

# THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE “FROZEN CONFLICTS” IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS

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## Introduction

The author originates from a small and neutral EU member country in Central Europe, which has no innate interests in the South Caucasus (and not even embassies). Still he does not consider this region as insignificant: on the contrary, it seems to him that there are several reasons for drawing attention to it. First of all, it is a striking phenomenon that one could call an “asymmetry of attention” in humanitarian affairs. For instance, the Palestine conflict is being covered by the media almost everyday in numerous details, while the fate of South Caucasian refugees is largely unknown to the European public and politics.

The European Security Strategy, adopted in 2003, identifies terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, State failure and organised crime as “key threats.” – At least the last three thereof are relevant to the South Caucasus, even though it appears in just one single text passage within the strategy: “We should now take a stronger and more active interest in the problems of the Southern Caucasus, which will in due course also be a neighbouring region.” European politics and media mention the South Caucasus and the Caspian Basin solely in the context of energy security, since the region is both a source area and transit corridor for oil and gas supplies to Europe, which remains heavily dependent on oil from the Persian Gulf and Russian gas supplies.

The enlargements which took place in 2004 and 2007 brought the EU geographically closer to the South Caucasus. However, the region’s appreciation has not automatically increased with this event. In the EU, in many cases it is not being understood that politics in the South Caucasus is conducted according to completely different criteria than in Western and Central Europe. Moreover, “there is no general consensus in the EU that South Caucasus is an urgent matter.”<sup>1</sup> At times, EU representatives admit this quite frankly. Peter Semneby, since 2006 the EU’s Special Representative for the South Caucasus, stated that “there is [...] (a) lack of knowledge in the EU about the South Caucasus and its particular problems and about the importance of this region for the EU.”<sup>2</sup> And Marie Anne Isler Béguin, member of the European Parliament and Chairwoman of the South Caucasus Parliamentary Delegation, reckoned candidly: “Nobody (in the EU) is interested in Georgia’s problems.”<sup>3</sup> She could have added the other South Caucasian countries too, even though Ar-

menia is in a special position: It can rely on an active and lobbying-experienced Diaspora not only in Russia and the U.S., but also in some EU countries.

The European Security Strategy showed awareness of the fact that “violent or frozen conflicts [...] threaten regional stability. They destroy human lives and social and physical infrastructures; they threaten minorities, fundamental freedoms and human rights.” Likewise, in documents of the EU Commission it is said that “frozen conflicts” are “not only our neighbours’ problems. They risk producing major spillovers for the EU, such as illegal immigration, unreliable energy supplies, environmental degradation and terrorism.”<sup>4</sup> All this should be a sufficient cause to sum up the situation around the South Caucasian breakaway regions Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Nagorny Karabakh and to examine the role of the EU in the conflict settlement efforts.

Brussels should not confine its politics towards the South Caucasus to the claim for a shutdown of the Armenian nuclear power plant Medzamor, as the phenomenon of separatism and regionalism – although in different characteristics – is in fact familiar to several EU countries. Concretely, this concerns the United Kingdom (the Catholics of Northern Ireland, Scottish National Party), France (Corsica), Belgium (Vlaams Belang, before known as Vlaams Blok), Spain (ETA, Catalonia), Italy (South Tyrol, Lega Nord) and Cyprus (Turks in the North). But obviously, this did not lead to a better general understanding of sources and consequences of violent separatism in the South Caucasus.

## The EU and the territorial integrity of the South Caucasian States

In the EU/Georgia Action Plan within the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) one of the mentioned goals is to “contribute to the conflicts settlement in Abkhazia, Georgia and Tskinali Region/South Ossetia, Georgia, based on respect of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognised borders.”<sup>5</sup> However, the document does not envisage any concrete steps to achieve this. Potentially meaningful distinctions are to be found in comparison of the ENP Action Plans for Azerbaijan and Armenia. Thus, according to the Action Plan for Armenia, the Karabakh conflict shall be resolved “on the basis of international norms and

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principles, including the principle of self-determination of peoples.”<sup>6</sup> At the same time, the Action Plan for Azerbaijan does not contain any reference to the mentioned “principle.” Instead, it refers (in the introduction, not in the chapter about Karabakh) to “respect of and support for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of internationally recognised borders.”<sup>7</sup> But this clarification is absent in Armenia’s Action Plan.

