

The EU's Eastern Policy in light of the Georgian Conflict and the Gas War

Abstract

The EU is seeking to develop its relations with former ex-Soviet republics at a time of growing Russian opposition to the expansion of Western influence into what it considers its sphere of influence, coupled with increased tensions between Russia and some of the other former Soviet states. The EU should not accept the concept of a Russian sphere of influence in Eastern Europe. The circumstances leading to the Second World War and the Cold War have made it clear that the same principles of international law, and national sovereignty, must apply throughout the continent. Furthermore, the Georgian conflict and the Russo-Ukrainian gas war have shown that the state of Russia's relations with its neighbours can adversely affect EU interests. Furthermore, there is a danger of a renewal of the Georgia conflict and of further interruptions of the Russian gas transiting Ukraine. The EU should therefore make the state of Russia's relations with its neighbours a factor in the EU's co-operation with Russia. For the EU to influence most effectively Russian policy, and for the EU to develop its relations with the other former Soviet republics without Russian opposition, the West has to deal with Russian fears of Western expansion by working out a new security arrangement for Europe. The West might place greater emphasis on engaging Russia constructively on a wide range of world issues. The West should also seek to involve Russia further in the Western network of organizations and agreements.

Introduction

In response to requests for assistance and closer relations from East European states, the EU has, with its Eastern Policy, sought to bring about democratic and economic reforms leading to association with the EU. The EU had hoped eventually to achieve similar goals in Russia.

In following this policy, the EU has lately had both to face Russian opposition to Western expansion into its 'near abroad', and to deal with the consequences of the conflict in Georgia and the gas war between Russia and Ukraine. These developments have raised, in addition to the long-standing issue of European energy security, three interlocking questions:

- To what extent should the EU get involved in the relations between Russia and other former Soviet Republics?
- Will the EU's new Eastern Partnership be a sufficient instrument for developing relations with the other former Soviet republics?
- What should be the EU's response to the Russian call for a European Security Pact?

To what extent should the EU get involved in the relations between Russia and other former Soviet Republics?

Among the five principles of Russian foreign policy that President Medvedev laid out on 31 August 2009 was the right to give “special attention” to particular regions in which Russia has “privileged interests.”^{i ii}

President Medvedev’s claim of privileged interests did not express any new doctrine, for Russia has always sought, in one way or another, to exercise a dominant influence over the other republics, including over the two whose relations with Russia gave rise to the crises of recent months, Georgia and Ukraine. The fraught nature of the relationships with these two countries now threatens to harm major EU and Western interests.

Georgia

In the case of the Georgian conflict, while the Georgians, who had apparently received mixed signals from the United States, launched the attack that started the war, and while the short-sightedly bellicose and chauvinist attitudes of the Georgians have repeatedly made difficult any reconciliation with Georgia’s secessionist regions, South Ossetia and Abkhazia, a major cause of the conflict this past summer has to be found in the long-standing Russian policy of trying to exercise a controlling influence over Georgia. It is important to understand Russia’s role in the outbreak of the recent fighting and the reasons for Russia’s policy towards Georgia, because they may lead to a resumption of hostilities.

As it has in other secessionist regions, such as Transdnistria in Moldova, and Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan, Russia has promoted the separation of South Ossetia and Abkhazia from Georgia. It has done so apparently so as to have a foothold on the south side of the Caucasus in view of the repeated insurrections in the North Caucasus, especially in Chechnya, to increase the share of the Black Sea coast under Russian control, and to have a means of pressuring Georgia into adopting policies to Moscow’s liking.

Russian military support made possible the uprisings of South Ossetia and Abkhazia from 1992 to 1994. Russia then furnished progressively more economic, administrative and military help to the rebellious regions. In the end, ministers in the de facto governments and officers in their armed forces were Russians.

Russia also maintained regular troops besides its peacekeepers in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, including at the Gudauta Air Base in Abkhazia. In keeping the base at Gudauta against the will of the Georgian authorities, Russia violated the 1990 Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) as well as its commitment, made at the Istanbul Summit of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in November 1999, to withdraw all its military forces from Georgia and Moldova not authorized by the national authorities, by 31 December 2002. Such a commitment was one of the conditions posed by the NATO countries for their signature to the Adaptations of the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE).^{iii iv}

The Russians issued most residents passports, and allowed them to vote in Russian elections. Neither the Abkhazis nor the Ossetians are of Russian origin or culture. One of the other principles of Russian foreign policy that President Medvedev set out on 31 August was the right “to protect the life and dignity of our citizens, wherever they are,”

Although there were repeated talks on possible solutions to the crisis, hostile acts between Georgia, and Russia and the secessionist regions never totally ceased after the final cease-fire in 1994. While Georgia staged incursions into the two territories, Russia launched bombing raids, principally connected with the war in Chechnya, against Georgia.

