგანიზაციამ უკვე განახორციელა პროექტები სამხრეთ კავკასიაში მდინარის წყლის მონიტორინგზე, მიუხედავად ზოგიერთი პოზიტიური შედეგისა ეს პროექტები ძირითადად უპერსპექტივო და მოკლე-ვადიანი აღმოჩნდა. ერთ-ერთი დამაბრკოლებელი ფაქტორი იყო პოლიტიკური ნების ნაკლებობა. მტკვრისა და არაქსის აუზში წყლის ხარისხის პრობლემის გადასაჭრელად აუცილებელია არა მოკლე-ვადიანი განყენებული პროექტები, არამედ უფრო მდგრადი და გრძელვადიანი ფორმატი, რომელსაც რეგიონალური საკოორდინატორი ორგანო უხელმძღვანელებს. სასურველია თანამშრომლობის გარმავეების სურვილი რეგიონის ქვეყნებიდან მოდიოდეს, თუმცა სამხრეთ კავკასიის რეალობის გათვალისწინებით ნათელია, რომ ამჟამად ეს პასუხისმგებლობა თავის თავზე ისეთმა საერთაშორისო აქტორმა უნდა აიღოს, რომელიც მისაღები იქნება ყველა მხარისათვის, სწორედ აქ შეუძლია ევროკავშირს მნიშვნელოვანი როლის შესრულება.

წყლის მართვის სფეროში მიღწეული წარმატებები საზღვრისპირა თანამშრომლობას ჩაუყრის საფუძველს და მნიშვნელოვანი იქნება რეგიონის სამომავლო განვითარებისთვის.

## AUTHOR'S BIOS

### **Dr. Jakub Forst-Battaglia, Austria**

Ambassador Jakub Forst-Battaglia, is an Austrian career diplomat and presently works as a Director, of Austrian Cultural Forum Kiev, Ukraine. He studied History and Slavonic Philology (PhD 1975), before entering the Austrian Foreign Ministry as a lecturer at Vienna University, researcher with the Austrian Academy of Sciences, free lancer with ORF/Austrian Broadcast and TV, author of books and articles on Poland, Hungary, the Habsburg Empire, Central and East European questions. Diplomatic posts in Moscow, Madrid, Prague and Tallinn (Austrian Ambassador to Estonia from 2001 to 2006. At the Ministry in Vienna, among others between 2006 and 2011 Special Coordinator for South Eastern Europe, The Danube Basin and the Black Sea Region with the Directorate General for Cultural Policy.

### **Dr Oskar Wawra, Austria**

Dr Oskar Wawra was born on 10 October 1950 in Vienna. He holds a law degree of the University of Vienna and later completed post graduate studies in International Relations at the Johns Hopkins University in Bologna. He worked as officer on legal matters for the Austrian Constitutional Court and for the Vienna Chamber of Commerce and Industry. From 1983, he was secretary and later director of the People's Party caucus in the Vienna City Council. From 1991 to 1997 he was member of the Vienna Provincial Diet and City Council. Since 1997 Dr Wawra is Vice President of the Federation of Austrian-Foreign Societies, an honorary function, which includes 112 bilateral friendship societies. Since 1998 Dr Wawra is Head of the Chief Executive Office — European and international Affairs and Executive Director for International Relations of the City of Vienna

### **Anastasiya Stelmakh, Ukraine**

Anastasiya Stelmakh is a graduate of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv (Ukraine), where she got BA and MA in International Relations. Currently, she is enrolled in PhD Programme in the Middle East Technical University in Turkey. She is active participant of various events dedicated to Black Sea issues, among others Harvard Black Sea Security Program. Areas of interest: Black Sea cooperation, security, energy in CIS. PhD thesis topic: 'Ukraine's energy policy and its energy cooperation with EU under Viktor Yanukovich'.