EU representatives in their obvious efforts to please everybody like to stress the existence of two “contradictory principles” in international law – the right of territorial integrity and the right of self-determination of peoples. However, it is generally well known that taking up the right of self-determination does not automatically include (or lead to) the right of territorial separation from an internationally recognised State. Even if that would be the case, one should ask why Chechnya, which declared independence in 1991 (and has more inhabitants than Abkhazia, Nagorny Karabakh, and South Ossetia altogether), could not separate itself from Russia as well. The author of this text has gained experience within numerous discussions and conferences in Central and Western Europe and has learnt from a lot of publications that most of those (also and especially non-Russian) voices, which defend the Chechen war with indications regarding Russia’s territorial integrity, find no critical words regarding the separatist entities on Azerbaijani and Georgian soil.

### The EU and the breakaway regions

The management of the wars in the Western Balkans in the 1990’s already overburdened the EU at times: Even though this region is in direct proximity to Central Europe, one could be astounded with the naivety and low level of knowledge of some EU facilitators and crisis managers. With regard to the South Caucasus, it is even lower. Time and again, especially verbal utterances of EU politicians and diplomats show a lack of knowledge about the situation of the “frozen conflicts” in the South Caucasus and the roles played by third countries therein.

In his mission statement, Semneby prefers not to speak about Karabakh’s territorial affiliation – for him, this “disputed enclave” is “located in the border area between Azerbaijan and Armenia.”<sup>8</sup> This is astonishing because documents of the European Commission put it unambiguously that “portions of Azerbaijan’s territory remain under Armenian occupation.”<sup>9</sup> However, the meaning of this issue in the relations between Brussels and Yerevan is obviously insignificant.<sup>10</sup>

With regard to Georgia, a document of the European Commission puts it in clear words: “The separatist regime (in Abkhazia) won a de facto victory in 1993 over the forces of the newly independent Georgia which resulted in the forced expulsion of the Georgian population. [...] South Ossetia has in recent years become a haven for

smuggling operations which have also provided the major source of income for the separatist leadership in Tskhinvali. [...] Due to the two unresolved territorial disputes [...], nearly 18% of Georgian territory remains beyond the control of the Georgian Authorities.”<sup>11</sup> And the European Parliament in a joint resolution strongly condemned the attempts by movements in the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia to establish independence unilaterally.<sup>12</sup>

Recognition of Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Karabakh as “independent States” is not a matter of discussion within the EU. Brussels has repeatedly stated that it would not recognise the separatist regimes as well as elections and referendums held by them. However, these regimes and the conditions they have created and maintained are still in existence, which means that the EU position in this question has no impact on the circumstances after all; nothing depends on whether EU accepts it or not.

One cannot ignore that West European and North American countries and organisations are also contributing to the survival of those entities: companies, relief organisations, diplomats, journalists, and even several politicians deal with them quite impartially. According to Vladimir Socor, the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and Secretary-General of the EU Council Javier Solana “allowed himself to be maneuvered by (Russian President) Putin into a meeting with the Abkhaz and South Ossetian secessionist leaders in Sochi” in 2005.<sup>13</sup> EU delegations headed by the European Commission director for Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus and Central Asia met senior officials of separatist Abkhazia. Semneby met the separatist leadership of Abkhazia in Sukhumi and insisted that “we have worked with the de-facto-leaders of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and keep working with them.”<sup>14</sup>

No matter whether the EU wants this or not: every contact with the separatists reevaluates them, strengthens their self-confidence (which, for example, appeared in Abkhazia’s claim for direct links with the EU, without mediation of Tbilisi<sup>15</sup>) and, finally, makes them even more adamant. This is, of course, clearly counterproductive for any conflict settlement.

The EU’s interest in contacts with the South Caucasian separatists is in a peculiar contrast with the uproar caused by a single commercial flight of an Azerbaijani airline to the Turkish North Cyprus in 2005: the government of Cyprus considered this an infringement of its national sovereignty and reacted harshly towards Azerbaijan, and the EU External Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner warned that unless the Azerbaijani government abandons its “policy of cultivating ties with the unrecognized Turkish Republic of North Cyprus, it risks being excluded from the imminent talks with South Caucasus States on closer cooperation within the EU’s European

Neighborhood Policy.”<sup>16</sup> Altogether, this flight provoked more criticism by the EU than the continuing occupation of Azerbaijani territory.