In 2004, it became clear to the Georgians that the West was moving to recognize the independence of Kosovo. The Georgians felt that they had to reabsorb all rebellious regions into Georgia before this happened. According to the former Georgian Ambassador to Russia, Erosi Kitsmarishvili, in his statement on 25 November 2008 before a parliamentary hearing on the origins of the war, the Georgians began in 2004 to discuss plans to retake South Ossetia and Abkhazia by force.^v They staged a skirmish in South Ossetia,^{vi} They occupied a separatist region in the south of the country, Adjara, as well as districts in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, where they set up alternative governments.^{vii}

In the same year, 2004, according to Andrei Illarionov, who, until the end of 2005, was an economic adviser to President Putin, Russia began to prepare for an invasion of Georgia so as to get rid of President Saakashvili. Russia took its decision in reaction to the Rose Revolution that had brought Saakashvili to power at the end of 2003, Saakashvili's announcement of his intention of taking Georgia into NATO, and the occupation by Georgia of Adjara, which had had a pro-Russian leader.^{viii}

In December 2005, Putin ordered Russian energy companies to blockade Georgia. When this failed, Russian special services blew up the pipelines and electrical power lines linking the countries. After the Georgians had expelled alleged Russian spies, the Russians responded in September 2006 with an economic blockade. Over the period, the Russians strengthened their regular forces in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and Russian diplomats spoke openly of an invasion of Georgia in September 2008.^{ix}

According to Sergey Markedonov, the Head of the Interethnic Relations Department of the Institute of Political and Military Analysis, Moscow took the decision in February 2008 to move toward recognition of the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, apparently in response to the Western recognition of Kosovo as an independent country.^x

After NATO had, at the Bucharest Summit in April 2008, welcomed Ukraine's and Georgia's aspirations for membership in the organization, Prime Minister Putin, in his meetings with President Bush on 4 and 6 April, 2008, is reported to have warned that, if NATO accorded the countries a Membership Action Plan (MAP), at the NATO summit this past December, Russia might respond by instigating the partition of Ukraine and recognizing the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Putin told Bush that Ukraine was "not a real nation," that much of its territory had been "given away" by Russia. Ukraine would "cease to exist as a state" if it joined NATO. In that case, Putin hinted, Russia would encourage the secession of the Crimea and the eastern regions of Ukraine.^{xi} The Russian Chief of the General Staff, General Yuriy Baluyevsky, warned on 11 April 2009 that Russia would take military as well as other types of measures against Georgia and Ukraine if these countries moved toward NATO membership.^{xii}

The Russians then began what appeared to be preparations for war. In the second half of July, they staged military manoeuvres, putting troops in position just north of the Georgian border; the Russian army repaired the railway linking Abkhazia with Russia, and transported Russian troops and equipment into the two territories. The Russians

allegedly shot down Georgian drones, carried out over-flights, dropped bombs, and launched cyber-attacks against Georgian official websites.^{xiii xiv} The Russians rejected German efforts to mediate differences over Abkhazia. By the beginning of August, there were a rising number of exchanges of fire between the Georgians and South Ossetians.

Among the troops that the Russians brought into Abkhazia and South Ossetia were Chechens. At the beginning of July, Kavkaz Centre, a Chechen internet news agency, reported that Moscow intended to launch operations against Georgia in late August or early September.^{xv} The Georgians feared the Russians would escalate tensions in the early fall.^{xvi} According to the former UK Ambassador to Russia Sir Roderic Lyne, there was a deliberate intention on their (the Russian) part at some point when the opportunity presented itself to do what they have done, really to use force against Georgia.^{xvii}

While the reasons why the mercurial President Saakashvili launched the attack on Tskhinvali, the capital of South Ossetia, on 7 August in particular, remain disputed, there is some indication that Georgia was planning to attack at some point in response to the growing Russian pressure. The Georgian Ambassador to Moscow at the time, Erosi Kitsmarishvili, declared in testimony before the Georgian parliamentary commission investigating the origins of the war, that Georgian officials had informed him in April that they were planning to launch a war in response to Russian provocations. It was his impression that the Russians were fully informed of Georgian intentions, and the Georgians had done exactly what the Russians had wanted them to do.^{xviii}

James Sherr, the head of the Russia and Eurasia Programme at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, has concluded, “The commanders of the Russian forces and their political masters...hoped that he (Saakashvili) would behave exactly as he behaved. The episode is a perfect application of what Russian military scientists call ‘reflexive control’: the defeat of an adversary through his own efforts.”^{xix}

The Russians may have been prevented from occupying Tbilisi and overthrowing Saakashvili through the intervention of President Sarkozy who, with the threat of sanctions against Russia, negotiated on behalf of the EU a cease-fire on 13 August.^{xx}

As a result of the conflict, Russia has formally recognized the independence of the two regions. Reports in the Russian media indicate that Moscow plans to establish a Black Sea naval base in the Abkhaz port of Ochamchire, to restore the airbase at Gudauta, and open a land forces base in the Kodori Gorge.^{xxi}

The Russian policy of trying to overthrow President Saakashvili, the way in which the conflict ended, the skirmishes that have occurred since, and the slow progress of the peace talks in Geneva raise the prospect that the fighting may resume.

