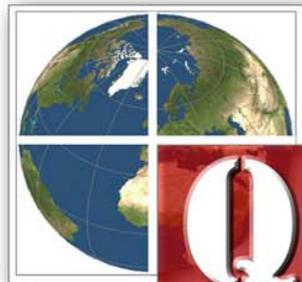


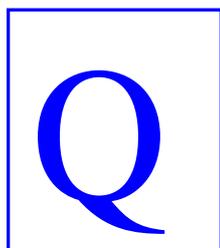


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DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE AND THE RISE OF REGIONAL NEO-OTTOMAN SOFT POWER

Paolo Quercia



Relevant regional political developments in the second quarter of 2009

The United States and the Balkans. The visit of the American vice-president Biden in the Balkans marks the level of the political status of the region and in particular of its “instability peak”, namely the political triangle Bosnia Herzegovina-Serbia-Kosovo. Joe Biden visited Sarajevo, Pristina and Belgrade, conveying different messages but reminding everyone that this area still is a priority area for the US foreign policy but that there is an unfinished task at stake to guarantee the stabilization of the region and the anchoring of the Balkans in the Western area.

There were different priorities for the visits in the three different countries. In Bosnia Herzegovina the scope was to verify the progress made after the SAA concession with the EU, in particular the implementation of the political agreements between the two entities that will allow the state entity to work more efficiently and be more integrated, thus overcoming the ethnic and territorial divisions. The time has come for the US administration to foster the abandonment of every resistance option to a more solid integration of the Bosnia Herzegovina, and also dissuade alternative geopolitical options both from the Serbian as well as the Croatian side. If the visit to Bosnia Herzegovina has been more relevant from a geopolitical point of view, the Belgrade visit represented the highest point of the Balkan’s visit, as Belgrade truly holds the keys of the regional security and integration. In particular the opportunity of verifying Tadic’s power and the governmental coalition extended to the socialists who support the Democratic leader Cvektovic, who came to power after the parliamentary elections of May 2008. The highest point of the visit was represented by Biden’s declaration of interest in establishing a strong collaboration with Serbia, besides the Kosovo recognition from Belgrade. Biden also expressed understanding for the lack of independence recognition of Kosovo from Belgrade, inaugurating a sort of double US Balkan policy. What is interesting for the US is the possibility of using Belgrade’s support to stabilize Bosnia Herzegovina. To implement this, the US showed the political availability to grant a “freedom to geopolitically dissent” on the Kosovo status from the side of Belgrade, in order to obtain help to take Bosnia Herzegovina back under its control. At the same time Biden opposed the possibility of a Dayton two, namely of a new peace conference which will draw new political balance of powers between the two entities and the three ethnicities who constitute the Bosnia Herzegovina Federation. If this US policy should be confirmed, it would be increasingly more difficult for the EU not to give Serbia a possibility of integrating in the EU also without the official Kosovo recognition. This could become highly problematic for the EU which has substituted the UN in Kosovo as key player in the safeguard of Pristina independence.

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In Kosovo, Eulex police forces and the NATO KFOR army intervened in the northern part of Mitrovica to prevent clashes between those Serbians who lived in a city old neighbourhood and Albanians Kosovars who had tried the reconstruction of some houses which were abandoned ten years ago. Serbians, who de facto control the territory, continue to prevent Albanians to come back in the North of the river Ibar. Serbians claim that the return of the refugees could worsen the security in the area and ask that this takes place through a negotiation process, which could foresee the return of Serbians in other areas of the countries where Serbians fled after 19991. In the meantime the Kosovar government is increasingly demanding the end of the UNMIK mission, that is perceived as a limitation to the national sovereignty obtained in February 2008. However it will not be possible to implement a status change of the mission or terminate it until the International Court of Justice will not evaluate the legality of the Kosovar independence. The resolution has just been conveyed from Ban Ki-Moon to the Court, after the General Assembly's approval; however the decision cannot be ratified before one year.

In the meantime it would be better to refrain from any substantial change of the balance of power in the area including the reduction of the NATO and EULEX contingents. Kosovo obtained a very important recognition from IMF (International Monetary Fund) which included Pristina in its members' slate. Kosovo membership has been voted for from more than 187 countries, a higher number of countries than those who recognize Kosovo as an independent state (less than sixty)².

Bosnia Herzegovina. *The Bosnia Herzegovina parliament has modified the status of the Brcko district, putting it entirely under the sovereignty of the central state and ending the international status envisaged by the Dayton Agreements. The unique status of the district however remains and it is situated outside of the control of the two entities that constitute Bosnia Herzegovina and it is passing under the control of the federal state and of its structures of triple ethnic rotation. In the meantime the UN has appointed a new high commissioner for Bosnia Herzegovina, the Austrian diplomat Valentin Inziko to replace the Slovak Miroslav Lajcak. The UN had manifested for long the intention of putting an end to its current presence in Bosnia Herzegovina and to abolish the position of the high commissioner, but the ethnic tension of the last year coupled with the fragility and vulnerability of the Dayton state construction will keep the UN still engaged on the ground for a very long time.*

Turkey. *Turkey and Armenia have agreed over a framework document for the normalization of their bilateral relations. In a diplomatic wording the two countries have stated jointly that they reached significant progress and mutual understanding of their different position in a way that makes possible to start the process of normalising their bilateral relations. The news of this important diplomatic progress, that has been achieved with the mediation of Switzerland, has*

¹ The issue of the return of Kosovar refugees is an extremely dangerous issue for internal security and can undermine the fragile and difficult ethnic balance reached so far. At the same time this is a test of how effectively government institutions both, international and Kosovar, can control the territory. At present, besides a lack of political will, it seems like none of the Kosovar authorities can cope with the ethnical hate and violence that comes from within. As a result the return of the numerous returnees who had to leave their house is minimal and unlikely.

² Kosovo's membership of the IMF will enable Pristina to obtain funds for developmental economic and infrastructural projects. This is a common objective of all European countries besides the availability to recognize or not Kosovo.

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produced protests and dissatisfaction in Azerbaijan both among the opposition and government parties.

Turkey foreign policy and the rising of neo-Ottoman soft power

The visit of the American president Obama in Turkey has been an important circumstance for assessing the new developments in Turkish foreign policy, especially after the new dynamism that the foreign policy of Ankara assumed towards Iraq and Caucasus. In the Caucasus the Georgian war of last summer has represented an important element in reshaping the regional balance of power effecting the solidity and endurance of the political and energetic axis Ankara – Baku – Tbilisi that stretches from the Black Sea to the Caspian Sea. After that war Turkey as constantly pursued a policy of stepping up its political ties with Moscow. This reaction to the facts on the ground should be interpreted as a diplomatic guarantee in case of a new future political turmoil in Georgia that could bring to a substitution of the leadership of Saakashvili with the one of a more pro Russian government. But another important change in the political and security environment scenario around Turkey has been activated by the decision of the United State to disengage military from Iraq in few years. This situation from one side is a positive outcome since it could bring an improvement of the security situation and of the internal stability conditions, as well as it will force the local Iraqi government to assume more autonomous governmental capacities; on the other side it is a highly dangerous phase of transition of powers where the risk of creating a power vacuum is high. The risk for Baghdad is that its own military forces could be unprepared to face internal riots and terrorist activities as well as it could create the good occasion for the secessionist part of the Iraqi Kurds to take action towards creating the conditions for a breakaway from the central state. Turkey tried to counter the risks for its own security from these two political developments by necessarily increasing, slowly but still significantly, the distance with its major ally, the United State of America and by reevaluating the political “virtues” of its neighbours, Russia and Iran in particular. This was the context that created the framework for the visit of Obama in Turkey, the first Islamic country that the new elected American president decided to visit. Two were the key aspects of this important visit: the Armenian question and the issue of the future of EU Turkey integration. As far as Obama’s approach to the Armenian question, the words of the American president, in his speech delivered in front of the Turkish parliament, have been received in Turkey with coldness and with a sentiment of dissatisfaction. Obama, even if decided to avoid the controversial word “genocide” referred to the Armenian massacre as “one of the biggest atrocities of the twentieth century”. Whatever the historical truth it is, the fact that the American president decided to touch this argument in a speech to the Turkish parliament shouldn’t be read as a contribution to the historical debate but has got a deep political meaning. Erdogan himself lined up with the critics of Obama’s approach to the issue commenting that it would be better to leave the historical questions to the historians and that they shouldn’t influence directly the political present international relations. But the goal of the American president was fully political, that is to push the Turkish government to remove the historical obstacles that prevent an enhanced political dialogue between Turkey and Armenia, a dialogue that is strategically necessary to the American regional geopolitics after the war in Georgia.

At this regard Erdogan has proposed an upside down approach, building the political confidence

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based on reciprocal interests first and delaying the opening of the historical revisions and confining it at a non political level. Obama, whose political aim seems to be more to detract Armenia from its international alignment with Moscow and Teheran than to praise the Turkish national sentiment, seems to have a different approach to the issue. But Armenia is only a pawn in the American regional strategy, while Ankara is a strategic ally who is, nevertheless, developing an increasingly autonomous international posture that is, to a certain extent, heretic to the American eyes.

Ankara is all the more the pivot between Iraq and Iran

In the first semester of 2009 Ankara has been evermore involved as a major player in the complex web of diplomatic activities predominantly directed towards its with Euro-Asiatic and Middle Eastern geopolitical space. Just looking at some of the State visits made by the President of the Republic Abdullah Gul in the last months is enough to acknowledge the compass of the new foreign policy that Ankara is implementing, under a new and more dynamic international political situation and with the support of the new Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmet Davutoglu. In February the Turkish president, faithful companion to Prime Minister Erdogan and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, journeyed to Russia, a country which is now engaging in developing a new tactical *entente* with Ankara. In March Gul was welcomed in both Iran and in Iraq. The visit to Baghdad, in particular, represented an important and historic step, if one considers that the Turkish president has not travelled to its neighbouring Iraq for the better of thirty years. Russia, Iran and Iraq represent in fact the new strategic triangle through which Ankara is searching a new political realignment, in part “in retreat” from the Atlantic arrangement in which it has been constrained over the last half century, and in part in execution of an American “mandate” to be the amicable regional power and mediator regarding Russia, Iraq and Iran. These developments constitute a criss-crossed effect involving two different processes. On the one hand they represent a “normal” evolution of the country following the prolonged power of the AKP and the emergence of an out-and-out different foreign policy on the part of Prime Minister Erdogan’s party with respect to the consolidated, Kemalist-inspired version of the past. On the other hand they are the fruit of the evolution of American Middle East foreign policy, from the last phase of President Bush to the first phase of the new President Obama. From this point of view, a recent further sign of possible new developments in Turkish foreign policy is represented by the visit of a peculiar Iraqi religious leader in Turkey in May 2009, whose presence in Ankara (and his particularly welcomed reception) cannot but make one consider how the country is preparing to play on the Iraqi scene in anticipation of the Americans military exit.

The Mysterious Visit in Turkey by the head of the Sadrists Iraqi “Opposition”

The first of May 2009 the reserved Shiite cleric Muktada al-Sadr made a surprise visit to Turkey meeting the highest heads of state, from President of the Republic Gul to Prime Minister Erdogan. Al-Sadr arrived in Turkey from Iran where it seems that the religious leader has largely made his base in the last two years. Al-Sadr has not made foreign visits or official appearances for about two years, since 2007 when he went into voluntary exile in order to avoid possible attacks on himself and his paramilitary groups (the Mehdi army) which for the better

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part of three years have comprised one of the largely popular contingents of resistance against the CPA and the foreign forces of occupation. Following a series of military operations against anti-government forces, al-Sadr's paramilitary forces declared a temporary truce proclaimed by their leader and accepted the option of controlled withdrawal of the American troops from Iraq as was agreed upon in SOFA with the Iraqi government. Even while in exile the Iranian al-Sadr brought forward again the Iraqi resistance following the Israeli war against Hamas in the Gaza Strip, inviting them to carry out acts of retaliation against their "Zionist enemy".