### The EU as a donor in the region

In the South Caucasian region the EU has a role of a “payer” instead of a “player.” Thus, Brussels obviously tries to compensate a lack of political engagement. It provided Georgia with 369.43 mil. Euro between 1992 and 2003, Azerbaijan with 399.674 Euro in 1992-2006, and Armenia with 386.39 mil. Euro in 1991-2006.<sup>17</sup> This means that Armenia has received much more financial assistance per capita than Azerbaijan. The cancellation of EU aid for Armenia due to the occupation of Azerbaijani territory has never been up for discussion. Notwithstanding the significant financial support from the EU and the U.S.,<sup>18</sup> Armenia has up to now at no point appeared as if it would be more flexible in the Karabakh question.

Between 1997 and 2006, the EU allocated 33 million Euro for humanitarian programs in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. In 2006, the EU became the biggest international donor to the two breakaway provinces. Several EU representatives actually present the granting of outside help to Armenia and to the separatists as a contribution towards the conflict settlement. However, it is exactly the opposite: the separatists (and the countries and interest groups behind them) feel assured in their course if they receive money without any push towards the reintegration into the States they belong to under international law. It is likely that they will act even more uncompromisingly to gain more money.

The EU is funding such fields as road engineering, civil engineering, banking and finances, agriculture and energy – all of which the separatist entities would otherwise have to finance on their own. Now when the EU participates, the saved capital can be used for the armed forces – which again is being clearly counterproductive for any conflict settlement. Furthermore, the EU has popularised itself in the separatist areas by no means only because of its money donations – “mistrust of EU assistance in the secessionist entities is widespread.”<sup>19</sup>

### The EU and the negotiations regarding the “frozen conflicts”

The Finnish diplomat Heikki Talvitie was appointed as Special Representative for the South Caucasus on 7 July 2003. His mandate included among other things to “assist in conflict resolution, in particular to enable to the EU better to support the UN Secretary-General and his Special Representative for Georgia, the OSCE Minsk Group, and the conflict resolution mechanism for South Ossetia under the aegis of the OSCE.”<sup>20</sup> With this reference to the UN and OSCE, the EU abandoned in its

mandate an explicit independent role within the conflict management a priori. Up to date the EU is no formal participant in any of the regions’ conflict resolution mechanisms.

The EU Member States - Germany, Italy, Sweden, and Finland - are members of the Minsk Group, but the EU as an institution has not appeared there up to now. Documents of the European Commission constitute that the EU through its Special Representative for the South Caucasus provides “strong political support” to the mediation efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group.<sup>21</sup> Likewise, Semneby made clear that the “EU backs the activity of the Minsk Group.”<sup>22</sup> But *de facto* the EU in the Karabakh conflict offers little more than verbal support to the Minsk Group process, which has, since its establishment in 1992, not made any progress towards Karabakh’s reintegration into Azerbaijani State structures. In the Abkhazian and South Ossetian conflicts, the EU works in partnership with the UN and OSCE, providing them with acutely needed funds for confidence building in support of negotiations. Negotiations for settlement of the Georgian - South Ossetian conflict are facilitated by the OSCE in the Joint Control Commission, which includes Georgian, South and North Ossetian, as well as Russian representatives. The EU Commission is an informal observer.<sup>23</sup>

Return of refugees and internally displaced persons to the places of their origin is a part of the mandate of the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus, but neither Talvitie nor Semneby have alleged that due to their actions just one single refugee has returned to Karabakh or Abkhazia.

The separatists like to underline their “commitment to peace.” If one has already reached his goal – violent separation from a hateful central government – it is naturally easy to present oneself as peace devotee and to blame simultaneously this government for wanting to change the status quo violently, for preparing a new war, for being a “warmonger” etc.

The international community also plays – being aware or unaware of that – into the hands of the separatists, since there is an extensive consensus that a settlement must be reached peacefully and through talks. But the separatists as well as external forces behind them can delay those talks *ad libitum*. Hence the negotiations lead to a prolongation of the status quo, advantageous to the separatists, and the secessions will consolidate, which will make it even harder for the affected States to restore their territorial integrity.