This prospect should be of concern to the EU:

- The loss of effective independence for Georgia would be a vindication of the Russian claim to a zone of influence in its former empire. Because of Europe’s history, European security cannot be preserved unless the same rules are applied everywhere on the continent. It was Germany’s territorial claims on its eastern borders that led to the Second World War. Russia’s claim to overlordship over Eastern Europe at the end of that War led to the Cold War.
- The end of Georgia’s imperfect efforts to develop a democracy would be a setback to the EU’s efforts to promote national sovereignty, human rights and democracy in the area.

- Bringing Georgia under Russian control would effectively put an end to the most promising attempt of the EU to diversify its supply of gas by completing the Nabucco pipeline intended to link the Caspian basin, Central Asia and the Middle East with Europe. This pipeline runs through Georgia.

Ukraine

Russian policy towards Ukraine is also likely to lead to repeated crises affecting serious EU interests. Russia has long sought to bring Ukraine back under its influence. It has repeatedly interfered in Ukrainian affairs, especially in the parliamentary elections of 2002 and the presidential election of 2004-2005 in attempts to ensure victory for parties and candidates amenable to its interests.

Russia's energy policy towards Ukraine has been one of the instruments used for making Ukraine more compliant with Russian wishes. The 2003 Energy **Strategy of the Russian Federation up to 2020** states that Russia's fuel and energy complex is "*an instrument for the conduct of internal and external policy. The role of a country in world energy markets largely determines its geopolitical influence.*"^{xxii}

The price dispute at the end of 2005, when Russia for the first time turned off the gas supply to Ukraine and Europe, arose after Russia had torn up a multi-year contract it had concluded the previous year with a more pro-Russian government. Statements at that time made by the Russian government and officials make it clear that the main aim of the dispute was political. Andrei Illiaronov, the former economic adviser to President Putin, who had resigned at the end of 2005, stated, for example, that the price being sought by Russia was discriminatory, and the way in which it was proposed was deliberately provocative, so as to prevent the dispute from being settled before the parliamentary elections of March 2006. The dispute was also, according to Illarionov, intended to lead to the take-over of the Ukrainian gas transit pipeline.^{xxiii} Ukraine views control over its pipelines as the only leverage it has against Russia's attempts to limit its sovereignty. In addition, it needs control so as to supply gas to its own customers from its reserves in case of a Russian cut-off.

The EU had to intervene to put an end to the dispute. As part of the settlement, President Putin insisted on the insertion of two middlemen in the transaction:

- RosUkrEnergo, to handle shipments of gas from the Russian company, Gazprom, to the Ukrainian company, Naftahaz, and
- UkrGasEnergo to sell the gas to the best paying industrial clients in Ukraine.

This arrangement profited shadowy intermediaries, including, allegedly, the pro-Russian party in Ukraine. It meant, however, that the Ukrainian company, Naftohaz, which had been left with the less profitable customers,^{xxiv} was partly incapable of paying for the gas it received. This state of affairs in turn allowed Gazprom to renew its calls for the Ukrainians to turn over the gas transit system in payment of debts.^{xxvxxvi} Prime Minister Tymoshenko managed to get rid of UkrGasEnergo in 2008. Putin and Tymoshenko agreed to eliminate RosUkrEnergo in the negotiations ending the gas war.

Russia's relations with Ukraine just now are especially tense, because of Ukraine's campaign to join NATO, its support for Georgia in the recent conflict, and its refusal to renew the lease on the Russian naval base on Sevastopol in the Crimea, when it expires in 2017.

The Ukrainians accuse the Russians of supporting a separatist movement in the far west of the country in Transcarpathia and of distributing Russian passports to the residents of Crimea.

Against this background, it is difficult to regard the most recent gas war as being purely an expression of commercial differences. Admittedly the heavy losses sustained by Russia by the recent fall in oil prices were a powerful motivating factor in the tough position the Russians took. The Russians were also likely angry at the inability of the Ukrainians to pay a contested amount that the Russians said they owed for gas deliveries in 2008 and the tough, dilatory, and contradictory Ukrainian negotiating positions arising out of the tensions between the President Yushchenko and the Ukrainian Prime Minister Tymoshenko. The Russians had warned the Ukrainians that they would cut off the gas if the question were not solved by 31 December.