### **Lia Putkaradze, Georgia**

Lia Putkaradze has earned Bachelor of Science Degree in International Relations from the American University for Humanities, Tbilisi Campus. She is the recipient of Global Undergraduate Exchange Program scholarship from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of US Department of State, and has spent a year in Utica College, majoring in International Relations. She is currently employed at the Alliance Group, holding on the position of Corporate Communications Assistant. At the same time, she is the project coordinator at the philanthropic fund which was established by the company.

### **Hovhannes Stepanyan, Armenia**

Hovhannes Stepanyan works at U.S. Peace Corps Armenia as Regional Manager. He has also extensive past work experience with public sector in the area of international cooperation in the fields of transport, communications and information technologies. Hovhannes holds BA in IT Management, MA in Public Administration and MSc in International Transport. Hovhannes is interested in volunteerism, regional integration, youth affairs, as well as enjoys travelling and acquaintance with new people.

### **Akhmed Gumbatov, Azerbaijan**

Akhmed Gumbatov is a project coordinator at the newly established Caspian Center for Energy and Environment (CCEE) of Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy (ADA). Akhmed studied at the School of International Relations of Saint-Petersburg State University in Russia and worked at the International Youth Diplomacy League. He was also an intern at the United Nations Association in Washington D.C, and Atlantic Council where he was dealing with the integration process of the South Caucasian states into Euro-Atlantic structures and some other security related issues of the post-Soviet space. Akhmed holds a Master's degree in International Affairs with the focus on International Security and Caspian Basin Studies from Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy.

### **Marina Vorotnyuk, Ukraine**

Marina Vorotnyuk is a research fellow of the Center for International Studies of Odessa Mechnikov National University and a senior research fellow of Odessa Branch of the National Institute for Strategic Studies under the Secretariat of the President of Ukraine. Her primary sphere of research is related to conflict and peace studies, theory of international relations, security in the Black Sea region

and Turkish foreign policy. She holds an M.A. in international relations from Odessa Mechnikov National University. Her PhD project is concerned with the application of the critical security theories to the foreign policy of Turkey.

### **Ayfer Erdogan, Turkey**

Ayfer Erdogan did Bachelor of Arts in Foreign Languages Education at Middle East Technical University (Ankara) and graduated in 2007. Upon completing her BA, she worked as a language assistant in Germany for a year. She did her MA in Eurasian Studies, at Uppsala University in Sweden. She worked as an intern journalist in EU-Turkey News (AB Haber) in the European Parliament as a part of her master study. Currently, she is instructor in Modern Languages Department and doing her PhD in International Relations and Politics at Yıldız Technical University.

### **Akper Saryyev, Ukraine**

AkperSaryyev is a postgraduate student in Vienna University at the faculty of European and International Business Law. In 2005-2010 he studies in the National Yaroslav Mudryi Law Academy of Ukraine. During 2003-2005 He studied in Donetsk technical gymnasium during 2003-2005.

### **Mehmet Zeki Günay , Turkey**

Mehmet Zeki Günay is research assistant at the Graduate School of Social Sciences at the Middle East Technical University in Ankara, Turkey. He has BA in International Relations from Bilkent University in Ankara, and MA in Eurasian Studies from Middle East Technical University. Currently he is a PhD student in International Relation at the Middle East Technical University. His research interests are: Russian foreign policy, Russian politics, and international organizations.

### **Maxim Stepanov, Russian Federation**

Maxim Stepanov (25), was born in Yekaterinburg on the Asian side of the Ural Mountains where he spent the first 20 years of his life und studied German and English. Later, he moved to Berlin and started MA program in Political Science and Sociology. His academic focus is post-soviet space, and he applies knowledge as a free-lance trainer for the citizenship education all around Eastern Europe.

### **Tamar Gzirishvili , Georgia**

Tamar is 21 years old, born and raised in Tbilisi, Georgia. Four years ago, she went to the U.S. to get higher education, and in May she is graduating from Clark University (Massachusetts) in the fields of Political Science and Philosophy. Last year, she spent a semester in Washington, D.C., studying Peace and Conflict Resolution, where she did a research on Cyprus conflict, as well as the conflicts within Georgia. In the beginning of her career, she would like to do work related to the Caucasus region.