Georgia believes that the EU “can have a positive influence on Russia to make its role more constructive.”<sup>24</sup> Tbilisi calls on the Union to intensify its participation in existing negotiation forums and assist in creating new mechanisms,<sup>25</sup> since it believes such an enhanced EU presence would serve as a counterweight to Moscow. The latter very obviously is not being aspired to by Brussels. Larger

EU's engagement in the negotiations on the "frozen conflicts" would hardly change their course. The main cause for the stalemate is not the negotiation format but the mutually exclusive interests of the parties concerned, that is, the Azerbaijani and Georgian governments on the one side and the *de facto* leadership of the separatist regions on the other.

### How does the EU comprehend the "settling" of the frozen conflicts?

EU politicians and diplomats emphasise the general importance of "settlements" of the South Caucasian "frozen conflicts." However, their statements do not comprise ideas about the goals of such settlements. It remains unclear what the EU actually wishes to attain or considers as desirable – an extrapolation of the current status quo for an undetermined time? Reintegration of the separatist entities into Azerbaijan and Georgia? Or, on the contrary, their definite independence and international recognition? EU representatives underscore – like Russia (which at the same time fights separatists in Chechnya) and the U.S. – always independently, that there is no viable alternative to continued efforts to reach peaceful solutions of the "frozen conflicts." But this is a statement about an *instrument* rather than a *goal*. And this common approach of Brussels, Washington, and Moscow accommodates the separatists and makes their positions practically intangible, since they are not going to let themselves be reintegrated into their metropolitan States through negotiations: There is no thinkable behaviour of Tbilisi or Baku which could prompt the separatists to recognise the State governments again as legitimate leaderships. Those circumstances should inherently be the underlying principle for subsequent conflict management. But Brussels has not made any suggestions so far in case the peaceful reintegration of the separatist regions into their metropolitan States is not feasible.

EU representatives like to animate a "broad, far-reaching autonomy" for Karabakh, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia. But this has been proposed by official Baku and Tbilisi for many years and on countless occasions without any success. The separatists feel – with the support of Russia and Armenia respectively – strong enough to insist on their "independence" and to decline compromises of any kind. This does not seem to impress the EU, which is not intending to change its course towards the break-away regions. EU representatives suggest for the "settlement" of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict the model of the Åland Islands, which belong to Finland, but with ethnically Swedish inhabitants who enjoy some privileges. The Karabakh Armenians keep declining such a solution stating that "Azerbaijan is not Finland." Although this is indisputable, they always forget to mention that they are no Swedes.

### The European Neighbourhood Policy and the "frozen conflicts"

The EU in June 2004 formally included Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan in its European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). On 15 November 2006, the ENP Action Plans with the three countries were signed. Brussels has stressed many times that the ENP is not intended as a preliminary step towards the EU membership. However, even a membership perspective would hardly facilitate a fair settlement of the "frozen conflicts." As known generally, the Greek-Turkish conflict over Cyprus was not resolved due to the accession of the island to the EU.

At the end of 2006, the European Commission drew at a quite disillusioned picture: "The ENP has achieved little in supporting the resolution of frozen or open conflicts in the region". But "if the ENP cannot contribute to addressing conflicts in the region, it will have failed in one of its key purposes. Such conflicts can threaten the Union's own security, whether through the risk of escalation or of an exodus of refugees, or by interrupting energy supplies or cutting trade and transport links, or through the spread of terrorism and organised crime including trafficking in human beings, drugs and arms."<sup>26</sup>

### Russia as a factor for EU activities in the South Caucasus

The EU policy towards the South Caucasus is obviously marked by a "Russia first" approach. EU representatives with Solana taking the lead have affirmed on several occasions that settlement of the "frozen conflicts" in the South Caucasus and Moldova is "impossible without Russia." However, nobody in the EU is able to give an example of a "frozen conflict," settled *in collaboration with* the "Russian friends" (Solana). This indisputable fact should suffice to cause an alteration of the EU strategy, but there seem to be no prospects of that.