The importance of al-Sadr's visit to Turkey, of which the content and results have been maintained in great secrecy on the part of Turkish authorities, is based on the fact that the Sadrist represent a peculiar component in the Iraqi opposition galaxy. For Ankara the Sadrists represent an interesting pawn in the fluid Iraqi situation that is preparing to take on the unknown elements tied to the withdrawal of American forces: Sadrists are a Shiite movement (therefore potentially brought into the Iranian sphere) but marked by strong Iraqi nationalist tendencies, heavily engaged in combating the American presence in the country in addition to countering other interference, more than of political-religious nature, on the part of the governments of Islamic countries. For this motive al-Sadr's movements have attracted—thanks to the anti-American insurrection of the last years and the fact of its being duly critical of Iranian interference—a range of sympathy also on the part of the Sunni nationalist community. Al-Sadr has not yet decided whether or not to form his own political party, but he does control thirty or so parliamentarians and it is realistic that his influence on the Iraqi political system continues to increase along with the Iraqi governments progression along the road to recovering full sovereignty, as far as he can represent an element of compromise between Iraqi self-determination and Iranian influence. In this context they usefully reveal some of the ideological positions that they see in order to try to reconcile the authoritarianism of radical Shiite religious leaders with different local customs of the Iraqi Shiite tribes, wagering on an always greater role in the administration of religious law on the part of tribal leaders.

However the significance of the visit to Turkey by al-Sadr goes beyond the religious political role that the Sadrist leader could recover in Iraq in the future and largely inserts itself in the wake of Turkish preoccupations with finding a greater number of supporters against a possible dissolution of Iraq into various states, one of which could be formed as the Iraqi Kurdistan. In this sense the Sadrist pawn effectively becomes useful to Ankara in so far as one of the firm points of the Sadrist movement is to preserve the unity of the country, to arrest the process of separatism initiated by the Iraqi constitution that allows for provisional authorities and impedes an eventual dissolution of the country. In so far as al-Sadr succeeds in developing his model of a Shiite theocratic state based on his Iraqi nationalism and tribalism, Turkey could assess—in partial accord with Teheran and Washington—a wager on the Sadrist "wild card" as a possible element of compromise and equilibrium between the centrifugal tendencies of the Kurdish strands and Iranian strands. Surely there exists between Ankara and al-Sadr a series of agreed upon tactics, such as that on the decisive opposition regarding the question of a referendum for the attribution of Kirkuk. One of the few comments made by Turkish functionaries on the political visit of al-Sadr in fact referred to the disputed status of Kirkuk. The Turkish daily *Yeni Safak* affirmed that the Sadrist leader, in the course of speeches, stated that in order to avoid the possibility "that Iraq could collapse and that therefore, on the Kirkuk theme, the Sadrists maintain the same position as the Turks".

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According to some analysts al-Sadr could be on the point of openly passing from religion to politics, creating a movement in Iraq that—with necessary differences—could be similar to the Lebanese Shiites of Hezbollah. If al-Sadr is on the verge of such a move, Ankara cannot imagine to be outside of the game, in the end balancing Iranian influence that, if dominant, could bring about, in the medium-range period, significant fears of the dissolution of the country. For these reasons the fact that the first relevant political appearance of al-Sadr for almost a year begins with an official visit to Turkey is extremely significant: the visit of an Iraqi Shiite religious leader who lives in Iran but plays an increasingly political role in the Iraqi internal politics and who has been one of the major players behind anti-American military revolts. And, for this reason, notwithstanding the fact that he hasn't recovered an institutional role in the Iraqi government, he was received in Ankara and Istanbul with all the honours reserved to foreign heads of States and governments.

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THE CAUCASUS IS SMOULDERING AGAIN

Andrea Grazioso



In Georgia, domestic politics is dominated by the stand-off between the opposition, much more organised and disciplined now, and President Saakashvili.

The stated aim of the opposition appears more radical and resolute than in the recent past.

Since the beginning of April, the centre of Georgia's capital, Tbilisi, is a scene for continued public protest rallies, while the opponents of the present Government have also set-up a tent-village, in order to give continuity to their presence in the main streets of the city.

Both the Police and the demonstrators have showed a certain restraint in terms of physical violence; while some clashes erupted in several circumstances, the confrontation has remained relatively peaceful up to now. On the contrary, the "verbal violence" is remarkable, with the protesters reclaiming the dismissal of President Saakashvili and new political election.

If seen as a domestic problem, or a purely internal confrontation between (actually among) political rivals, there wouldn't be significant matters of concern. State capabilities to handle such situation greatly improved over the last decade. While in the early Nineties Georgia was plagued by the inability of security apparatus to manage political and ethnic clashes, and while the same "rose revolution" that took Saakashvili to power was facilitated by the lack of professionalism among security structures, the present capabilities of both police and armed forces seem adequate to repulse any violent push against legitimate political leaders.

Also, new young leaders potentially able to replace Saakashvili, without revising Georgia's stance as a pro-West country, are emerging among opposition groups.

However, the evolution in Georgia is dominated by external factors, as Russia's quest for dominating the whole Caucasus, thus reintegrating under its sphere of influence the former soviet, then independent states of Southern Caucasus, as well as Western interest to preserve Georgia's independence, also as a transit corridor for the exploitation of energy resources in Central Asia.

As for Russia, Moscow is using the whole set of orthodox and non-orthodox tools, in order to assert its influence and, in the end, its dominance.

In mid April, a motorcade of Russian activist from the extreme-nationalist group "Nashi" departed from Moscow, with the declared intention to drive through the South Ossetia and reach Tbilisi, where the group intended to join the protests against Saakashvili.

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The leader of the group, Aleksandr Kuznetsov, driving one day in advance, was blocked and then arrested by Georgian police, as soon as he crossed the “border” between South Ossetia and Georgia, and accused of fomenting unrests. He was later expelled out of the country, and once free he released an interview, accusing Georgian authorities of violence and torture.

According to several analysts, the aim of the group was to ignite further disorder in Georgia, and possibly clash with the Police, thus escalating tension between Tbilisi and Moscow.

Few days after the unsuccessful “raid” of Nashi activists, Moscow authorities arrested an alleged Georgian spy, in the Black Sea city of Sochi. The Georgian citizen, emigrated in Russia several years ago, has been accused of collecting information in order to interfere with the next Winter Olympic games, to be held in Sochi. Russian state television indulged on the news, showing the Georgian citizen under interrogation, further feeding anti-Georgian feelings among Russians.

Few days later, it was the turn of Georgians to “uncover a Russian plot”.

The first unofficial reports about mutiny in Mukhrovani military unit emerged in the early hours of May 5, with the soldiers not responding to the orders of central Authorities.

At noon, Shota Utiashvili, head of the Interior Ministry’s information and analytical department, convened a press conference and said that the Georgian law enforcement agencies had uncovered plot to stage a mutiny in the Georgian army. He also said that the law enforcement agencies had been probing into information of possible mutiny in the army for past two months.

According to Georgian officials, president Saakashvili personally intervened to thwart the rebellion; later on, the commander of the military Unit, together with several associates, was arrested. The Authorities gave the responsibility of the attempted coup-de-état to Russia; according to their reconstruction of the events, the renegade’s objective was to disrupt the incoming Georgia-NATO exercises, which were to start in few hours after the rebellion was discovered.

These exercises, conceived in the framework of the NATO Partnership for Peace program, were divided in two main phases: the Cooperative Longbow '09, between 6 and 19 of May, a command-post exercise with about 340 soldiers from NATO and PfP countries, and the Cooperative Lancer '09, between 21 of May and 3 of June, a battalion-level field-exercise, with the participation of about 740 NATO and PfP soldiers.

Nineteen countries initially planned to send troops to Georgia for the exercises, planned since the summer of 2008. However, the harsh reaction from Moscow persuaded some PfP countries to renounce.

According to official statements from the Kremlin, the exercises actually constituted a “provocation”, a direct threat to the stability in the region and an obstacle for a new, peaceful relation between Russia and the Atlantic Alliance.

Further increase in Russian military presence on the border with Georgia

On 15 June Russia vetoed the continuation of the mission of the OSCE observers in Georgia, which for many years guaranteed a symbolic presence in the disputed region of South Ossetia.

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The next day, Russia vetoed the UN resolution that ensured the extension of the Mission of UN Observers in the regions. On this occasion, the Russian Ambassador to the United Nations said that the proposed resolution could not be accepted by Russia, since it does not recognize the Abkhazia as a sovereign state.

Very critic was the German Ambassador, who emphasized the principle of territorial integrity of Georgia in its internationally recognized borders. Within hours of the Representatives of the United States, Great Britain, Germany and France issued a joint statement in which they express strong dissent to the Russian decision, which determines the termination of a mission rather effective and ongoing for over fifteen years .

Beyond the dispute at the diplomatic level, the Russian action in the context of two international bodies where it can exercise a veto means that the unique mission of international observers will remain in Georgia is that of the European Union. Moreover, this mission is also subject to strong limitations, being the European Observers unable to enter in the separatist regions.

Furthermore, their safety is placed at regular intervals to the test: on June 21 a motorcade comprising a group of European Observers, running around the boundary between Abkhazia and the rest of Georgia, was hit by an explosion, probably due to a mine.

A vehicle of the convoy was destroyed, with the death of the pilot and wounding of a doctor, while the armoured vehicle of the European Observers was only damaged. The Head of the European Mission, Hansjörg Haber, spoke explicitly of a deliberate attack against the Observers. In the face of extreme difficulties for the international community to maintain a presence on the ground, the official statements of Russian authorities led to further raise the alert about the risk of a new phase of fighting.

The Commander of the Russian General Staff, and First Deputy Minister of Defence, General Nikolai Makarov, accused Georgia, helped by NATO, of procuring new weapons, in order to forcefully resolve the territorial dispute, and has accused the international observers of deliberately ignoring what is happening. Makarov was also to personally conduct the exercise "Caucasus 2009", scheduled between June 29 and July 6.

Officially, the exercise consisted of only 8500 men, 200 tanks, 450 armoured combat vehicles and 250 artillery pieces of various kinds; the aim of the exercise would have been to train the Russian forces in the North Caucasus region to conduct anti-terrorism operations.

All units at the brigade level, already present in the Caucasus military district, should have been involved in the training, along with naval units of the Black Sea Fleet and the Units of Naval Infantry of the Caspian Fleet. In addition, other land units, have been flown in from other districts. The number of soldiers involved, therefore, could have been much greater than officially declared.

In purely military terms, the mass of forces on the border with Georgia recalls what happened a year ago, when the exercise "Caucasus 2008" allowed to concentrate those forces that participated in the offensive operation started in August.

In many ways the current situation seems even more dangerous for the Georgians, as Russia fully controls the territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, including the region of Akhalkgori (Leningor for Ossetians), administratively part of South Ossetia, but still controlled by the Georgians until August of last year.

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From Akhgori, Russian forces could reach Tbilisi in a few hours, or might simply make a few tens of kilometres, cutting Georgia in two, breaking the rail and road connections, and the pipelines, which cross the country from the Black Sea to the borders with Azerbaijan. A relatively easy advance of Russian forces, even with a minimum use of force, would therefore isolate the capital, and would lead Georgia to the collapse, determining that "regime change", namely the overthrow of Saakashvili, repeatedly invoked by the Kremlin.

According to some experts, in addition to the fall of Saakashvili, the Russian objective is to establish a stable connection between its territory and Armenia, in order to supply on a regular basis its military forces there and avoiding a possible isolation of Yerevan caused by the closure of border with Georgia, thus reaffirming the power of Moscow as the guarantor of the safety of the Republics of South Caucasus.