Nevertheless, the way in which the gas war escalated, suggests that there were, as in 2005-6, wider Russian motives. On December 31, the Russians had proposed a gas price of \$250 per 1000 cubic metres. The Ukrainians countered on the same day with an offer of \$210, plus an increase in the transit fees on gas being shipped to Western Europe. The transit fees had increased by only 6% to \$1.70 per 1,000 cubic meters per 100 km, in the preceding three years, and were about half of some other transit fees, while the price of gas had approximately doubled.^{xxvii xxviii xxix} On the next day, 1 January, Naftohaz first offered \$235; then President Yushchenko agreed to \$250, but with an increase in transit fees to \$2.00 or \$2.50. Yushchenko asked Prime Minister Putin and President Medvedev to help find a solution. In response, President Putin on the same day accused Yushchenko of breaking off negotiations, insisted on \$450 and halted gas deliveries intended for Ukraine.^{xxx}

Three days later, on 4 January, the President Putin accused the Ukrainians of taking gas intended for Western Europe. In reprisal, he halted all shipments to Western Europe. The Deputy Gasprom CEO, Aleksandr Medvedev, at a press conference in London on 6 January, claimed, however, that it was the Ukrainians who had turned off the taps.^{xxxi} The Ukrainians flatly denied both accusations. They pointed out that the taps were on the Russian side of the border. They also claimed they did not need to steal any gas since they had sufficient reserves of gas built up to withstand several months of a Russian blockade. The head of the Ukrainian parliamentary commission investigating the dispute has since admitted that Ukraine did take and then quickly return 52 million cubic metres of gas.^{xxxii} The amount of gas the Russians accused the Ukrainians of having stolen in the three days since the Russians had imposed their gas embargo on Ukraine, some 65.3 million cubic metres, corresponds, however, more closely to the amount that the Ukrainians said they used to drive the compressors and turbines sending the gas to third parties for that period, about 63 million cubic metres.^{xxxiii}

Prime Minister Putin took advantage of the accusation that Ukraine had been stealing gas to call at a press conference on 8 January and in an interview on German television on 11 January, for an international consortium to take over the Ukrainian transit system.^{xxxiv} President Medvedev held a poorly attended international conference for a similar purpose on 17 January.^{xxxv xxxvi} The proposal for an international consortium in which Russia would have a controlling interest, has been Russia's fall-back position since it has been unable to achieve direct control.

After the EU observers had established that it was not Ukraine, but Russia, which had turned off the taps on 1 January, and there was no evidence that Ukraine had siphoned off gas for its own use, Russia agreed on 11 January to resume shipments to Western Europe, but only of a small amount, and that by a circuitous route that would have forced Ukraine to deprive much of southern Ukraine of gas from its reserves. This offer Ukraine turned down.^{xxxvii} It was only on 21 January, apparently after the intervention of Chancellor Merkel with President Putin, that the prime ministers of the two countries signed an agreement valid for ten years on gas and transit costs, and Russia agreed to resume regular shipments to Ukraine and Western Europe.

The political aims pursued by Russia in the gas war would appear to include:

- an attempt to weaken especially President Yushchenko, both because of the bad blood between the two presidents, and so as to slow Ukraine's westward policies, and to change the Ukrainian position on the Russian naval base of Sevastopol,
- a renewed effort to take over the Ukrainian gas transit system,
- retaliation for Ukrainian support for Georgia during the recent conflict. On the day on which the two countries signed the new gas agreement, President Medvedev signed an order imposing trade sanctions on countries that had supplied weapons and technology to Georgia during the recent conflict. The principal target of this order would appear to be Ukraine.

Since then, Russia has agreed to accord Ukraine a loan of five billion dollars to help it weather the world financial crisis. The loan was made in response to a plea from Prime Minister Tymoshenko, who enjoys currently Moscow's favour and is President Yushchenko's rival in the forthcoming Presidential election.

The Russian motives in the gas war are important, because they could mean that the agreement achieved on 21 January may be in fact of short duration:

- Ukraine is facing a presidential election at the beginning of 2010 and Russia may not resist the temptation to play the gas card again in support of its political objectives in Ukraine.
- In any case, it is not certain whether Ukraine can afford the new agreement, in spite of the elimination of middlemen. The cost of gas in the first quarter will be \$360 against a price of \$179.50 for 2008. This amount must be paid in US dollars, but the national currency, the hryvnia, has lost 46% of its value since July 2008 and may decline another 19%.^{xxxviii} In January, industrial production was down 34.1% on a twelve month basis. The foreign currency reserves have dropped 24% since August. The possibility of a sovereign default is not excluded.^{xxxix}
- The EU should be concerned at any internal Ukrainian affairs, especially when it appears to be part of an attempt to weaken Ukrainian sovereignty, or undermine its territorial integrity. The EU does not wish to see any further gas wars.

What can the EU do?