Russia tries to convince the EU, U.S., and NATO that "bellicose statements" and "hate speeches" from Azerbaijani and Georgian politicians as well as allegedly too high military expenses of the both countries, cause tensions – and not the existence of separatist entities within their territory. The success of Moscow's Strategy<sup>27</sup> is all the more astounding as Russia itself wages a war in Chechnya; moreover, the rhetoric of its politicians and mass media against the Chechen rebels in terms of acrimony leaves nothing to be desired.

Though Tbilisi is keen on greater EU engagement, it may not have understood how reluctant Brussels is to take on a greater role in the conflict resolution process – especially with regard to Russia. Due to Russia's concerns, the EU failed to deploy a fully-fledged border mission in Georgia in 2005. This aggravated the impres-

sion that without Russia's affirmation the EU would not attempt any significant initiatives. But even the EU's already quite passive role in the management of the "frozen conflicts" in the CIS is being considered by many in Moscow as still too active. They are always afraid of a "displacement of Russia from the negotiation processes, which bears the danger of destabilisation."<sup>28</sup> Consequently Russia shows itself highly unwilling to include the EU's Special Representative in the existing mechanisms for settling the three South Caucasian "frozen conflicts." Putin generally called on Brussels to keep out of them.<sup>29</sup>

There is an unexpressed, but definite reluctance of the EU to engage in a settlement of the separatist conflicts because it considers the CIS as a "Russian special interest zone" and does not wish to "unsettle" Moscow. In plain-text, the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Moldova is not important enough to the EU to "put at risk" its relations with Russia. In other words, nobody in the EU thinks of the Russian support in favour of armed separatists in Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Moldova as a factor which should bother the relations between Brussels and Moscow.

It is well known that official Russia tries to present the independence of Kosovo as an "original precedent" for the "independence" of separatist entities in the CIS. In this issue, the EU politicians and diplomats have contradicted one another and at times even themselves.

### What could the EU do?

First of all, the EU would have to take the *realities* as the foundation of its policy towards the Caucasus in general and the "frozen conflicts" in particular. In this regard, it would be an important insight that there are regions in the world where "soft approaches," "light footprints," "incentive packages," financing of workshops and conferences in order to "enter a dialogue," "facilitate confidence building," "increase mutual confidence," "apply moderation," "rebuild trust" or to "create a better environment for the negotiations," calls to "make full use of the existing negotiating mechanisms" and for a "federalization of the relations between the capitals and breakaway regions," democratization, civil society, etc. do not work or sometimes turn out even to be counterproductive. The South Caucasus is one of them.

Also of extreme importance is the definition of a clear goal of the EU's involvement in the negotiations on the "frozen conflicts." Again, this can only be the reintegration of the separatist entities (accompanied by effective protection of ethnic minorities) into their metropolitan States, otherwise would mean to legitimise violent border changes. Furthermore, the EU would have to call on Russia and Armenia to stop providing support to separatists. It would also be important that the EU calls a spade a spade with regard to the occupiers and the occupied.

Brussels has up to date never called for a withdrawal of the Armenian military forces from Azerbaijan.

It has become indisputable that the separatists will not be brought to more flexibility without any pressure, which the EU could impose by taking the following measures: Denial of entry for all officials and other citizens of the separatist regions

- within Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Moldova (also and especially with the usually used Armenian and Russian passports);
- Trade embargo towards the separatist regions;
- Ban on investments by natural as well as judicial persons from the EU;
- No – under which title whatsoever – financing the separatists or projects on their territories;
- No financial aid for countries which support the CIS separatists;
- Opposition to all attempts of the separatists to appear in the UN and other international organisations;
- Claim for demilitarisation of the separatist regions.