The scenario appears to be particularly worrying for the Georgians, also under the ongoing domestic political crisis.

The substantial reduction of the monitoring activities conducted by international observers makes any contact between Georgian military and police forces and Russians, either close to Ossetia or Abkhazia, very dangerous.

It is likely that, as preventive measures, the Georgians are therefore withdrawing their forces from the most vulnerable portion of the boundary lines, or borderline.

On June 11, for example, a bridge over the river Chanchakhi would have blown, a few kilometres from the Mamisoni pass, the border between Georgia and Russia. The Georgian Border Guards would have withdrawn from the border, perhaps up to about 20 kilometres - according to some reports. The passage of Mamisoni is not an easy way of communication, and is practically unusable for the transit of non-military vehicles, but its location, practically next to the region of South Ossetia, is particularly critical in symbolic terms.

Tbilisi also is looking for some sort of military protection through a relationship as close as possible with Washington.

On June 22, the first bilateral meeting between Georgia and the United States was held, under the "Strategic Partnership" signed on January 9. After the meeting, Deputy Secretary of State has reiterated support for the independence and territorial integrity of the Caucasian country. Currently the U.S. does not seem willing to provide Georgians with sophisticated weapon systems, while seem not reluctant to provide a visible support of a political nature.

In this regard, the White House announced that the American Vice President, Biden, will travel to Georgia - and Ukraine - between July 20 and 24, to meet both the official authorities and representatives of opposition and civil society. The statement of the White House seems to have been drafted very carefully to signal U.S. support for Tbilisi, but also that the U.S. will not necessarily identify the current leadership with the only potential partner of the United States.

In such a context there is also the news of the likely deployment, during 2010, a Georgian battalion in Afghanistan, within ISAF or the Operation Enduring Freedom. Given the direct military threat faced by Georgia, such participation in a military mission abroad would appear entirely inappropriate. On the other hand, the Georgians consider essential for their security the full U.S. support, and believe that sending forces to Afghanistan helps to forge stronger ties with Washington.

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In Ingushetia and Dagestan a new flare of violence

During the second Quarter of 2009, insurgents in the North Caucasus republics, part of the Russian Federation, returned to hit highly symbolic targets.

In Dagestan, last 6 of June, while attending a wedding ceremony, the Minister of Interior of the Republic, Lieutenant General Adilgeri Magomedtagirov, was killed by a sniper firing a highly accurate shot from an apartment in a building of the Republic capital city of Makhachkala.

In Ingushetia, on June 22, a car loaded with explosives was detonated very close to the vehicle carrying the President of the Republic, Yunus-Bek Yevkurov.

The explosion killed a bodyguard and the driver of the vehicle, while the President was seriously injured and was transported to Moscow for a very delicate surgery.

The attack on Yevkurov is extremely significant in political terms, as he was appointed President of Ingushetia last October to restore order in the Republic, after a dramatic surge of violent actions of Islamic guerrillas.

Former officer with huge experience in the intelligence activities, in 1999 Yevkurov commanded the intervention of Russian paratroopers to Pristina, Kosovo, during the NATO Operation Allied Force.

Since then, he enjoyed a great prestige both among the Russian soldiers and among political leaders in Moscow.

The attack on his person represents the highest point of an escalation of violence in Ingushetia that lasted for months, with a repeated series of attacks against political, military and religious figures.

It marks the apparent failure of the Russian strategy to regain control of North Caucasus by appointing to the top of the Republics leaders particularly capable and certainly faithful to Moscow, giving them extensive powers to normalize the situation.

In other republics, the security situation appears dramatically worsened in recent months, and certainly much more severe than in the nineties, when guerrilla actions able to directly threaten the political and military leaders could be encountered in Chechnya only.

Just last April, in Chechnya, the end of the special regime connected with the conduct of operations against terrorism was declared. In practice, the military campaign in the Republic was declared over.

However, even among those responsible for security, positions decidedly less optimistic are emerging. The head of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Prosecutor General, Alexander Bastrykin, recently referred to the Caucasus speaking of the presence of some 1,500 rebel fighters; only a few months before, a senior officer of the Ministry of Interior, Nikolai Rogozhkin, had reported 400 or 500 fighters still active in the region.

The intensity and diffusion of the attacks in several republics suggest that the guerrilla is in fact still strong and very capable. Furthermore, it seems able to co-opt new members, in order to replace the fighters killed or captured.

The Afghan Theater

AFGHANISTAN-PAKISTAN AND THE TRIESTE G8

Fausto Biloslavo



Iran was the dominant absent guest at the Conference on Afghanistan and Pakistan that took place in the margins of the Foreign Ministers' G8 held from 25 to 27 June in Trieste.

The absence of a representative from Teheran as a result of the internal crisis which exploded there following the contested election of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, scuppered any hopes of a breakthrough in the regional approach to the Afpak crisis. It should be noted that the Afghan minister for foreign Affairs, Rangin Dajdar Spanta, and his Pakistani counterpart, Makhdoom Mahmood Qureshi, were in unison in declaring that the violence in Teheran and other

Iranian cities, "are internal questions which we do not wish to interfere in" given that Iran "is a stabilizing factor in the region".

In their final declaration the G8, Afghani and Pakistani foreign ministers focused attention on the drugs problem which "remains a significant source of income for the extremists". The USA sent Richard Holbrooke, special envoy to Afghanistan and Pakistan, to Trieste. Holbrooke definitively laid to rest the USA's aggressive strategy (Colombia style) of rooting out the fields of poppy which make Afghan opium. "It has failed", he said, "it has not damaged the Taliban in any way, if anything we have left the peasants without work and many have finished in the arms of the insurrectionists". For these reasons, funds from the uprooting program will be redirected by the US administration and put to use in blocking the trafficking of drugs and of the chemical components used for refining opium into heroine, in the repression of the Narco-traffickers and in the promotion of alternative legal cultivations. According to Holbrooke, previous American policies did not reduce by a single dollar" the profits made by the Taliban from the growth and production of opium. "Perhaps some lots of land were destroyed", observed Obama's envoy in Afghanistan, "but this only helped the Taliban". Afghanistan is the world's principal opium supplier. According to UN figures, the Taliban and the formations linked to Al Qaida, made some 50 to 70 million dollars out of this business last year. In a report published by the United Nations against Drugs and Crime (UNODC), we can see, however, that the cultivation of poppy did decline last year by 19% compared to the previous year.

Holbrooke spoke in Trieste of a "big change". Agriculture was one of the main issues discussed by delegates and it is described in the final declaration as "the key to the future of Afghanistan and Pakistan, and to the other countries in the region". The Italian minister of foreign affairs, Franco Frattini, announced that with the "Roman branch of the UN we have thought about coming up with a 'green Marshall plan'". That is, "an action plan offering incentives to those returning to once profitable crop cultivation in place of poppy farming".

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On a regional level, Iran is one of the countries most involved in the fight against drugs along its border with Afghanistan. For this reason it was no surprise that the idea of setting up a UNODC (the United Nations Agency Against Drugs) centre in Teheran to coordinate the anti-narcotraffic battle at a regional level.

In point ten of the final declaration on the Afpak crisis, the foreign ministers gathered in Trieste underlined the importance of “increasing the capacity of the Afghan National army and police (ANP)” even though the problem of a lack of training staff and mentors clearly remains.

The declaration also mentions Pakistan’s renewed commitment to fighting extremists and the problem of the “suffering of the civil population in the Western Frontier province, where there are more than two million homeless” as a result of the operations of the Pakistani armed forces in the Swat valley which will continue in Waziristan. Holbrooke underlined, however, that the real test will come when the refugees return home. “Will their safety be guaranteed? Will the army be able to stop the Taliban from returning from the mountains?” asked the US envoy. He then underlined that the costs of reconstruction “will be huge, more than a billion dollars, perhaps two”.

A strong call also emerged from Trieste in the name of the international support group for Afghanistan and Pakistan with regard to the presidential elections due to be held on 20 August. The international community appealed for “credible, inclusive and safe elections, which reflect the will of the Afghan people”. The fear is that a slim victory for outgoing president, Hamid Karzai, who is the favourite, might set off a wave of protests from opponents. A sort of “Iran effect” would be a serious blow to the country’s fragile stability.

Afghan Presidential Election campaign starts

The campaign for the presidential elections in Afghanistan on 20 August have officially begun. There are 41 candidates for head of state, including two women. There will also be elections for the provincial councils where there are more than 3 thousand candidates, with almost 300 women among them. The candidates who are real contenders for the role of president are just three: outgoing head of state, Hamid Karzai, former Finance minister, Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai and former foreign Affairs minister, the Tajiki Abdullah Abdullah. In 2004, Karzai was elected president with 55.4% of the vote and observers continue to see him as the favourite even if his presidency has left many Afghans unsatisfied.

A dozen of the candidates can be catalogued among those politicians and businessmen who have a reasonable following but will not be capable of challenging the three principal contenders. Among them we find the vice-president of the Lower House as well as some other parliamentarians and ministers without portfolio. There is also a former procurator general. Other candidates are far more controversial, such as Mullah Abdul Salaam Rocketi, former Taliban commander, and the Turkmen leader Akbar Bai, who was imprisoned for contraband activities. Many of the candidates are little known and make up the so-called “new democratic leaders” which represents civil society. Many are taking part in the election simply to put pressure on the executive in order to obtain something in return for their later withdrawal.

The two women candidates, Frizan Fana, former wife of an assassinated minister, and parliament member, Shahla Atta, have little visibility and absolutely no chance of success. On the other hand, two women were named as first vice presidents and six others as second vice president.

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Challenges and prospects facing General McChrystal, new ComIsaf

On 15 June, the four-star general, Stanley McChrystal, took over the command of the Nato mission in Afghanistan in place of David McKiernan. Much of McChrystal's biography is reserved as he held command roles in special operations both in Iraq and Afghanistan. In Iraq, his men neutralized Abu Musa al Zarqawi, the most dangerous leader of Al Qaida in Mesopotamia. The general has already begun a tour among the front-line troops bringing a very clear message: "The success level of our activities will not be based on the number of enemies killed but on the number of Afghans protected from violence".

On 6 July the Commander of Isaf has publicly released a revised tactical directive aimed at minimising the risk to the civilian population as a result of the use of force. The directive provides guidance and intent for the employment of force in support of Isaf operations and serves to communicate the commander's intent to the lowest echelons, whose tactical actions can have strategic consequences.

(See 2 pages "Tactical Directive" http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/official_texts/Tactical_Directive_090706.pdf) General McChrystal has spoken of a genuine "cultural change" in the mission against the Taliban. Last month, in a bombing in the Farah province, more than 100 civilians were killed according to official Afghan sources. The Americans admitted that there had been 26 innocent victims but an internal inquiry showed that the soldiers who were involved in the raid had broken the engagement rules repeatedly. According to McChrystal, "if we win the confidence of the Afghans, we cannot lose. If we lose it, we cannot win".

This is the logic behind the large-scale Strike of the Sword operation launched at the beginning of July by four thousand marines in the southern part of the Helmand province. This area is a historic safe haven for the Taliban and the epicentre of opium cultivation. The marines, who are part of the fresh reinforcements sent to Afghanistan by president Obama, landed by helicopter in strategic villages in the area where they intend to remain. The aim is not only to force the Taliban to flee temporarily but to guarantee the local Afghan community the infrastructure that is needed (proper irrigations, medical clinics, schools).

The International troops in Afghanistan will, in any case, have to face "tough battles" in the coming months and "they will certainly continue until the end of the year", according to the Centcom commander, David Petraeus.