The EU has several instruments both for influencing Russian policy as well as for supporting Georgia and Ukraine. Up until now, the EU has had a tendency to make its relations with the other ex-Soviet republics subject to Russian views. As the German Foreign Minister Steinmeier stated on 21 March 2006: *“In the EU-Russia-Ukraine triangle, the three sides must be as equal as possible. Disturbed relations between two of these partners destabilize the region. However, the precondition for regional stability is that all sides stop thinking in terms of traditional spheres of influence and in categories of geopolitical rivalry.”*^{xli} The EU might now consider reversing the equation and making the development of the EU's relations with Russia dependent on the quality of Russian relations with the other ex-Soviet republics. It can also urge restraint on Georgia and Ukraine. The EU is in a strong position to do so. The world financial crisis will have strengthened all countries' interest in further economic co-operation with the West. The EU and Russia will shortly resume talks on a Partnership Agreement. Russia is also seeking the EU's agreement for Russian membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

In the case of Ukraine, the EU might recast its entire energy relationship. In the view of James Sherr, the head of the Russia and Eurasia Programme at the Royal Institute of International Affairs:

- The EU might establish a temporary payment mechanism to cover Ukraine's short-term debt to Gazprom.
- It might establish a joint EU-Ukraine Commission along the lines of the NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group on Defence Reform, to conduct an audit and transformation of Ukraine's grotesquely opaque and dysfunctional energy system. Conditional upon Ukraine's acceptance of agreed targets and enforcement mechanisms, the EU might make available finance and expertise to make the system, by stages, profitable, energy efficient and investor friendly.
- The EU might work to ensure that Russia and Ukraine conclude long-term supply contracts on the same basis as they are concluded between Russia and any EU member state: an EU pricing formula with stable, transparent provisions, price adjustment mechanisms and procedures for arbitration and enforcement.^{xlii}

Will the EU's new Eastern Partnership will be a sufficient instrument for developing relations with the other Soviet republics?

Closely related to the question of whether the EU should become involved in the relationship between Russia and the other ex-Soviet republics is the issue of whether the EU's new Eastern Partnership will be a sufficient instrument for developing relations with these republics. The role of the EU has become especially important. NATO, which had become, in view of the EU's diffidence towards Eastern Europe, the West's primary vehicle for responding to East European states' interest in closer relations with the West, is likely no longer to be as active. To defuse increasing doubts about the attractiveness to East European countries of the EU's previous plan, its European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), in part because the Policy did not offer the prospect of membership, the EU unveiled on 3 December 2008 the Eastern Partnership. The EU's new policy is an

improvement on the ENP, which had lumped the EU's eastern neighbours with Middle Eastern countries. The Partnership offers, among other things, free trade, closer energy ties, visa liberalization, and financial assistance programs to support the adoption of democratic and free market reforms. It does not guarantee, however, membership in the EU. There is a danger therefore that this plan too may turn out to be inadequate. Ukraine, while welcoming the Partnership, has reiterated that EU membership remains its goal. In their paper, **Contested Neighbourhood: Moldova, at the Crossroads between the EU and Russia**, Constantin Chira-Pascanut & Oliver Schmidtke come to the conclusion that, without a firm promise of membership, the reinvigorated assertion of Russian influence is likely to be a considerable obstacle to bringing Moldova closer to the EU.^{xliii} Ukraine may now also be coming under increasing Russian pressure.

What should be the EU's response to the Russian call for a European Security Pact?

The success of any efforts by the EU to influence Russia's policies toward the other former Soviet republics or to overcome Russian opposition to the extension of the EU's links in Eastern Europe will depend in part on the EU's ability to establish a new relationship with Russia. Russia's current uneasy relations with the West have partly risen from Russia's perception of unfriendly, and possibly threatening, Western attitudes and actions. The EU and NATO have expanded eastward into the Soviet Union's old sphere of influence. According to Gorbachev, *"The Americans promised that NATO wouldn't move beyond the boundaries of Germany after the Cold War, but now half of central and eastern Europe are members, so what happened to their promises? It shows they cannot be trusted."*^{xliv}

Russian disillusionment increased with the Kosovo conflict in 1999, which showed, in Russian eyes, that NATO was not a purely defensive organization, but was prepared to wage aggressive war without the authorization of the UN Security Council. The Kosovo conflict also showed them that the West, by attacking Russia's friend, Serbia, was prepared to ignore serious Russian interests.

The Russians saw the Coloured Revolutions that shook Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, from 2003 to 2005, as the product of Western coups intended to weaken Russia. The Russians were concerned not merely at the strategic implications of these Revolutions, but also with the danger that the contagion of democracy might spread even to Russia.

In addition, the steady increase in the price of oil gave President Putin from 2005 onwards the means to pursue a more muscular foreign policy.^{xlv} This assertiveness has proved a useful tool at home.