### Summary and Conclusions

In the words of Dov Lynch, the EU in the South Caucasus "retained a low overall profile, with little presence in the negotiating mechanisms, no direct involvement in mediation, and an undefined strategy to lead policy."<sup>30</sup> A reason for the EU (and NATO) for showing restraint with regard to the "frozen conflicts" in the Black Sea region is the unwillingness to interfere with the OSCE mediation. However, it is appropriate to confess that the efforts of the latter has not produce any results so far. A further, arguably even more important reason for the European restraint is the "thoughtfulness" for Russia: the EU does not want to engage in the negotiations on the "frozen conflicts" also because of the possibility of "irritating" or "alienating" Russia; eventually all separatist entities of the CIS owe their existence and sustainability to a certain extent to Moscow. "Despite EU efforts directed at Abkhazia and South Ossetia, the trend of *de facto* annexation of the secessionist entities to Russia remained predominant, limiting the scope for EU policies in the future."<sup>31</sup> Altogether it is indisputable that greater EU involvement in conflict resolution in the South Caucasus is opposed by Russia. Thus, the EU will hardly advocate Azerbaijani and Georgian interests towards Moscow, and it will not actively help the governments in Baku and Tbilisi to restore their territorial integrity. The South Caucasian "frozen conflicts" are much less important for the EU than to – what one seems to be afraid of in Brussels all the time – "put at risk the relations with Russia."

The EU is hardly concerned about the support provided by third countries to Karabakh, Abkhazia and South Ossetia respectively. Although the EU has the potential to put pressure upon separatists, it will hardly come to this.

Up to now, the EU's actions entailed the prolongation of the status quo with regard to the "frozen conflicts" for an undetermined time span – meaning that separatists can feel safe in their position. However, in the long run Brussels will not be able to avoid answering the question what should happen with the separatist regions in the CIS if – and everything points to that – all of its past recipes fail.

EU engagement and presence in the South Caucasus can be no end in itself. The Union must stay aware of its principles, and this should actually include the unconditional protection of the territorial integrity of States and the subsequent impossibility of violent border changes. 🍀