### **Gökçe Perçinoğlu, Turkey**

Gökçe Perçinoğlu received her BA in Political Science and International Relations from Boğaziçi University (İstanbul) in 2007. She continued her academic studies at University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) and received her MA degree in International Law in 2008. She joined TESEV Foreign Policy Program team in May 2009. Her area of interest includes Turkey's foreign policy, Turkey's South Caucasus and Middle East policies, Turkey-Armenia relations.

### **Orkhan Ali , Azerbaijan**

Orkhan Ali holds an MA degree in Non-Proliferation and International Security from the Department of War Studies of King's College London (KCL) and Post-Graduate Studies Diploma from Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB). Since 2003 he has involved in peace-building projects in the region and beyond, and has had valuable experience as an Executive Director of NATO International School of Azerbaijan (NISA) in 2008 in Baku. Currently, he coordinates the Governance Programme at Oxfam International Azerbaijan and is also contributing to the 'Youth Eastern Partnership' (YEaP) International Project as an editor and writer in security affairs, as well as the Caucasus Edition. His academic interest includes the conflicts in the South Caucasus, International Security, good governance and decentralization, state-building and public administration.

### **Arpi Atabekyan, Armenia**

Arpi Atabekyan graduated the Faculty of Turkish Studies at the Yerevan State University in Armenia. Currently, she is doing her Masters in German-Turkish Masters program in Social Sciences GeT MA, which is currently taking place in Ankara, whereas the second year will take place in Berlin. She is interested in Turkish migration in Europe, particularly in Germany. She is working on a paper on the educational migration issue from developing regions. Her research interests

are Turkish-Armenian relations, and participated in the project on the reconciliation process. Arpi has written one of the final papers on the Armenian-Turkish reconciliation process.

### **Aydan Muradova, Azerbaijan**

Aydan Muradova has spent an academic exchange year in the USA, where she has become passionate about international relations, diplomacy and global affairs. Later, she became a student in International Relations at the Baku State University. She has participated at many conferences, forums, workshop both on national and international levels, among them are the First "International Model of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation" Conference which was held in Istanbul, World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue which was held in Baku, Civic Education Workshop which was held in Washington DC, Better Understanding for a Better World Conference in Orlando, Florida, International Humanitarian Forum in Baku: Hopes and Challenges and different other events.

### **Yana Zabanova, Russian Federation**

Yana Zabanova is a research analyst with the Berlin-based think tank European Stability Initiative, where she focuses on the South Caucasus and Moldova. Originally from Ulan-Ude, Russia, she holds an MA in international relations from the Central European University in Budapest and an MPP from the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin. She has also studied in Russia and the US. Yana is currently working on a report on Azerbaijan's relations with the Council of Europe and will be preparing the shooting of a documentary film on Moldova this summer.

## მოკლე ბიოგრაფიები

### დოქტორი იაკუბ ფორს-ბატალია-ავსტრია

იაკუბ ფორს-ბატალია- არის ავსტრიელი დიპლომატი და ამჟამად მუშაობს ავსტრიის კულტურული ფორუმის დირექტორად კიევიში, უკრაინა სადაც წარმოადგენს ავსტრიის საგარეო საქმეთა სამინისტროს.

### ანასტასია სტელმახი, უკრაინა

ანასტასია სტელმახმა დაამთავრა ლვოვის, ივან ფრანკოს სახელობის ეროვნული უნივერსიტეტი, სადაც მოიპოვა ბაკალავრისა და მაგისტრის ხარისხები საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობებში. ამჟამად ის ჩართულია თურქეთის ახლო აღმოსავლეთის ტექნიკური უნივერსიტეტის სადოქტორო პროგრამაში. აქტიურად მონაწილეობს შავი ზღვის რეგიონთან დაკავშირებით მოწყობილ სხვადასხვა აქტივობებში, მათ შორის ჰარვარდის შავი ზღვის უსაფრთხოების პროგრამაში. ინტერესის სფეროები: შავი ზღვის თანამშრომლობა, უსაფრთხოება, დსთ და ენერგო-უსაფრთხოება. სადოქტორო ნაშრომის საკითხი: „უკრაინის ენერგო პოლიტიკა და ევროკავშირთან ენერგო-თანამშრომლობა ვიქტორ იანუკოვიჩის მმართველობის პერიოდში“.