The first week in June saw "the highest level of incident in terms of security since the liberation of Afghanistan" in late 2001, when the Taliban were removed from power", Petraeus continued.

From January to June, the number of attacks in Afghanistan has risen by 59% compared to the same period of the previous year (there has also been a sharp rise in the Western sector where most of the Italian troops are employed).

General McChrystal will be able to call on some ninety thousand men, two thirds of whom are American. During 2009, the American forces will double from thirty-two to sixty-eight thousand men. In June seven thousand marines arrived in the 'hottest' southern provinces of Helmand and Kandahar.

Despite the reinforcements promised by American president Barack Obama, the outgoing commander of the Atlantic alliance, John Craddock spoke to the BBC of his 'frustration' with the lack of International troops in Afghanistan and with the caveats imposed as to how they be

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employed, especially by the European nations.

IN PAKISTAN POPULAR REACTION AGAINST THE TALIBANS WHO REACT VIOLENTLY

Pakistan, including the tribal zones on the border with Afghanistan, is reacting to the arrogance and threat of the neo-Talibans. The revenge suicide attacks in the large cities, the shocking videos that show executions order by the Talibans, the forced recruitment of young men from the extremist ranks have provoked indignation in broad sectors of public opinion.

The Pakistani Talibans have reacted to this by killing both those former allies, who are now attempting to distance themselves from them, and the religious moderates who are supporting the government in its military offensive to root them out of the tribal areas. Baitullah Mehsud, one of the most dangerous Taliban commanders and leader of the extremist group, Tehrik-e Taleban-e Pakistan has even claimed responsibility for the killing of Qari Zainuddin. A former ally of Meshud, he is a member of the same tribe and when only thirty years of age already had some three thousand men under his control. Zainuddin formed an alliance with another 'moderate' Taliban fighter, Qari Turkestan Bhitaini, in order to wage war on Meshud. The Pakistan government was banking on this alliance for the offensive that it is launching in southern Waziristan.

A 'hot' summer lies ahead caused by the expected Pakistan offensive in the radical strongholds in Waziristan, on the border with Afghanistan. On 25 June, Mehsud narrowly escaped an attack launched from an American drone. Unfortunately the attack killed some 80 victims who were taking part in a funeral cortege to commemorate the victims of an early bombing.

Zainuddin, on the other hand, was shot by an 'infiltrator' sent by Meshud who had convinced him that he had abandoned his commander. The tribal chief whom the Pakistani government had been banking on is not the only notable victim of the hardcore Talibans who have reacted to the offensive against them.

On 12 June, a teenage suicide bomber blew Sarfraz Naeemi up in his office in Lahore. "The Talibans are a black mark on Islam. For this reason we are supporting the armed forces who have every right to destroy them. In this way they will save Pakistan", said the Sunni religious leader from the moderate Bareilvi school a few weeks before his death.

As the head of the Koranic School, Jamia Naeemia in Lahore, the cultural capital of Pakistan, he taught his students to ignore the calls of the fundamentalist sirens. Not only: Naeemi founded an alliance of 22 Islamic movements and political groups with the declared intention of opposing the Talibans. This Sunni Ittihad Council has organised protests against Taliban evils.

His son Raghieb has denounced that his father was murdered "because he declared a fatwa in which he said that suicide bomb attacks were prohibited by Islam. Naeemi was convinced that

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the “war” declared by the army against the neo-Talibans was the last chance for the country to survive. “If we are defeated we will lose Pakistan”, he said before dying. Sarfraz Naemi was close to the former premier and current opposition leader, Nawaz Sharif and to his brother.

Despite the threats, people are openly inciting the Pakistani armed forces to take out the Talibans who are hiding in the tribal areas. The newspapers continually receive letters to this effect from readers. Some reasonably influential leaders, such as Maulana Sarwat Qadri, who leads an Islamic party, has even proposed taking up arms: “We are ready to send volunteers to fight alongside our soldiers against the Talibans.”

Laskars, that is tribal militias that have been formed by clan leaders to fight against Taliban impositions, are becoming more common in the tribal areas. At the start of June, in the Upper Dir district, the ancients asked the neo-Talibans to leave. In reply, a suicide bomber carried out a massacre in a local mosque killing 39 people. Following this, the village leaders mobilized more than 1000 men into a lashkar. The tribal militia killed the commander of the local Talibans and many of his men. The survivors were forced to flee to the mountains. Other Lashkars are forming in the tribal areas which the Talibans have infiltrated (Bannu, Bajur, Swat) and they are beginning to receive help from the government. Officers in plain clothes guarantee air and artillery support if it is needed. Finance support and arms are arriving, even if there is a worry that arming the tribal militia will create a problem for the future. General Petraeus, commander of Centcom has declared that “for the first time, the people are rebelling in the tribal areas with the so-called Lashkar against the Talibans”.

Poll: the Pakistani want Sharif instead of Zardari and the military should the situation worsen.

20% of Pakistanis are in favour of military dictatorship but the percentage favouring it over democracy rises to 65% in the case of “emergency or too much government corruption”. This picture of popular sentiment emerges from a survey carried out by the International Republican Institute (Iri, an American non-profit organization, linked to the Republican Party), and published on the website of the Dawn daily newspaper. Only 25% of Pakistanis believe that the armed forces do not have the right to interfere in the political life of the country. The same survey reveals, in addition, that support for Nawaz Sharif, leader of the Lega Musulmana del Pakistan (Pml-N) opposition party, has soared, while Pakistan’s president Asif Ali Zardari is struggling against wide unpopularity. 75% of those questioned would like Sharif to take over from Zardari who has the support of only 17% of the electorate. Among the members of the government, Yousuf Raza Gillani, the current prime minister, is the only way whose popularity has increase since earlier polls, jumping from 19 to 33%. Iftikhar Mohammad Chaudry, the supreme court president who was removed by then president Pervez Musharraf and is now reinstated, is also seen as a possible by Pakistanis as a possible future head of state.

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AFRICA: WAITING FOR THE "CULTURE OF THE PEOPLE'S GOOD"

Maria Egizia Gattamorta



The one that just passed was a quarter full of events that has drawn international attention onto the African continent. Such interest is due to several reasons: two presidential elections in Algeria and South Africa that were overcharged with expectations; the passing of Omar Bongo, the supreme leader of Gabon; the diplomatic manoeuvres of Khartoum.

In some cases, change is only apparent while it was obligatory in other cases. The background is characterized by a basic cohesion between the leaders, a bond which claims the difference of the African reality compared to the Western World, that goes beyond the respect and tutelage of human rights, that follows its own logic.

What can emerge from such a complex scenario? That Africans from the extreme North to the extreme South seek their own stability, that they still need a strong leadership and have not yet gained any certainties. Nearly five decades have passed since the difficult phase of independence and the foundations have been laid for new political systems: it is about time to remodel the fundamental structures.

Work has to start on the "political school" in order to shape up a "new culture for public good", by creating a pool of leaders that can guarantee a responsible and competent alternative and thus ensuring a substantial and meaningful change.

It is not an easy task but this is the only way for the continent to grow soundly and develop its enormous potentials, which are not only related to the presence of unexplored or partially used mineral resources but also to the presence of a young population called to become an active player in the third millennium.

Algeria and South Africa: two elections ... same results

The April elections in Algeria and South Africa were characterized by continuity and alternation.

Two antithetical forms in order to guarantee "democracy in the African way"; different political expressions that leave space to numerous questions about the methods through which power is managed in the continent. Last November the Algerian Government passed an amendment to the Constitution, justifying this choice with the linearity of a process and the need for the completion of a specific program to restore security and development to the North African country; South Africa instead, proposed a contradictory but necessary change to the executive, while remaining within a system which since 1994 was qualified – not practically but substantially – to a single party.

The overwhelming electoral victory in Algeria (April 9th) reproduced the "third act" for Abdel Aziz Bouteflika, a man related to the past but projected into the future, the President who has

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succeeded to restore peace and order since 1999, in areas where certain traumas are still very much alive following a decade of violence¹ in the 90's. After two regular mandates *secundum legem* -which were characterized by the commitment to promote national dialogue but also by the will to construct new infrastructures, in order to modernize the country and thus making the domestic industry more competitive in the circuit of international trade- the new candidacy was seen as forceful, by most local players and by external observers.

The President's team had a certainly easy game in the pre-electoral period: it was quite easy to prepare a program against weak opposition candidates who lacked great political weight or charisma. Louisa Hanoun of the Workers' Party, Moussa Touati of the Algerian National Front, Mohamed Sahid of the Party for Justice and Freedom, Djahid Younsi El Islah Party (moderate Islamist), Ali Fawzi Rebaïne of the AHD-54 Nationalist Party all received total votes that represented less than 10% of preferences; most voters were not convinced by the simple slogans related to change or employment nor did those candidates accuse the local media of being totally bias to the outgoing leader or denounced the use of public funds to cover the expenses of the electoral campaign. Only abstention could have been Bouteflika's greatest enemy, for example only 59% of those entitled to vote participated in the 2004 elections. Instead, in 2009 that number soared to 74% and 90, 24% of those (equivalent to 12.911.707 votes) expressed a renewed confidence towards a program that promised a justice reform, the creation of a million housing facilities, development investments (for a total of 150 billion dollars over the next 5 years), a productive economy characterized by the creation of 3 million jobs opportunities and 200.000 small and medium enterprises. However, what mostly convinced the Algerian voter were the promises made in order to guarantee stability and commit to detach national wealth from oil resources, and made them overcome fears of a new five years mandate for Bouteflika and the doubts about the installation in place of a new "regime".

Despite the fact that plebiscite victories are never very convincing, substantially in Algeria there were no serious alternative proposals capable of facing the domestic challenges in terms of safety and recovery of the productive apparatus. The successes achieved by the police in recent months are clear: meticulous controls and close collaboration with the intelligence services dramatically reduced operations linked to Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQMI) and strongly limited drug trafficking.

Without any doubt, the vote was also the result of the society's profound crisis of identity by being a prey to a conservative trend and a victim of a closure, in particular to the detriment of the feminine gender. Such a scenario explains why the voters anchored themselves to the only certainty offered by the political scene: the renewal of Boutef's (President's nickname) mandate is seen as a hindrance, a barrier against extreme evils.

It is interesting to take into consideration the opposite results obtained in South Africa, the country that witnessed the "political miracle" of power alternation between blacks and whites, thanks to the enlightened leadership of men such as Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki.

The April 22nd vote brought to completion a path taken by a fringe of the African National Congress (ANC), the historic party that fought against segregation and who managed the post-

¹ Please note that it is estimated that more than 200,000 people disappeared in the decade (1991-1999) that followed the 1991 elections (official data that could be inferior than the exact number of casualties)

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apartheid era with insight, ability and lucidity. Basically, there was change of management at the executive with Jacob Zuma's raise to power while in the line of continuity.

Following 15 years of leadership, the ANC obtained a full confirmation of its conduct, bringing home 66% of preferences (equal to 264 seats in Parliament), a figure slightly lower than that for a radical change of the Constitution. The Congress of the People (COPE) obtained 7%, Helen Zille's Democratic Alliance (DA) 17% (a percentage that guarantees her 67 seats), the Inkhata Freedom Party conquered 5% of votes (equivalent to 18 seats), while other parties obtained a minimum residual quota that ensure them 21 seats.

Over two third of the 23 million South Africans entitled to vote, reconfirmed their support to their "party" that has become a success story in the country's recent history, and thus to its representative. A controversial exponent who has been involved in various processes of corruption and violence

but remains a symbol of determination and tenacity: this is Jacob Zuma. The Zoulou who came from no where, the self-taught man, the fighter, the leader who knows how to address his people and totally uprooted the ANC's elite. He offered an alternative for a *top-down* management, haughty, distant and British styled group tied to Mbeki. The *big man* received 277 votes (against the 47 of Mvume Dandala, representing the COPE) during the special vote for the new Head of State, carried out by the representatives of the newly elected parliament on May 6th. The latter is a number that indirectly reflects the actual will of the voters, a preference that requires great efforts to upfront the numerous serious and urgent problems of the *rainbow nation*.