- 1 Nicu Popescu, "Europe's Unrecognised Neighbours. The EU in Abkhazia and South Ossetia", CEPS Working Document No. 260/March 2007, p. 7.
- 2 Cited in Thomas de Waal, "EU Could Assume Peacekeeping Role", 341 IWPR'S Caucasus Reporting Service 25 May 2006.
- 3 Anya Vvedenskaya, "Evrosoyuz ne sovetuet Saakashvili podlivat masla v ogon" (Interview), "Nezavisimaya gazeta", 13 October 2006, p. 6.
- 4 Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament "On Strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy". Commission of the European Communities, Brussels, 4. December 2006, p. 2.
- 5 EU/Georgia Action Plan, see at <[http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/action\\_plans/georgia\\_enp\\_ap\\_final\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/action_plans/georgia_enp_ap_final_en.pdf)>, [accessed 30 May 2007]), Priority area 6.
- 6 EU/Armenia Action Plan, see at <[http://www.armeniaforeignministry.com/perspectives/061114\\_armenia\\_enp\\_ap\\_final\\_en.pdf](http://www.armeniaforeignministry.com/perspectives/061114_armenia_enp_ap_final_en.pdf)> [accessed 30 May 2007]), Priority area 7.
- 7 EU/Azerbaijan Action Plan, see at <[http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/action\\_plans/azerbaijan\\_enp\\_ap\\_final\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/action_plans/azerbaijan_enp_ap_final_en.pdf)> [accessed 8 January 2008]), p. 1.
- 8 Mission statement of Peter Semneby, see at <[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3\\_fo/showPage.asp?id=1037&lang=EN](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3_fo/showPage.asp?id=1037&lang=EN)> (accessed 12 May 2007).
- 9 Identical in: Commission of the European Communities. Brussels, SEC (2005) 286/3: Commission Staff Working Paper. Annex to: European Neighbourhood Policy, Country Report Azerbaijan, Chapter 2.4.; Commission of the European Communities. Brussels, SEC(2005) 285/3: Commission Staff Working Paper. Annex to: European Neighbourhood Policy, Country Report Armenia, Chapter 2.4.
- 10 Conflict Resolution in the South Caucasus: The EU's Role. Crisis Group Europe, Europe Report No. 173, 20 March 2006, p. 11, see at <[http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/europe/caucasus/173\\_conflict\\_resolution\\_south\\_caucasus.pdf](http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/europe/caucasus/173_conflict_resolution_south_caucasus.pdf)> (accessed 21 March 2006).
- 11 Commission of the European Communities. Brussels, SEC (2005) 288/3: Commission Staff Working Paper. Annex to: European Neighbourhood Policy, Country Report Georgia, p. 13.
- 12 MEPs denounce and fully reject Transnistria referendum on independence / South Ossetia – MEPs call for a peaceful resolution to the conflict. Press Service of the European Parliament, 26 October 2006, see at <[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress\\_page/030-11950-293-10-42-903-20061020IPR11906-20-10-2006-2006-false/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/030-11950-293-10-42-903-20061020IPR11906-20-10-2006-2006-false/default_en.htm)> (accessed 30 October 2006). However, in foreign policy matters the European Parliament can only act in an advisory capacity.
- 13 Vladimir Socor, "Solana Blinks, Deeply", 187 Eurasia Daily Monitor – The Jamestown Foundation, vol. 3, 11 October 2006.
- 14 Olga Allenova, "Vopros o priznanii Rossiiy Abchazii i Yuzhnoy Osetii ne stoyal i ne stoit" (Interview). Newspaper "Kommersant", 20 December 2006, p. 9.
- 15 "Sokhumi Wants 'Direct Links' with EU", Civil Georgia, 18 January 2007, see at <<http://207.44.135.100/eng/article.php?id=14470>> (accessed 17 May 2007).
- 16 RFE/RL Newline, vol. 9, No. 190, part I, 7 October 2005.
- 17 The EU's relations with Georgia, see at <[http://ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations/georgia/intro/index.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/georgia/intro/index.htm)>; The EU's relations with Azerbaijan, see at <[http://ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations/azerbaidjan/intro/index.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/azerbaidjan/intro/index.htm)>; The EU's relations with Armenia, see at <[http://ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations/armenia/intro/index.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/armenia/intro/index.htm)> (all accessed 13 May 2007).
- 18 Over the past decade the U.S. has provided over 1.5 billion dollars in assistance to Armenia, the highest per capita amount in the Newly Independent States (NIS). In the Fiscal Year 2006 alone, it received 76.5 mil.; U.S. Department of State: Background Note: Armenia, see at <<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5275.htm>> (accessed 17 May 2007); U.S. Department of State, Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, 17 May 2006, see at <<http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/fs/66320.htm>> (accessed 17 May 2007).
- 19 Popescu op. cit., p. 16.
- 20 There was a subtle change in language in the mandate assigned to Semneby, who now has to "contribute to the resolution of conflicts" (Official Journal of the European Union, 21 February 2006. Joint Action 2006/121/CFSP of 20 February 2006 appointing the European Union Special Representative for the South Caucasus.). Semneby said this linguistic change was small but important, calling it "a political signal that the conflicts are very high on the agenda"(cited in: de Waal op. cit.).
- 21 Identical in: Commission of the European Communities. Brussels, SEC(2005) 286/3, op. cit; Commission of the European Communities. Brussels, SEC(2005) 285/3, op. cit.
- 22 Quoted according to: A. Ismayilova, "EU Special Envoy: It is Time to Establish Relations between Azerbaijan and Nagorno Karabakh", see at <[www.trend.az](http://www.trend.az)>, 20 February 2007.
- 23 The first-ever civilian mission to the former Soviet Union under the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), the EUJUST Themis Rule of Law Mission, which was launched in July 2004 for one year, assisted and advised Georgian law-enforcement agencies on how to reform the judiciary, criminal law, police and penitentiary systems and had nothing to do with the "frozen conflicts."
- 26 Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, op. cit., pp. 4 & 9.
- 27 For example, Peter Semneby said in September 2006 (by the way, in Yerevan): "Military rhetoric by Azerbaijan is, certainly, not welcomed by the EU" (The ISCIPI Analyst, volume XIII, No. 1, 21 September 2006).
- 28 E.S. Khotkova, "Tsenarii razvitiya otnosheniy Rossii i Evrosoyuza", in Evgeniy M. Kozhokin (ed.), Politika v XXI veke: vyzovy i realii, 5 (15) Analiticheskiy almanakh, Moskva 2006, pp. 43-79, at p. 73.
- 29 Michael Stürmer, "Energie ist der Schlüssel zu allem", Die Welt, 13 September 2006, p. 3.
- 30 Dov Lynch, "Why Georgia Matters", 86 Chaillot Paper (EU Institute for Security Studies, Paris, February 2006), p. 61.
- 31 Popescu op. cit., p. 22.