For the EU to influence effectively Russia's relations with its neighbours, and for the EU to develop its relations with them without Russian opposition, the West has to deal with Russia's concern that its security is being threatened and its other interests are being ignored in the growth of Western influence. The West might place greater emphasis on engaging Russia constructively on a wide range of world issues. On the major questions Russia and the West are no longer on opposite sides. Both are concerned at the threats posed by terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. There is potential for rediscovering common ground in the area of arms control and disarmament. The West should also seek to involve Russia further in the Western network of

organizations and agreements. It has been argued that a vision comparable to the Eastern Partnership is absent from the EU's proposals for the EU-Russian relationship.^{xlvi}

The West should respond to the Russian proposal for a European Security Treaty. The EU will have to move quickly on this front. President Sarkozy, on behalf of the EU Presidency, has converted the Russian proposal into a Franco-Russian initiative to hold talks next summer on new European security architecture under the auspices of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

By then, the Western countries will have had to work out a response to the Russian proposal. As set out by President Medvedev in his speech at the World Policy Conference in Evian on 8 October, the Treaty would contain five principles:

- a confirmation of the basic principles of security and international relations, including fulfilment of international obligations, respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence, and other principles set out in the UN Charter,
- non-use of force or the threat of force, and possibly approaches to the prevention and peaceful settlement of disputes,
- guarantees of symmetrical security, including no promotion of security at the cost of others,
- no exclusive right to maintain peace and security in Europe,
- basic parameters of arms control, and cooperation against trafficking, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and terrorism.^{xlvi} ^{xlvi}

The Russian initiative is a tricky one. It is understandable that it should seek to block, for example, the further expansion of NATO, and the installation of the U. S. missile defence systems in Poland and the Czech Republic.

The Russian proposal would also, however, have the effect of devaluing the Helsinki Accords of 1975. The Russian proposal does not cover some of the principles of the Helsinki Accords, such as the inviolability of borders, the non-intervention in internal affairs, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and equal rights and self-determination of peoples. Russia has violated these principles in its domestic policy and its treatment of the other former Soviet states.

The Helsinki Accords moreover form the basis for the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), an organization decried by some Russians as a relic of the Cold War. The OSCE is the world's largest regional security organization. It covers an area that stretches from Vancouver to Vladivostok. It offers a forum for political negotiations and decision-making in the fields of early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. Its mandate includes issues such as arms control, human rights, freedom of the press, and fair elections. The OSCE also maintains observer missions in trouble-spots, including, before the Georgian conflict, in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Furthermore, the OSCE provides the aegis for the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE), whose application Russia had suspended in July 2007, because the Western countries had not ratified the Adaptations to the Treaty signed in 1999 at Istanbul. The Western countries refrained from doing so because Russia had not fulfilled its commitment to withdraw its forces from Moldova and Georgia.^{xlix}

By its reference to arms control, the Russian proposal could be intended to set aside the (CFE). The CFE provides stability and predictability in Europe by establishing limits

on conventional weapons. Among other things, the Treaty is supposed to prevent the massing of Russian forces on its borders, such as we saw in the invasion of Georgia.¹

Devaluing the Helsinki Accords and the treaties that flow from it, could assist Russia in achieving its avowed aim of establishing a zone of influence in the former Soviet Union.

Russia's aim of a zone of influence could also be given a boost by its proposal for a Union of Europe between Russia and the EU that is intended to flow from the European Security Treaty. The Union would form a single energy complex, which could prevent Europe from diversifying its sources of energy. The Union would also coordinate policy in the military, political, and strategic fields, a proposal perhaps intended to give Russia a veto on European policy in these areas. One of the important reasons for excluding Russia from NATO and the EU has been that membership would give Russia the right of veto.

The Union would be "supplemented" by NATO and Russia's economic, regional, and security organizations. Thus, Canada and the United States would have a say only through some relationship between NATO and the new Union, while the other former Soviet states would have a similar voice only if they were members of one of Russia's organizations.

Instead of proceeding on the basis of the Russian initiative, we might propose modernizing the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE). We might also seek to give greater force to the OSCE and the principles of the Helsinki Accords.

Conclusion

In a period of increased tensions with Russia, the EU should nevertheless continue its efforts to promote stability, prosperity and democracy in Eastern Europe. In view of increased Russian pressure on some of its neighbours, the EU may even have to enrich new Eastern Partnership by opening more fully the doors to eventual membership. Because of the deleterious effect that Russia's tense relationship with some of its neighbours can have on the EU interests, the EU might make the development of its relations with Russia dependent on the quality of Russian relations with the other ex-Soviet republics. The West, including the EU, must maintain the principles of the sovereign equality of all states, including the right to control their own destiny, and to have non-interference in their internal affairs.

If the West does not accept the idea of an exclusive Russian sphere of influence in Eastern Europe the West has to deal with Russia's concern that its security is being threatened and its other interests are being ignored in the growth of Western influence. The West must work out with Russia and the other East European countries a new security architecture for Europe. The West might also place greater emphasis on engaging Russia constructively on a wide range of world issues and seek to involve Russia further in the Western network of organizations and agreements.

To avoid further break-downs in the relationship, we must also be prepared for a greater long-term engagement with Russia and the other countries of the former Soviet Union.