In his speech following his appointment, Zuma set his priorities: the redistribution of land, the improvement of the educational system, the guarantee of an efficient health system² and the fight against criminality³ and unemployment⁴. These areas require serious political commitments but, above all, claim a substantial economic burden. The country's atmosphere is overwhelmed by a great sense of hope but also by some doubts related to the return of tribalism, a historic regression that could undermine the *western-styled* liberal principles rooted in the constitutional text. This occur in a moment where demonstrations of xenophobia are every charged with racial tensions, all exacerbated by an alarming recession.

The beginning of a new era always generates fear and the shadowy aspects related to the new leadership induce to apply some accurate reflections. Realistically it is the Africa National Congress that leads the country and the party that has long established guidelines based on relative balance between the various political groups, even though Zuma assigned key positions to his men while pushing for substantial changes. The Agrarian reform will be the cornerstone of Zuma's mandate, but it should not adopt the extreme tones as occurred in neighboring Zimbabwe.

The Algiers-Pretoria axis which has always promoted the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the *African renaissance* should be surpassed with major attention to internal affairs.

² Everyday 1000 people die of AIDS; approximately 6 million of South Africans cohabit with HIV

³ More 50 homicides occur daily, 150 sexual assaults

⁴ Today South African unemployment rate has reached to 22%

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The Pan-African train will be managed, for at least a year, by the Libyan Presidency of the African Union: this chance will satisfy surely Mr. Gheddafi who has made the concept of a United States of Africa its absolute focal point in recent years.

The passing of Omar Bongo Ondimba

Omar Bongo Ondimba, President of Gabon for 42 years, died in the Quiron clinic of Barcelona on June 8th, 2009. His passing has left a power vacuum that will be very difficult to fill, due to national political issues, in terms of regional stability and the Pan-African context, and also for direct contacts with foreign players (particularly France).

According to many experts neither of his two sons who already cover key posts within the establishment -nor his daughter Pascaline Bongo (Head of the Presidential Cabinet) or his other son Ali Ben Bongo (current Minister of Defense and vice President of the Parti Démocratique Gabonaise – PDG)- have the same political substance or charisma to replace the country's father-master for over four decades. More credible successors might be found among figures who are not related to Bongo: General Idriss Ngara (current Minister of Health), Paul Tongue (husband of his daughter Pascaline and current Foreign Minister), Jean Ping (current President of the Commission of the African Union), Marcel Abeké (Compagnie Minière de l'Ogooué), Casimir Oye Mba (former prime minister, currently head of the Ministry of Oil), Bongo's historic opponents Paul Mba Abessole, Zacharie Myboto (became part of the opposition in 2001), and Pierre Mamboundou. However, at the moment no clear indications on an eventual successor has been yet set.

Bongo has been known for being a skillful peacemaker, and has played a key role in resolving the crisis in the Central African Republic, Congo-Brazzaville (ties with this country were particularly strengthened following Bongo's marriage to the daughter of Sassou Nguesso), in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo. It is precisely his formidable diplomatic skills that will create difficulty in finding a valid successor, and this causes comprehensive continental and local concerns of an eventual *domino effect* of instability, that might occur within upcoming months.

Bongo's fidelity towards Paris prevailed on his relations with the United States and the rest of Europe. In return he was generously rewarded by France which accepted and fueled certain corruptive and nepotistic systems.

During this transitional phase power has been entrusted to former chairman of the Senate, Rose Francine Rogombe. She'll have to undergo an arduous task in preparing the upcoming presidential consultations and ensuring dialogue between the majority and the opposition. In consideration of the current atmosphere of uncertainty, the Constitutional Court – due to major forces – upon a Government request has postponed the electoral consultations to September 6th at the latest (and not as foreseen by article 13 of the Constitution: within 45 from the start of the power vacuum).

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Khartoum: "The big maneuvers" to maintain the unity of Sudan

The understanding of political policies of Khartoum, skillfully managed by the National Congress Party and by Omar El- Beshir, lays in its ability to manage privileged international channels, to meet regional commitments and most of all avoid internal demands.

Several factors attract the attention of international observers in the diplomacy of the Central Sudanese Government such as its strong relations with Meles Zenawi⁵, the productive contacts with Somalia, the good relations with the Eritrea of Afewerki, the close friendship with Gheddafi⁶ and Mubarak, great understanding with President Mugabe, the mutual support with almost all African partners (such solidarity was evident in the United Nations or during arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court).

Multiple approaches are simultaneously been developed, but instead of conflict they contribute in creating a complex and functioning mechanism.

Chad⁷ or Botswana⁸, are two exceptions: one could arrive to freeze the diplomatic relations (as happened with the executive of Ndjamena) or to openly criticize the behaviour of the government (the one made by President Ian Khama from Gaborone), however, all frictions are eventually overcome, thanks to the mediation of Arab partners (Libya and Qatar) and sometimes simply evaporate in the air.

If all the above were to be justified through blood bond, a continent's history made of external interferences and bloody struggles against the "colonizer" in order to regain control of its territory, more difficult it seems – but easily comprehensible for the division of the oil revenues - to understand how Sudan stood up against international justice, while being accused of genocide in different levels, and still enjoy the full support of China and Russia in the Security Council and even "forge" high-level contacts with Washington.

Undoubtedly the change of approach proposed by the United States is of significant importance. The new Democratic leadership has stretched a hand with the appointment of General Scott Gration as Special Envoy in Sudan (March 2009), followed by the missions of some democratic senators led by John Kerry (mid April) and concluded with the organization of a conference on June 23rd in the US capital. This event was attended by representatives of the National Congress Party and Sudan People's Liberation Movement, as well as the representatives of 20 countries that support the peace process in place between Northern and Southern Sudan.

The Sudanese contacts with America are quite deep and are developed on multiple levels; they mainly involve the heads of the intelligence services that were called to collaborate on the fight

⁵ In recent months contacts between Addis Ababa were intensified. The Governments developed multiple agreements that covered several sectors: military, scientific, industrial and construction.

⁶ Contacts with the leader of the Libyan Republic has been witnessed through the mediations proposed by Tripoli throughout the last 3 years and also following the recent visit of vice President Salva Kiir (June 22nd) to Libya, where he discussed possible conjoint operations in the agriculture.

⁷ Chad is the country that has been indirectly living the plight in Darfur hosting thousands of refugees. According to complaints made by President Idriss Deby, the government of Sudan has been backing the Eastern rebels who plan to overthrow the central power in N'Djamena. On its part, the Government of Khartoum has repeatedly accused local authorities in giving support to the rebels in Darfur.

⁸ Botswana was the only African country to sustain the decision made by the International Tribunal Court (March 4th).

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against international terrorism following September 11th 2001. The sanctions imposed by the Clinton administration in 1997 are still valid as the designation of Sudan as a “sponsor of terrorism” by virtue of some historical links with Osama Bin Laden. Even though charges of genocide, applied by the Republican team of Bush in 2004 still persists, mostly all other issues were overcome in order to facilitate the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed in January 2005.

Certainly, according to the activists of some prestigious ONG working in the human rights fields (also according to State Department officials⁹), the new approaches involve the closure of the worlds' eyes to the plight of 300,000 casualties in Darfur and 2 million and half refugees since 2003, not stopping Khartoum's protection and weapons supply to the Janjaweed (who continue to cause devastations in the three Western regions), denying the control exerted from above on a gagged and impotent press¹⁰, not weighing the continuous obstacles posed by the North on a number of issues (from the census made in April 2008 to the delimitation of the border lines, from power sharing to revenue sharing).

So far, the logic followed by President Obama and Secretary of State Clinton may be perceived as Machiavellian, however -in this moment of history- it seems more vital to restore dialogue with Arab Leaders and use a global approach, approach that does not delve into details but proposes a final solution altogether.

Yet it is within these calls where the other side of Khartoum's executive, the dark side, can be read; the country is eagerly looking forward for the 2010 elections (already postponed once) and even more it has higher expectations for the South's autonomy in 2011.

Obviously every action made in the North is justified within the context of keeping the country united...but at what price? In fact, following the agreements of 2005 which brought an end to a 21 years old war, the government of national unity has provoked frustration among those who were not included in the power sharing, disappointed the people's expectations and showed the huge differences between the two parts of the country.

Another critical fact is that the power management in the South by SPLM of Salva Kiir has not been very promising: corruption has been increasingly diffused (particularly within lower profiles), public funds have been widely mismanaged, nepotism has been the winning card.

This moment in history is characterized by many incognitas that can work as a prelude for events determining for the diverse souls of Sudan and for the entire East African region.

Throughout the last four years the North remained compact or at least succeeded to overcome the dissonant voices (see Al Turabi) while the South has not been able stay united and now seem to be falling apart without aimlessly.

What framework could emerge following the February 2010 elections? Will the voters (particularly the Southern voters) be able to “manage” 12 cards, while at the same will be voting for the Presidency, for the President of the region and for the governors of the National Assembly and to the region they belong to? How will the SPLM present itself to this appointment? Can a government reshuffle be enough to convince their voters?

⁹ Other than the ONG, criticism arrived from former officials of the State Department, as for example Roger Winter who during a public speech reminded that the National Congress Party is directly responsible for the death of millions of Sudanese and the party has been at war with its own people from the day it raised to power.

¹⁰ The old law for the press was modified by the federal parliament on June 8th 2008

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What about the referendum? Will it really take place in 2011? This is the crucial point for the country: what is perceived in the South is the desire to detach itself but at the same time it lacks the strength regardless of the frauds that can be handled by.

This is the real key point for the country: the desire of the Southern part to escape is perceived but, on the other hand, lacks the strength, regardless of the fraud that can be managed by a *co-opted committees*.

The experience of the government of national unity in recent years shows that the two main players

In the North and South continue to have different ideas on the country's future and show no interest in sharing a common vision for Sudan.

These are the events that have had a major media coverage in the last trimester but other issues will definitely become more known in the upcoming months : the difficulties that the Nigerian President Yar'Adua is facing with MEND rebels are becoming more obvious, the debility of the moderate Somali leader Sheikh Sheriff Sheikh Ahmed against Islamic radicals are always more evident. These two issues might be emblematic and a cause of more troubles if the continent's game rules are not to be modified.

The main problem for both the North and South is on how to manage the political power, how to ensure dialogue between the different forces together with power alternation, how to administer the enormous oil and diamond revenues and at the same time guaranteeing compliance of all the local communities.

In the absence of will and ability to apply new rules, there is a serious risk for the instability factor to increase and create a "domino effect", compromising the results -albeit partial- that were achieved with great effort throughout the last five decades.

India and China

A NEW MIDDLE AGES?

Nunziante Mastroli



The global economic crisis has been spreading uncertainties and threatening already consolidated assets; it has also been affecting the omniscience of world markets and the sacredness of Wall Street, and it seems to alter the deep structure of international relations by globally changing the distribution of power and consecrate the emergence of new major players, all under an unexpected speed.

However, the overall situation has been so far chaotic and volatile inherent of a “middle era”, a new Middle Ages where innovative features constantly bubble with the persistence of old structures. This feeling of living in a middle age, where an old order continues to survive even if

weakened while a new order finds difficulties in emerging, probably pushes many to abandon the certainty of economic analysis or the peremptoriness of the numbers released by the international organizations bulletins, in order to look for signs, symbolic events that might give a sense of how things are evolving and shed a light of major understanding of what is to come in the near future.