### ლია ფუტკარაძე, საქართველო

ლია ფუტკარაძემ ბაკალავრის ხარისხი მოიპოვა ამერიკის ჰუმანიტარული უნივერსიტეტის თბილისის ფილიალში. ის არის აშშ-ს სახელმწიფო დეპარტამენტის საგანმანათლებლო და კულტურის ბიუროს მიერ გამოცხადებული ბაკალავრების მსოფლიო გაცვლითი პროგრამის გამარჯვებული და ერთი წელი სწავლობდა უტიკას კოლეჯში საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობების სპეციალობით. ამჟამად მუშაობს ალიანსის ჯგუფში, კორპორატიული კომუნიკაციების ასისტენტის პოზიციაზე. ამავდროულად, ახდენს პროექტის კოორდინირებას კომპანიის დაარსებულ ფილანტროპულ ფონდში.

### ჰოვანეს სტეპანიანი, სომხეთი

ჰოვანეს სტეპანიანი მუშაობს სომხეთში არსებულ აშშ-ს მშვიდობის კორპუსში რეგიონალურ მენეჯერად. მას წარსულში საჯარო სექტორში, ტრანსპორტის, კომუნიკაციებისა და საინფორმაციო ტექნოლოგიების კუთხით მუშაობის დიდი გამოცდილება აქვს. ოვანესი საინფორმაციო ტექნოლოგიების ბაკალავრია. მას აქვს ორი მაგისტრის ხარისხი. ერთი - საჯარო ადმინისტრირებაში, ხოლო მეორე – საერთაშორისო ტრანსპორტის სფეროში. ოვანესი დაინტერესებულია მოხალისეობით, რეგიონალური ინტეგრაციის თემით, ახალგაზრდული საქმეებით, ამასთან მისი ჰობია მოგზაურობა და ახალი ადამიანების გაცნობა.

## **მარინა ვოროტნიუკი, უკრაინა**

მარინა ვოროტნიუკი ოდესაში არსებული მეჩნიკოვის ეროვნული უნივერსიტეტის საერთაშორისო მეცნიერებათა მკვლევარია. ასევე, უფროს მკვლევარად მუშაობს უკრაინის პრეზიდენტის კანცელარიასთან არსებულ სტრატეგიულ მეცნიერებათა ეროვნული ინსტიტუტის ოდესის ფილიალში, მისი კვლევის ძირითადი მიმართულებებია კონფლიქტები და მშვიდობა, საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობათა თეორია, შავი ზღვის რეგიონის უსაფრთხოება და თურქეთის საგარეო პოლიტიკა. მიენიჭა საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობათა მაგისტრის ხარისხი მეჩნიკოვის ეროვნულ უნივერსიტეტში. მისი სადოქტორო ნაშრომი შეეხება კრიტიკული უსაფრთხოების თეორიების გამოყენებას თურქეთის საგარეო პოლიტიკასთან მიმართებაში.

## **აიფერ ერდოგანი – თურქეთი**

აიფერ ერდოგანი 2007 წელს მოიპოვა უცხო ენების ბაკალავრის ხარისხი ახლო აღმოსავლეთის ტექნიკურ უნივერსიტეტში (ანკარა). ბაკალავრიატის დამთავრების შემდეგ ერთი წელიწადი მუშაობდა გერმანიაში თურქული ენის მასწავლებლად. მაგისტრატურა დაამთავრა შვედეთში, კერძოდ უპსალას უნივერსიტეტში, ევრაზიული სწავლების სპეციალობით. სამაგისტრო პროგრამის ფარგლებში სტაჟიორ-ჟურნალისტად მუშაობდა ევროპარლამენტის -თურქეც ენსში. ამჟამად ინსტრუქტორად მუშაობს თანამდებროვე ენების დეპარტამენტში და ამავდროულად ამზადებს სადოქტორო ნაშრომს საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობებსა და პოლიტიკაზე ილდიზის ტექნიკურ უნივერსიტეტში.