-
- ⁱ Lyne, Roderic, **Reading Russia, Rewiring the West**, www.opendemocracy.net, 12 October, 2008, Johnson's Russia List, 2008-#191, 20 October 2008, #22
- ⁱⁱ Reynolds, Paul, , **New Russian world order: the five principles**, BBC News Europe, 1 September 2008, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7591610.stm>
- ⁱⁱⁱ **Occasional Paper #284 The 1999 OSCE Istanbul Summit Decisions on Moldova and Georgia: Prospects for Implementation**, The Kennan Institute, The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?ots591=0C54E3B3-1E9C-BE1E-2C24-A6A8C7060233&lng=en&id=19098>
- ^{iv} **Questions and Answers on CFE, NATO**, http://www.nato.int/issues/arms_control/cfe_qa_factsheet.pdf
- ^v **Georgia Ex-ambassador Revises Claim on US Blessing of South Ossetia War**, Itar-Tass, 26 November, Johnson's Russia List, 2008-#216, 28 November 2008, #4
- ^{vi} **Ex-Envoy's Hearing at the War Commission Ends in Brawl**, Civil Georgia, Tbilisi 25 November 2008, Johnson's Russia List, 2008-#216, 28 November 2008, #3
- ^{vii} Markedonov, Serhey, **Caucasus Conflict Breaks Old Rules of the Game**, Russian Analytical Digest, 45/08, 4 September, 2008, p. 3
- ^{viii} Goble, Paul, **Window on Eurasia: Moscow Began Planning for the Georgian War Four Years Ago**, Illarionov Says, Johnson's Russia List, 2008 -178, 1 October 2008, No. 34
- ^{ix} Goble, Paul, **Op.cit.**
- ^x Markedonov, Serhey, **A Russian Perspective: Forging the Peace in the Caucasus**, Russian Analytical Digest, no.40/08, 8 May 2008, p.7
- ^{xi} Socor, Vladimir, **Moscow Makes Furious but Empty Threats to Georgia and Ukraine**, Eurasia Daily Monitor, 14 April,2008, Vol.5, Issue 70, p.1
- ^{xii} **Idem.**
- ^{xiii} Whitmore, Brian, **Did Russia Plan Its War In Georgia?** RFERL, August 15, 2008
- ^{xiv} Pop, Valentina, **Saakkashvili saved Georgia from coup, former Putin aide says**, EUObserver.com, 14 October, 2008, Johnson's Russia List, 2008-#187, 14 October 2008, #37
- ^{xv} Kavkaz Center, 5 July 2008, **Moscow to launch War Operations against Georgia in Late August**, Johnson's Russia List, 2008-No. 158, No. 35
- ^{xvi} Felgenhauer, Pavel, **Georgian Officials Admit They Misread Russian Intentions**, Eurasia Daily Monitor, 30 October, 2008, Vol.5, Issue 208, p.2
- ^{xvii} **After Georgia. The EU and Russia: Follow-Up Report**, House of Lords, European Union Committee - Third Report <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200809/ldselect/ldcom/26/2602.htm>
- ^{xviii} **Ex-Envoy's Hearing at War Commission ends in Brawl**, Civil Georgia, Tbilisi, 25 November 08, BBC Monitoring, **Ex-Envoy says, Russia, Georgia "did everything possible" to start war**, Ekho Moskvyy radio, Moscow, 0808 GMT, 26 November 2008, Johnson's Russia List, 2008 -#216, 28 November 2008, #2, 3
- ^{xix} Sherr, James, **A Regional Offensive**, The Sunday Telegraph, 10 August 2008
- ^{xx} Bernstein, Jonas, **Are Putin and Medvedev at Odds over the Georgian Campaign?** Eurasia Daily Monitor, 14 August, 2008, Vol.5, Issue 156, p.3
- ^{xxi} **Cohen, Ariel, GEORGIA: RUSSIA PLANS THREE MILITARY BASES IN ABKHAZIA, EURASIA INSIGHT**, 6 Feb. 2009, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insightb/articles/eav020609g.shtml>
- ^{xxii} **2003 Energy Strategy of the Russian Federation to 2020**, (in Russian) Minpromenergo Rosii, Moscow, 27 September 2005, p.1
- ^{xxiii} Zarakhovich, Yuri, **Q&A: Putin's Critical Adviser**, Time.com, New York, 31 December, 2005 Johnson's Russia List 2006-#1, 1 January 2006 #18,
- ^{xxiv} Kupchinsky, Roman, **Russia's Gas information Game**, Eurasia Daily Monitor, 13 January, 2009, Vol.6, Issue 7, p.3
- ^{xxv} Busch, Gary K., **The misperception of the Russian Ukrainian Gas Problem**, Oncus.net, 12 January 2009, Johnson's Russia List, 2009-#8, 13 January 2009, #24
- ^{xxvi} Socor, Vladimir, **Ukrainian Law Bars Transferring Ownership of the Gas Transit System**, Eurasia Daily Monitor, 15 January, 2009, Vol.6, Issue 9, p 4
- ^{xxvii} **Russia, Ukraine and Gas Pipe Down**, The Economist 10-16 January 2009, Johnson's Russia List, 2009-#6, 9 January 2009, #20