This is probably why the acquisition by the Chinese Sichuan Tengzhong Heavy Industrial Machinery Company of the American Hummer, a symbol that represented American excesses and power, immediately made news around the globe, it is as if this move represented the shift of world power axis towards Beijing.

Current events shifting from the selling of the American Hummer to piracy in the Gulf of Aden seem to highlight the loss of one of the American cornerstones today and that of the British in the past: the safety of the routes provided by the naval force of the central power.

From the Hummer to the dollar which many dream to see an end to its indisputable sovereignty “since the outbreak of the current financial crisis, the confidence and role of the U.S. dollar have been further impaired, and it has been skeptical and widely questioned if the dollar would go on serving as the global reserve currency”¹.

From the China of Xiaochuan, the governor of the Central Bank of China, who was the first to have launched the challenge against the dollar, to the Russia of Medvedev, those are the promoters of a new multi-polar Monetary order focused on special rights of withdrawal by an institution, a result of the allied victory in the second world war and pivot of Pax Americana: the International Monetary Fund (IMF)²: “countries have begun to increase their hold of international monetary fund (IMF) bonds, so as to seek a stronger voice in global financial institutions while prompting the U.S. to take a more responsible approach”³.

The tendency of the new Middle Ages is in contrast with a central power that seems to be in decline and features new players who not only push the boundaries to achieve greater power and

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prestige but also seem to create an alliance to exploit their specific weight and accelerate the transition process.

It is also probably for this reason within the context of search for revelatory signs that the materialization of what was used to be a formula used by Goldman Sachs, the BRIC, “*driving forces for the world’s common development with their big populations and vast territories*”⁴, assumes what is close to a constituent value of the new international assets.

In fact, it is in Yekaterinburg, where Brazil, India, China and Russia gathered for the first time to discuss the economic crisis which, according to the Governor of the Central Bank of China, has reached a global scale because of an international system that completely lays unbalanced on an already weakened dollar. The four emerging powers in Russia tried to overcome such unbalance by foreseeing a formula for a multi-polar monetary system and not only.

Numbers seem to sustain the claim of what Medvedev described as “a more equitable world order”:

all four countries together account for 40% of the world's population and 15% of its economy and according to the IMF throughout the years 2006-2008 they have been accountable for one third of the world's economic growth.

However, the summit's final declaration did not contain any direct attack on the dollar nor there was any mention of a possible “bancor” of Keynesian memory which supranational currency that could oust the dollar. The reason for this is quite simple: The BRIC preserve 2.800 billions of stocks denominated mainly in dollars; their campaign against the dollars could have a boomerang effect on them. Still, the declaration calls for a “stable international monetary system that is predictable and more diversified.”

However, the interpretation of the signs lead many observers to see the summit as the first act towards the birth of a new world order. Even Medvedev during the opening session of the summit defined Yekaterinburg as “the epicenter of world politics.” The epicenter of an earthquake that wants to shake international equilibrium. It is in Yekaterinburg that the Bolsheviks executed the Tsar and his family and it is in Yekaterinburg where the BRIC want to send the dollar into retirement: “*as a matter of fact, the ‘de-dollar’ process has already begun in many regional bilateral and multilateral trading arrangements among developing countries. In fact, changes evolved in the role and functions for the dollar would undergo a relatively lengthy process*”⁵.

It is still hard to imagine this new order within the immediate future but several ideas has been made on it: Washington has been probably thinking of a G-2 as proposed by Brezezinski even though China does not seem to appreciate it⁶. Europe is in favor of a G-3 while Moscow, thanks to the new geometry set by the BRIC, can overlap that with the now famous Sino – Russian joint ownership of SCO in central Asia. However, revenues of this joint ownership seems to benefit only Beijing.

The scenario is that of a chaotic and a variable geometry of events, a central power in decline an iron axis that bind emerging powers: those probably are the essential elements that characterize this new Middle Ages, no matter how realistic or perceivable it is, where the economic crisis appears to have jolted the world.

Beijing also sustains that the crisis represents a remarkable opportunity. It is only a matter of capturing it in order to move structures and alter consolidated balances for its own advantage: “*any grave economic crisis would imply the redrawing of a global economic map and an*

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*economic order in modern world history, however, and this is absolutely inevitable and independent of man's will*⁷.

This is how that the theme of decoupling became popular again: this gives the possibility for some developing countries, primarily the BRIC, to become the engine of international growth due to its domestic consumption and an increase in mutual international trade in face up to the slow down or stagnation of the main drivers of international economic growth and that is the strength of American and European consumption and thereby detaching their fate from developing countries economies⁸. The first hypothesis remains to be a hope for the future while the second increasingly seems to be certainty as affirmed by Geithner during his recent first trip to China (June 2009): *“in the United States, saving rates will have to increase, and the purchases of US consumers cannot be as dominant a driver of growth as they have been in the past”*⁹. This is why *“the leaders of the under-developed nations now fully recognize that any return of the traditional global driver of demand and growth is extremely unlikely, and that their fortunes now lie much more in spurring domestic demand and in strategically boosting trade amongst themselves - in other words, decoupling.”*¹⁰

It is really hard to say if Yekaterinburg will be remembered as the beginning of a new Bretton Woods, a new Yalta or otherwise. However, the objectives of the countries that took part in it are quite clear: the attempt to obtain a critical value by taking common negotiating positions with respect to the United States and Europe and seeking to consolidate and strengthen its role within some international organizations.¹¹

However, It is exactly on this point that such a strategy seems more critical. In fact, beyond the doubts that might lay behind the state of those countries economies, their consumption capacity and their demographic trends¹², the relations that distinguishes in this case Asian countries with particular reference to India and China remain thorny.

It is probable that an initial weakness might be the strength of this deal which calls for greater balance in international and monetary assets: every country wants to increase the role of its own currency. However, Beijing is moving, even through a series of bilateral agreements, in promoting the Yuan as a regional currency. Since 2008 China has stipulated agreements for payments in Yuan with at least 5 States for a total value of 650 billion Yuan (circa € 65 million). It remains very difficult for India and Russia to accept an excessive power of the Yuan in the region.

Secondly, also according to analysis made by Robert Cooper, the Asian region is the area of the globe where state of Westphalia monad continues to exist in its purest form; an area where cooperation seems to languish and competition increases and where there is the perception that every country is to be accounted for its own security. In other words any breakthrough or improvement of any of the regional players is perceived by others as a possible threat.

Throughout the SCO summit in Yekaterinburg the Chinese President Hu Jintao promoted the central role of Beijing as the propeller of the region by providing funds for 10 billion dollars to the countries of Central Asia to help them overcome the global economic crisis¹³, and thus trying to undermine the role of Moscow in the region. In fact the *“the former Soviet States are increasingly close to China which is seen as a powerful ally that does not have Russia's pretensions for supremacy.”* On regard to this, it is sufficient to take into consideration that commercial exchange between Beijing and those countries has witnessed a 30% increase from 12.1 billion dollars in 2001 to 67.5 this year.

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The relations between India and China seem even more difficult and contradictory¹⁴. An intense movement of Indian troops in the region of Arunachal Pradesh, a territory claimed by China took place while Manmohan Singh's was traveling to Yekaterinburg, According to the People's Daily approximately 60 thousand troops were deployed along the border with China with the intention, as declared by the region's Governor J.J. Singh to "*meet future security challenges*"¹⁵, that may come, of course, from Beijing.

The maneuver gave rise to the official newspaper of the Communist Party of China to publish a very harsh article against the government of New Delhi which it described as envious for the Chinese successes: "*but India can't actually compete with China in a number of areas, like international influence, overall national power and economic scale. India apparently has not yet realized this*"¹⁶.

The article continues by saying: "*India's current course can only lead to a rivalry between the two countries. India needs to consider whether or not it can afford the consequences of a potential confrontation with China. It should also be asking itself why it hasn't forged the stable and friendly relationship with China that China enjoys with many of India's neighbors, like Pakistan, Nepal and SriLanka*".

The above represented a bitter stab for New Delhi that has always been suspicious of the ever growing Chinese influence on bordering countries particularly in Pakistan where most recently the strong bond between Beijing and Islamabad has been increasingly strengthened¹⁷, regardless of the growing tensions between India and Pakistan¹⁸. It is worth mentioning here the agreement stipulated

between Iran and Pakistan¹⁹ for the realization of what was to become the "peace pipeline", if India participated (the now famous IPI, Iran-Pakistan-India). Following over three years of negotiations, Iran and Pakistan have, in fact, signed a preliminary agreement in Tehran for the construction of the pipeline which will carry energy from the Persian Gulf. Therefore, construction will start, for now, only for the stretch between Iran and Pakistan (IP) and they could be soon joined by China that has repeatedly and insistently expressed an interest in the project, as did Moscow. New Delhi did not pursue further negotiations due to economic reasons and due to the strong opposition of the Bush administration to the IPI pipeline project. Currently, the Obama administration has not yet made known its position on this matter.

Additionally the increase of Chinese and Pakistani influence in Sri Lanka is equally worrying for India. Both countries benefited from India's delay in arming Colombo and massively supplied weapons to the country in its fight against the Tamil Tigers. "*India fears that Beijing, with the help of Pakistan and possibly Sri Lanka, plans to encircle its influence in the Indian Ocean. It is concerned about a deep-water port being built with Chinese help in Hambantota, on Sri Lanka's South coast, and has long objected to Chinese involvement in the Gwadar port in Pakistan's Balochistan province*"²⁰.

If the ongoing global crisis is giving an opportunity for China to increase its regional role, even as a last minute player in helping some regional countries gain an economic breath, the overall situation remain quite worrisome²¹. Unemployment remains to be the most alarming factor²². The Chinese are well aware of the fact that it will take years for the transition from an export-led structure into a system supported on domestic consumption to be achieved and that it could lead to very high costs during the transitional period in terms of the unemployment of unspecialized and cheap workforce: practically a big chunk of those sectors that hauled China's

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growth for more than three decades. Additionally, China knows well that it can not transform from one day to another an economic system which made its fortune through cheap labor cost in several hi-tech sectors. Also this transition will cut off thousands of jobs. However, the what mostly worry the leaders is the so called intellectual unemployment. It is estimated that in 2009 between 60 and 70% of new graduates will remain jobless. These reports are quite scary also particularly with the occurrence of the Tienanmen anniversary this year. The fear is that this intelligentsia might give life to a new series of protests that might act as a detonator to the anger of thousands of simple workers who were expelled from the labor market.

“Mao’s solution in the 70s was to send graduates into the countryside in order to foment the cultural revolution; on the other hand Hu Jintao decided to collocate them as interns²³, not only in the State-owned enterprises but also in the Army. On June 21st the People’s newspaper announced the Army of National Liberation’s intention to recruit 120000 graduates aged between 18 and 20 years (the age limit can be increased up to 24 for university graduates). A unique event for the for the consistency of the numbers: “China is under tremendous pressure to find jobs for 6.1 million college students graduating this summer, while one million from last year are still looking for job”²⁴.

Beijing intentions are very clear: the current leadership is trying to eradicate the roots of “ the possible causes of social discontent that might lead the masses, as occurred in the past, to demand a liberal reform to their political system²⁵.” Such an approach is characteristic of the current leadership and can be defined as a “populist authoritarianism” with which the party has found a way

to strengthen its capacity for governance while at the same time avoid a democratization of the country”²⁶. In other words nothing new but Mao's old slogan “let the party take care of it”²⁷.

Another important point is as follows: the government is using its intervention on the economy (as a reaction to the crisis) in order to strengthen their state owned enterprises and as a projection of their capabilities both in foreign and domestic markets. A domestic market that Beijing is trying hard to turn into a privileged hunting reserve for its own enterprises²⁸. Several voices of accusations has been heard against the party's central authorities who reserved a budget plan of 585 billion dollars exclusively for Chinese enterprises on November 2008²⁹.