## **აკფერ სარიევი, უკრაინა**

აკფერ სარიევი ვენის უნივერსიტეტის ევროპული და საერთაშორისო ბიზნესის სამართლის ფაკულტეტის მაგისტრანტია. 2005-10 წლებში სწავლობდა იაროსლავ მუდრის სახელობის უკრაინის ეროვნულ აკადემიაში. 2003-2005 წლებში დაამთავრა დონეცკის ტექნიკური გიმნაზია.

## **მეჰმეთ ზეკი გუნაი, თურქეთი**

მეჰმეთ ზეკი გუნაი ანკარის ახლო აღმოსავლეთის ტექნიკური უნივერსიტეტში მკვლევარ-ასისტენტი. ბაკალავრიატი ანკარის ლინკენტის უნივერსიტეტში დაამთავრა, მაგისტრის ხარისხი კი ახლო აღმოსავლეთის ტექნიკური უნივერსიტეტში მოიპოვა. ამჟამად, ამავე უნივერსიტეტში სწავლობს სადოქტორო პროგრამაზე. ისი კვლევის ინტერესებია: რუსეთის საგარეო პოლიტიკა, რუსული პოლიტიკა და საერთაშორისო ორგანიზაციები.

## **მაქსიმ სტეპანოვი, რუსეთის ფედერაცია**

მაქსიმ სტეპანოვი, დაიბადა ეკატერინბურგში, ურალიში. აქ მან გაატარა ცხოვრების პირველი 20 წელი, შეისწავლა ინგლისური და გერმანული ენები. მოგვია-

ნებით საცხოვრებლად გადავიდა ბერლინში და დაიწყო სწავლა პოლიტიკური მეცნიერებისა და სოციოლოგიის სამაგისტრო პროგრამაზე. მის აკადემიურ ინტერესს წარმოადგენს პოსტ-საბჭოთა სივრცე, კითხულობს ტრეინინგ-კურსებს აღმოსავლეთ ევროპაში სამოქალაქო ცნობიერების ამაღლების თაობაზე.

## **თამარ გზირიშვილი, საქართველო**

თამარი დაიბადა და გაიზარდა თბილისში. ოთხი წლის წინ გაემგზავრა აშშ-ში უმაღლესი განათლების მისაღებად. მაისში ამთავრებს მასაჩუსეტისის კლარკის უნივერსიტეტის პოლიტიკური მეცნიერებისა და ფილოსოფიის ფაკულტეტს. გასულ წელს ერთი სემესტრი გაატარა ვაშინგტონში სადაც სწავლობდა მშვიდობისა და კონფლიქტების მოგვარების საკითხს და გააკეთა კვლევა როგორც კვიპროსზე, ისე საქართველოში არსებულ კონფლიქტებზე. ის მხოლოდ ახლა იწყებს კარიერულ განვითარებას და სურვილი აქვს იმუშაოს კავკასიის საკითხებზე.

## **გოკჩე ფერჩინოლლუ, თურქეთი**

გოკჩე ფერჩინოლლუმ ბაკალავრის ხარისხი ბოლაზიჯის უნივერსიტეტში მოიპოვა (სტამბული, 2007 წ.). სწავლა ლონდონის უნივერსიტეტის აღმოსავლეთისა და აფრიკის სკოლაში (შშ) განაგრძო, და მიიღო საერთაშორისო სამართლის მაგისტრის ხარისხი (2008 წ.). 2009 წლის მაისში შეუერთდა თმV საგარეო პოლიტიკის პროგრამას. ინტერესის სფეროები: თურქეთის საგარეო პოლიტიკა, თურქეთის სამხრეთ კავკასიური და ახლო აღმოსავლეთის პოლიტიკა, თურქეთისა და სომხეთის ურთიერთობები.