- ^{xxviii} **Analysis: Ukrainian Leadership Split Complicates Gas Deal With Russia**, OSC [US Open Source Center], 12 January 2009, Johnson's Russia List, 2009-#8, 13 January 2009, #31
- ^{xxix} Travin, Dimitriy, **Russia and Ukraine in Gas Conflict**, Polit.ru, 12 January, 2009, Johnson's Russia List, 2009-#8, 13 January 2009, #25
- ^{xxx} **Analysis: Ukrainian Leadership Split Complicates Gas Deal With Russia**, OSC [US Open Source Center], 12 January 2009, Johnson's Russia List, 2009-#8, 13 January 2009, #31
- ^{xxxi} Kupchinsky, Roman, **Russia's Gas information Game**, Eurasia Daily Monitor, 13 January, 2009, Vol.6, Issue 7, p.3
- ^{xxxii} **Ukraine Wanted Gas Crisis: Investigators**, www.russiatoday.com, 6 February, 2009, Johnson's Russia List, 2009-#26, 6 February 2009, #45
- ^{xxxiii} Jolly, David and Werdiger, Julia, **Gasprom Dispute Entangles Europe**, New York Times, 7 January 2009
- ^{xxxiv} Socor, Vladimir, **Russia Seeks Control of Ukraine's Gas Transit System through a Consortium**, Eurasia Daily Monitor, 13 January, 2009, Vol.6, Issue 9, p.2
- ^{xxxv} Baev, Pavel, **Gasprom's War Has Damaged Russian Interests**, Eurasia Daily Monitor, 19 January, 2009, Vol.6, Issue 11, p 1
- ^{xxxvi} <http://www.newsru.com/arch/russia/17jan2009/konf.html>
- ^{xxxvii} Choursina, Kateryna and Comfort, Nicolas, **Russia, Ukraine Agree Talks to Resolve Gas Dispute**, Blomberg, 15 January 2009, Johnson's Russia List, 2009-#10, 15 January 2009, #1
- ^{xxxviii} O'Brien, Emma, **Ukraine's Hryvnia May Decline 19% in Next Six Months as Economy Worsens**, Bloomberg News, 17 February, 2009, Ukraine Report AUR#929 18 Feb 2009, #21
- ^{xxxix} Runner, Philippa, **EU Neighbour Ukraine at Risk of going Bust**, Euroobserver 16 January 2009, Ukraine Report AUR#929 18 Feb 2009, #25
- ^{xl} **Ukraine Industrial Production Shrinks by over a Third Year on Year**, Reuters, Kiev, 17 Feb2009, Ukraine Report AUR#929 18 Feb 2009, #26
- ^{xli} Schneider Eberhard, **Ukraine and the European Union**, Ukraine-Analysen, No. 5, 11 April 2006, - #17, The Ukraine List, #390, Ottawa, 4 May 2006
- ^{xlii} Sherr, James, **Final Warning, Europe, Russia, Ukraine, and Energy**, The World Today (UK) February 2009, Johnson's Russia List, 2009-#20, 29 January 2009, #41
- ^{xliiii} Constantin Chira-Pascanut, Constantin & Oliver Schmidtke, Oliver, **Contested Neighbourhood: Moldova, at the Crossroads between the EU and Russia**, <http://web.uvic.ca/%7Epolisci/verdun/conference/papers/Schmidtke.pdf>
- ^{xliv} Telegraph .uk.co May 7, 2008
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/russia/1933223/Gorbachev-US-could-start-new-Cold-War.html>
- ^{xlvi} Shlapentokh, Vladimir, shlapent@msu.edu , Johnson's Russia List, 2008-#194, 24 October 2008, #29
- ^{xlv} DeBardeleben, Joan, **The Impact of EU Enlargement on the EU-Russian Relationship**, http://web.uvic.ca/%7Epolisci/verdun/conference/papers/joan_debardeleben.pdf
- ^{xlvii} **Medvedev Voiced Five Guidelines for Europe's Security**, Kommersant.com, 8 October 2008, Johnson's Russia List, 2008-#183, 8 October 2008, #5
- ^{xlviii} **Security Treaty Principles, Five Principles of the European Security Treaty Suggested by the President of Russia, Dimitry Medvedev**, Kommersant.com, 9 October 2008, Johnson's Russia List, 2008-#184, 9 October 2008, #4
- ^{xlix} Wikipedia, **Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe**, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_on_Conventional_Armed_Forces_in_Europe
- ^l Gottemoeller, Rose, **Russian-American Security Relations after Georgia**, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, October 2008