Another aspect of concern on this regard is related to the actions of new-established Chinese anti-trust authority. Recently an attempt by Beijing to double its own financial participation (from 9 to 18% and which would have been its largest abroad by a Chinese company) has been blocked by the Australian mining giant of Rio Tinto. The Chinese enterprise of Chinalco lost the bid to its former rival Bhp Billiton: “Canberra said no to Beijing for the same reasons why, four years earlier, Unocal declined a generous offer by Cnooc: despite globalization (and in the case of Rio Tinto, the urgent need for cash), the strategic sectors are not sold to foreigners”³⁰.

The Chinese reaction to the Australian refusal was immediate. In fact for executives of the Ministry of Commerce, the joint venture planned by Rio Tinto and Bhp Billinton in the iron sector is characterized by “a strong monopolistic taste” that risks to deeply distort the Chinese domestic market and China, as the world's largest importer of iron will examine this within the context of its new antitrust legislation. Therefore, it not unlikely for Beijing to close the doors of its domestic market on Rio Tinto or at least strongly influence its access into it.

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The above closure can be reminiscence of a previous one: the Chinese Ministry of Commerce, with reference to the anti-monopoly, rejected a 2.4 billion dollars by Coca Cola to acquire the largest Chinese producer of fruit juices, the China Huiyuan Juice.

All those worrisome signs may suggest the beginning, or even a premature, real commercial wars. However, Beijing has been refusing all allegations of protectionism and discriminatory behavior against foreign companies³¹.

Nonetheless these words in China as in other realities (for example “buy American” or all’ *achetez français*) appear as a traditional rite. In many countries the “free trade party” is increasingly weakened, the WTO seems to be short of breath and the Doha Round does not seem to revive.

Within this new international climate it is logical for Beijing to reserve the money of its stimulus package for its State-owned enterprises and attempt limit the access of foreign firms into its domestic market, the only guarantee for future development.

Now that Beijing does not any longer see the of accessing international markets with its own goods as extraordinarily strategic nor does it consider the continuous inflow of foreign investments as vital as before (at least on a long term period), it has become less conditioned by external pressure³².

This is also why the situation appears to be quite worrying: regional powers tend to close in their areas of “co-prosperity” due to the contraction of the central power of the international system. This way the international frame breaks into regional blocks following the model of the panregions of Hausofern. In fact Beijing has been trying to create an authentic regional area of Yuan as in the thirties model of the Yen area.

These protectionist tensions are occurring within a climate of a substantial increase in expenditure for Defense purposes³³. A new long Middle Ages, with regional players not able to create a common bloc (but in constant economic competition) in order to reassess the international system, can therefore follow a world interrelated by international trade and focused on a central power. A new Middle Ages consisting of a closed “fortress – countries” closed on themselves and while constantly observe the moves of their neighbors.

The greatest risk is the recurrence of a script that Europeans have unfortunately experimented in the past: “within the domestic politics of each European nation the industrial bourgeoisie found it convenient to support nationalist political forces in favor of heavy armament programs and thus creating a vicious circle in which economic protectionism and political nationalism backed each other in each country and the militarism of each country nurtured that of the other³⁴.”

Therefore it might not be totally out of place to sustain that the alternative to globalization is not that of a harmonious system that smoothly share duties and quotas but War and not just a commercial one.

¹ “Dollar and future of BRIC may dominate summit”, People Daily June 16th 2009.

² It is worth mentioning that Beijing took the commitment of depositing 50 billion dollars for the recapitalization of IMF, See Peter Lee, “China discovers value in the IMF”, Asia Times, June 10th 2009.

³ *Ibidem*

⁴ *Ibidem*

⁵ *Ibidem*

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[6](#) Jian Junbo, “China says ‘no thanks’ to G-2”, Asia Times, May 29th 2009.

[7](#) *Ibidem*

[8](#) “Decoupling 2.0”, The Economist, May 21st 2009.

[9](#) The Secretary of the Treasury has reassured the Chinese people about the soundness of their investments in the United States: “The assets are very safe, since we have the most fluid State bond market in the world”. These words were pronounced by Geithner during a lecture he held at the University of Beijing. It is interesting to note that as mentioned by Luca Vinciguerra on the Sole24ore, that those words were greeted with some skepticism (and some laughter)”

[10](#) W Joseph Stroupe, “The world is now changed”, Asia Times, June 18th 2009.

[11](#) W Joseph Stroupe, “BRIC group plans own revolution”, Asia Times, June 17th 2009.

[12](#) Martin Hutchinson, “The perils of multipolarity”, Asia Times, June 24th 2009.

[13](#) “China will help the Central Asian Nations to overcome the crisis”, Asia News June 16th 2009.

[14](#) Also to be emphasized is the indignation aroused in Beijing following the decision made by the Asian Development Bank to finance some Indian projects in the region of Arunachal Pradesh. See Ananth Krishnan “China express ‘strong dissatisfaction’ over ADB approval to India”, The Hindu, June 19th 2009. See also: “A war in Africa between Beijing and New Delhi: China sells false Indian medicines”, Asia News, June 9th 2009. Also See “Delhi accuses: our Pmi damaged by the Chinese”, IL Sole24ore, June 16th 2009.

[15](#) “India's unwise military moves”, People's daily, June 11th 2009.

[16](#) *Ibidem*

[17](#) “Zardari, Hu vow to boost strategic partnership”, June 16th 2009. “China has decided to provide 60 million yuan (about 8.82 million U.S. dollars) in additional aid to help the Pakistani government settle the homeless civilians, he said. China had previously offered 1 million dollars of cash as well as materials worth 30 million yuan (about 4.4 million dollars) in humanitarian aid to Pakistan to help the settlement of homeless civilians.”

[18](#) “Pak used US aid to fight India: Report”, June 7th 2009.

[19](#) Pepe Escobar, “Pipelineistan goes Iran-Pak”, Asia Times, May 29th 2009.

[20](#) Siddharth Srivastava, “India blasts rivals’ role in Sri Lanka”, Asia Times, June 11th 2009.

[21](#) “Premier Wen: Chinese economy at critical moment of recovery”, People's daily, June 17th 2009.

[22](#) Ivan Franceschini, “Chinese workers lose more than jobs”, Asia Times, May 6th 2009.

[23](#) Loretta Napoleoni, “Pragmatismo, l'arma della Cina”, Il Sole24ore, May 16th 2009.

[24](#) “China to recruit 120,000 college graduate to join the army in 2009”, People's Daily June 21st 2009.

[25](#) Timothy Cheek, *Live the reforms. China since 1989* Rdt, Torino, 2008, pagg.126-127.

[26](#) *Ibidem*

[27](#) Brian P. Klein e Kenneth Neil Cukier, “Tamed Tigers, Distressed Dragon”, Foreign Affairs, July-August 2009.

[28](#) Wu Zhong, “Foreign companies blowing in the wind”, Asia Times, 11 giugno 2009.

[29](#) “Beijing is accused for having reserved investments for 4 thousand billion yuan to the advantage of Chinese enterprises, with the exclusion of foreign ones and thus to activate real

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protectionism in order to allow its enterprises to keep on being competitive. On May 26th the website of the National commission for Reform and Development published that more than two-thirds of 4 thousand billion yuans were allocated to Chinese firms. See also “Signs of recovery in the Chinese economy, but there is still a long way to go”, Asia News June 18th 2009.

[30](#) Luca Vinciguerra, “In Cina l'Antitrust ora affila le armi”, Il Sole24ore, June 16th 2009.

[31](#) “China denies protectionism allegations”, People's daily, June 18th 2009.

[32](#) “Foreign investments continue their flight from China”, Asia News, June 15th 2009. Foreign investments directed to China witnessed a decrease of 17,8% in May, compared to May 2008. The decrease registered in April was at -22,5% .

[33](#) “Asian countries speak of peace, but rush to armaments”, Asia News, June 01st 2009. On regard to the Indian armament please see Siddharth Srivastava, “Indian arms spree on the fast track”, Asia Times, June 4th 2009. On February Indian Minister of Defense A.K. Antony made it very clear that “There is no question of scaling down our defense expenditure, which is 2.5 percent of our GDP (gross domestic product) or compromise with our (arms) acquisition programs despite the economic recession”.

[34](#) Giuseppe Sacco, Critica del nuovo secolo, Luiss University Press, Rome, 2006.

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NATO AND EU BETWEEN REGRETS AND REVIVALS OF AN OFTEN (NEEDLESSLY) CONFLICTING RELATIONSHIP

Lorenzo Striuli



On one occasion during this first semester of 2009, the Secretary General of NATO Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, almost at the end of his mandate (he will be replaced in July), expressed his consternation for not having managed, during his office, to ensure stronger collaborative cooperation between the EU and the NATO, or, to use his own words, to bring the collaboration to “more pragmatic bases”. Scheffer referred to what is undoubtedly the most obvious and intricate issue of the ESDP: the double belongings of most of European Countries to two organizations (21 Countries out of the 27 EU ones are, indeed, also NATO members) that

have intrinsically different agendas due to the USA’s presence in NATO, but also due to the particular position that France has slowly acquired in the European leadership of the ESDP and at the same time as “half member” of the Atlantic Alliance. Indeed France, even though since De Gaulle’ choices it is outside the integrated chain of command of the NATO, has managed to develop a series of multinational formations all validated for the NRF (NATO RESPONSE FORCE), and some even experimented in NATO operations (like the EUROCORPS in Afghanistan, for example).

And it is exactly from France that the most acute observers have always believed to descend the key to resolve the intricate situation of the majority of the EU Member States. Indeed, since each of them is obviously equipped of one single army, one single navy and one single air force, they have had to play, for a long time, their role in the international security through two international organisations, two chains of command and two ways of activation, even for different operations carried out in the same theatre.

Now France has totally re-joined NATO in April (in occasion of the 60th anniversary of its establishment), after having obtained from the United States the headship of important positions, such as the ACT (the Norfolk’s ALLIED COMMAND TRANSFORMATION, the supervision and coordination body charged for the doctrinal and organisational transformation of the Member States’ armed forces), a regional headquarters based in Lisbon and a centre of analysis of satellite images. Also the insertion of more than 900 officers along the chain of command of the Alliance has to be taken into account, as a measure with which France (often indicated as the most anti-NATO nation of the EU) will re-balance her paradoxical position: an amount of approximately 138 million euros for financial annual contributions and military and civil resources destined to NATO (as a comparison, the whole Common Foreign Security Policy’s budget is limited to approximately 200 million euros per year), in exchange for a mere 1% in terms of military presence of detached staff.

A strengthening of the link between the NATO’s and ESDP’s military tools can be presumed by this “heavy” re-introduction, considering the current situation in which the latter has never

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overcome its substantial marginality in the international affairs, due to the obvious difficulties in establishing two integrated but separated military structures in the European continent, structured over different multinational chains of command and decision making, but although, if looked at closely, based on the same national force contributions.

Indeed the NRF, the main military tool of the Atlantic Alliance, works as a rotation system of both permanent and on call multinational formations, including, for example, the EUROCORPS (or other formations in which France carries out important roles), a permanent multinational force in which the French units and staff positions detain a primary importance. This formation has the famous FRENCH-GERMAN BRIGADE as its main operational core, that at the times was established as the first step toward an “European Army”, but currently is only a *force provider* for today’s European *battlegroups*. The latter, established in order to overcome the substantial failure of the ERRF (EUROPEAN RAPID REACTION FORCE, that should have become operative in 2003, but actually has never been set up in real terms, although it was declared IOC, or Initial Operating Capability, all the same), have however not ever used due to the particular activation mechanism of the EU military missions. Almost always, therefore, the ESDP missions have started: according to the so-called principle of *framework nations*, for which a country (up to now always France) leads the mission, feds all the main staff positions and the most important operational assets, and leaves the other countries participating at the mission to fill up the augmentation positions with little more than symbolic contributions; or simply changing the EU flag on assets till that moment deployed almost completely under NATO responsibilities (it is the case of EUFOR ALTHEA, that in Bosnia replaced NATO’s SFOR).