## **ორხან ალი, აზერბაიჯანი**

ორხან ალის იარაღის გაუვრცელებლობისა და საერთაშორისო უსაფრთხოების მაგისტრის ხარისხი მიენიჭა ლონდონის სამეფო კოლეჯის (King's College London) ომის შესწავლის დეპარტამენტში. ასევე, ფლობს ბრუსელის მშვიდობის უნივერსიტეტის (Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB) დიპლომს. 2003 წლიდან ჩართულია მშვიდობის დამყარებასთან დაკავშირებულ პროექტებში. მნიშვნელოვანი გამოცდილება შეიძინა 2008 წელს აზერბაიჯანში NATO –ს საერთაშორისო სკოლის (NISA) აღმასრულებელ დირექტორად მუშაობით. ამჟამად არის Oxfam International Azerbaijan-ის კოორდინატორი. ამავდროულად ჩართულია „ახალგაზრდული აღმოსავლური პარტნიორობის“ საერთაშორისო პროექტში, როგორც რედაქტორი და ერთერთი ავტორი უსაფრთხოების საკითხებში. მისი აკადემიურ ინტერესების სფეროს განეკუთვნება: სამხრეთ კავკასიის კონფლიქტები, საჯარო მმართველობა და დეცენტრალიზაცია, ძლიერი სახელმწიფოს მშენებლობა და საჯარო ადმინისტრაცია.

## **არფი ათაბეჯიანი, სომხეთი**

არფი ათაბეჯიანს დამთავრებული აქვს ერევნის სახელმწიფო უნივერსიტეტი, სადაც მუშაობდა თურქოლოგიის პრობლემებზე. ამჟამად ის მაგისტრანტია სოციალურ მეცნიერებათა გერმანულ-თურქულ სამაგისტრო პროგრამაში, არფი დაინტერესებულია ევროპაში და კერძოდ გერმანიაში თურქების მიგრაციის საკითხით. ამჟამად მუშაობს სტატიანზე, სადაც საუბარია განვითარებადი ქვეყნებიდან საგანმანათლებლო მიგრაციის თემაზე. დაინტერესებულია თურქეთისა და სომხეთის ურთიერთობათა კვლევით, მონაწილეობა მიიღო პროექტში, რომელიც მუშაობდა ორ ქვეყანას შორის მოლაპარაკებათა პროცესზე. არფის ერთ-ერთი ბოლო სტატია სწორედ სომხეთისა და თურქეთის მორიგების საკითხს შეეხებოდა.

## **აიდან მურადოვა, აზერბაიჯანი**

აიდან მურადოვამ გაცვლითი პროგრამის ფარგლებში 1 წელი გაატარა აშშ-ში, სადაც დაინტერესდა საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობებით, დიპლომატიითა და მსოფლიო პოლიტიკით. მოგვიანებით მან ჩააბარა ბაქოს სახელმწიფო უნივერსიტეტის საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობათა ფაკულტეტზე. მონაწილეობა მიიღო მრავალ კონფერენციაში, ფორუმსა და სამუშაო შეხვედრაში როგორც ქვეყნის შიგნით, ისე მის გარეთ, მათ შორის: „ისლამური თანამშრობლობის საერთაშორისო ორგანიზაციული მოდელი“ (სტამბული), კულტურათაშორისი დიალოგის საერთაშორისო ფორუმი (ბაქო), სამოქალაქო ცნობიერების ამაღლების სამუშაო შეხვედრა (ვაშინგტონი), ურთიერთგაგება უკეთესი მსოფლიოსათვის (ორლანდო, ფლორიდა), საერთაშორისო ჰუმანიტარული ფორუმი: იმედები და გამოწვევები (ბაქო) და მრავალის სხვა.

## **ახმედ გუმბათოვი, აზერბაიჯანი**

ახმედ გუმბათოვი აზერბაიჯანის დიპლომატიურ აკადემიაში (ADA) ახლად დაარსებული პროექტის – ენერჯისა და გარემოს დაცვის კასპიური ცენტრის (CCEE) კოორდინატორი. ახმედმა დაამთავრა სანკტ-პეტერბურგის სახელმწიფო უნივერსიტეტის საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობათა სკოლა და მუშაობდა საერთაშორისო დიპლომატიის ახალგაზრდულ ლიგაში. გაიარა სტაჟირება გაეროს ასოციაციაში, ვაშინგტონში და ატლანტიკურ საბჭოში სადაც მუშაობდა ევრო-ატლანტიკურ სტრუქტურებში სამხრეთ კავკასიის ქვეყნების ინტეგრაციის საკითხზე, ასევე გარკვეულწილად ჰქონდა შეხება პოსტ-საბჭოთა სივრცეში არსებულ უსაფრთხოების საკითხებთან. CCEE-ში გადასვლამდე ახმედი აზერბაიჯანის სტრატეგიული მეცნიერების ცენტრში მუშაობდა მკვლევარ-ასისტენტად. მას აქვს ზერბაიჯანის დიპლომატიური აკადემიის მაგისტრის ხარისხი საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობებში საერთაშორისო უსაფრთხოებისა და კასპიის აუზის რეგიონის განხრით.

## **იანა ზაბანოვა, რუსეთის ფედერაცია**

იანა ზაბანოვა ბერლინში არსებული კვლევითი ცენტრის – ევროპული სტაბილურობის ინიციატივა- მკვლევარ-ანალიტიკოსია, მისი სპეციალიზაციაა სამხრეთ კავკასია და მოლდოვა. იანა წარმოშობით ურალიდან, კერძოდ- უდედან არის. მან მაგისტრის ხარისხი მიიღო ბუდაპეშტში არსებულ ცენტრალური ევროპის უნივერსიტეტში, ასევე მიღებული აქვს საჯარო პოლიტიკის მაგისტრის ხარისხი ბერლინის საჯარო მმართველობის ჰერტის სკოლაში. შხვადასხვა დროს სწავლობა რუსეთსა და აშშ-ში. ამჟამად იანა ამზადებს ანგარიშს აზერბაიჯანისა და ევროსაბჭოს ურთიერთობების თაობაზე, ამ ზაფხულს აპირებს მოლდოვაზე დოკუმენტური ფილმის გადაღებას.

## **დოქტორი ოსკარ ვაგრა, ავსტრია**

დოქტორი ოსკარ ვაგრა დაიბადა 1950 წლის 10 ოქტომბერს ქალაქ ვენაში. ვენის უნივერსიტეტიდან მან მოიპოვა დიპლომი სამართალმცოდნეობაში, მოგვიანებით კი დაამთავრა ასპირანტურა ჯონს ჰოპკინსის უნივერსიტეტში, ბოლონიაში საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობების განხრით. ის მუშაობდა ავსტრიის საკონსტიტუციო სასამართლოში და ვენის სავაჭრო და სამრეწველო პალატაში სამართლებრივ საკითხთა ოფიცრად. 1983 წლიდან ვენის საკრებულოში ის იყო სახალხო პარტიის ჯგუფის მდივანი და მოგვიანებით მისი დირექტორი. 1991-დან 1997 წლამდე იყო ვენის პროვინციული საკანონმდებლო ასამბლეის და საკრებულოს წევრი. 1997 წლიდან დოქტორი ვაგრა არის ავსტრიის უცხოელთა საზოგადოების ფედერაციის ვიცე პრეზიდენტი, საპატიო ფუნქცია, რომელიც მოიცავს 112 ორმხრივი თანამეგობრობის საზოგადოებას. 1998 წლიდან დოქტორი ვაგრა არის ევროპულ და საერთაშორისო საკითხთა მთავარი აღმასრულებელი ორგანოს უფროსი და ქალაქ ვენის საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობების აღმასრულებელი დირექტორი.



გამომცემლობა „უნივერსალი“

---

თბილისი, 0179, ი. ჯავახიშვილის გამზ. 19, ☎: 222 36 09, 5(99) 17 22 30

E-mail: [universal@internet.ge](mailto:universal@internet.ge)