With the France’s re-joining NATO this last method could, in the future, constitute the starting point for many ESDP operations, with the exception, perhaps, of those carried out in Africa (if there will be others), continent that has always inspired the French sensibility and for which probably will continue to prevail, also in the future, the *framework nation* principle. In fact, both the NRF and the EU *battlegroups* have in this last decade carried out a role in rationalizing the various agreements that are the base of the bi- and multinationals integrated military formations of the European continent. Moreover, both the international organisations have gradually oriented themselves on similar on concepts of force, like fast activation, high projection, global approach, preventive possibilities, an spectrum of mission covering both peace operations and those in response of a crisis, etc. Furthermore, both the NATO and the EU have been involved in concurrent almost overlapping enlargement processes, for which today they include a multitude of small military tools from smaller countries. For these, participating to multinational military formations is the only real possibility to contribute to international defence and security, with all the consequences that this has in terms of political importance. This is the reason why we can observe instances in which for such countries their belongings to an international organisation or to another does not make a great difference for their international military policies. In this sense, we observe Norway (NATO country but not an EU one) that participates to a EU *battlegroup*, EU but non-NATO countries active in protecting the air space of Island (a NATO country), Finland and Sweden (non-NATO countries) that through Norway (with which they share an EU *battlegroup*) try to be admitted to the NATO integrated procedures of information exchange in the field of air defence, etc.

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These instances show the tendency for which ESDP and NATO can respectively push each other towards that tight complementarity (lacking up to now) regretted by Scheffer.

Once again, a France re-joining NATO constitutes a Copernican revolution in such sense, with multinational operations that in the next few years will finally be able to use, possible, the bigger, joint and combined, more projectable and more fight-oriented NRF, in complementarity with the more limited, more land-oriented and less projectable *battlegroups*. For example, while the NRF would be engaged in distant theatre, the *battlegroups* could be detached for unexpected crises situated in areas nearer the European continent. Or, while the NRF would be held in stand-by in order to be activated only for high intensity operations, the *battlegroups* could be used for those less intense but not less important ones, that means, for instance, electoral monitoring, support to security sector reform, natural disasters, etc., with the NRF kept ready to help the *battlegroups* if the situation deteriorates. There could also be the case where the NRF would be used for tasks like initial entry force, in which the *battlegroups* could help the NATO forces in the following stabilization and reconstruction phases.

Such burden-sharing hypothesis can happen only if the units temporary affiliated to the *battlegroups* are not commissioned to the NRF, not even for the pre- or post operations' rotation training, and only when the magnitude of the crisis allows the transition from the most complex NRF, formation at the level of division/army corps (that scale down to the brigade level only in its land component) with smaller *battlegroups* (formation at the level of reinforced battalion/regiment).

Only on these lines the ESDP of the second decade of 2000 would find its *raison d'être* besides a NATO that still appears to be well alive, even after its death has been foretold by several fronts and several times in the last decades.

The end of EUFOR Tchad/RCA

The biggest ESDP mission ever carried out on African territory ended in a climate of tensions during this first semester of 2009. Indeed the EUFOR Tchad/RCA (so-called because taking place both in Chad and in the Central African Republic), since 19th March has left the peacekeeping duties on that area to the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT). The tensions following the international arrest warrant against the Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir partially influenced the decision of the Defence Ministries of the European Union (who met in Prague the 12th March) of not extending the mandate of the mission, that, in any case, since its start in the first months of 2008, had always had as main objective "to prepare the area" for the UN mission that was to follow, ensuring the protection of civilians and assistance in the distribution of the humanitarian aids.

The mission reached its peak with approximately 4.300 men, of which, however, only 3,700 effectively deployed, while the rest were kept on hold in Europe as a strategic reserve. Headed by the Lieutenant General Patrick Nash of the Irish Defence Forces, the EUFOR Tchad/RCA had the following contributions (listed in order of importance):

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Forces Contributed for the operative component of EUFOR Tchad/RCA	
France	1700 troops, plus 500 for logistic support, plus 8 helicopters
Ireland	450 troops , plus 2 helicopters
Poland	400 troops, plus 3 helicopters
Sweden	280 troops
Austria	170 troops
Netherlands	90 troops, plus one transport aircraft C-130
Italy	90 troops plus a field hospital
Spain	80 troops for 2 tactical transport aircrafts CASA 295
Belgium	70 troops, plus one transport aircraft C-130
Finland	60 troops
Portugall	transport aircraft C-130
Slovenia	16 troops
Grece	transport aircraft C-130

In operational terms, this force was structured on three battalions (one guided by the French, one by the Irish and one by the Poles) reinforced by a quick reaction echelon, and was deployed over an area of responsibility amounting approximately to 350.000 Km² (more or less an area as big as Germany).

The use of Special Forces/Special Operations Forces was quite wide (aside from the French ones, whose number is not known, there were 50 Irish Rangers, 50 Austrian Jagdkommando, 60 Dutch Marines, and 22 members of the Belgian SF, 15 from Slovenia and 15 from Croatia, about whom we will speak about later). However, once again for this kind of operations (and not only for the ESDP ones), the helicopters were insufficient, with the usual resort to chartered Russian helicopters after the countries participating to the mission refused to give them more (and the Irish helicopters in reality were subcontracted to a private society). At EUFOR Tchad/RCA took part also the following Countries not members of the European Union:

Forces Contributed for the operative component of EUFOR Tchad/RCA by non EU members States	
Russian Federation	100 troops, plus 4 helicopters
Albania	60 troops
Croatia	15 troops

If for the Russian Federation the contribution was mainly in terms of helicopters (and anyway these were detached only during the final phases of the mission, in December 2008), for Albania and Croatia an important role was played by their desire of joining the EU. Furthermore, the contribution of these two countries allowed to overcome, at least partially, the renunciation of Rumania due to financial reasons, although an earlier promised contingent of approximately 120 troops.

In any case, at the level of a staff structured essentially on a French framework, such were the contributions of the EU countries, in terms of positions covered at the Operational Headquarters

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of Mont Valérien and the Joint Chief of Staff of the Force, situated in Abéché under the command of French General Jean-Philippe Ganascia

<i>Staff contribution for EUFOR Tchad/RCA</i>	
Greece	15 troops
Germany	4 troops
United Kingdom	4 troops
Germany	4 troops
Hungary	3 troops
Lituania	2 troops
Luxemburg	2 troops
Portugall	2 troops
Bulgaria	2 troops
Czech Republic	2 troops
Romania	2 troops
Ciprus	2 troops
Slovakia	1 troops

The losses of the operation amounted to only one member of the French special forces, died in a shooting the 8th March 2008 during a recognition in Sudanese territory.

In any case, of the approximately 3.600 men of the EUFOR Tchad/RCA at the end of its mandate, roughly 2.000 (coming in particular from Croatia, France, Finland, Irish Republic, Poland, Portugal, Spain and Sweden components) transited to the MINURCAT.

According to some commentators, the EUFOR Tchad/RCA has, however, produced disputed results, since the population present in its Area of Responsibility has not benefitted at all of any improvement of the local conditions of safety, since brigandage, sexual violence, forced recruitment of child-soldier by part of the rebellious groups and inter-ethnic violence continue to exist. The EU, therefore, would have made a better choice if it had promoted, in agreement with the African Union, a negotiation table between the governments of Chad and the Central African Republic and the rebellious groups, instead of embarking itself in a military mission that, according to the European Parliamentarian British Geoffrey van Orden, member of the sub-committee on defence of such assembly, “would have enjoyed greater success and better continuity if the United Nations had supervised the responsibilities since its beginning”.

Such severe critiques have to be taken into account, but it must also be remembered that the EUFOR Tchad/RCA was never really established to resolve the problems of the regions in which it was deployed. The impossibility of dealing directly with the problem of Darfur, indeed, has pushed the international community towards a mechanism in which they approach the areas at the margins of that crisis like a kind of “sanitary cord” of stabilisation, so as to avoid, with the usual perverse consequences of migrations of refugees, the umpteenth African “geopolitical black hole”. In this sense, the EUFOR Tchad/RCA has been the first true great test of this new way to face the Darfur drama.

It is difficult to say if this approach could have shown its effectiveness, since Chad’s President has allowed the deployment of force only with heavy restrictions to its alignment in the areas

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bordering Sudan, where it mainly operated. In any case, however, the above-mentioned initiatives of International Criminal Court have invalidated its final result.

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ENERGY-ENVIRONMENT-ECONOMY: THREE INSEPARABLE ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS IN THE ENERGY FIELD

Gerardo Iovane



The oil has not been the protagonist in the energy scene of the first half of 2009. Indeed, the first half of the current year, after a frenetic growth of the oil price which during the last Summer raised up to 150 dollars a barrel, has seen an average adjustment of \$60 going to \$50 in February and breaking the roof of \$70 in early July, and then falling back to \$60 a barrel in the second part of the month.

The OPEC monthly bulletin has estimated that global demand for oil is going to get a downward trend in line with the developments of the world economy, but with the beginning of 2010 a retrieval can be expected.

According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), next year the global demand for oil will rise with the international economic recovery.

The debates that have animated the first half of 2009 have been about renewable energy sources and energy efficiency, climate change and reductions of polluting gases, and on a more international level, the possibility to make new assessments about nuclear power.

The Aeolian industry is currently developed in 50 countries throughout the world. Germany, Spain, USA, India, and Denmark are among those countries that particularly believed and invested in the new renewable source, but Italy, Holland, China, Japan, Portugal and Great Britain are also launching interesting projects of development ¹.

Even biomasses, yet still poorly used, but already of the second generation, that is, derived from wood waste and its remains, offer 30% greater results compared to those of the biomasses of first-generation, mostly composed of organic waste. A valid alternative could come from the poplars, a plant considered to be useful in this context because it has a rapid growth; such a solution could make thousands of hectares of derelict lands productive, providing also the farmers with an income. But over the next decade the primacy for investments and projects is certainly going to regard the photovoltaic energy whose trend will significantly change.

This year there has been a 27% increase with respect to the same period of 2008: these data confirm that the photovoltaic energy is one of the few growing areas in Italy. "Looking at the now-traditional data regularly provided by the GSE - explains Paolo Rocco Viscontini, Enerpoint Administrator - we note that compared to the last months of 2008 there has been a decrease of connections but they are still higher than those recorded during the same period of last year. "Without the financial crisis - continues Viscontini - the growth would have been

¹ Dati OCSE/Int.Energy Agency.

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much more consistent. Now it is interesting to see what is going to happen in the second half of this year considering the 2008 data”.

These data get even more interesting if you consider that the 2008 economy marked a record for renewable energies, with a 50% increase of the earnings from the photovoltaic energy, biofuels and the Aeolian energy, increased from 76.00 to 115.90 billion dollars. This is what is officially stated in the Clean energy trends report by Clean Edge, a Californian research company about renewable energy sources. The growth during the last year was driven by several factors: a double-digits expansion of the markets, but also a raise in price for the development of the Aeolian industry, linked to a demand which exceeds the supply. Among the more interesting trends the Aeolian industry emerges with its fifty-billion-dollar profit. New investments in clean energy technologies, including venture capital, project financing and research, have increased from 4.7% to 155.4 billion. The difficulties of the credit markets, however, have become more evident during the end of 2008 and the early 2009. There have been several clean energy companies that have postponed their investment plans, have left their employees without a job, or abandoned projects. According to Clean Edge, in a medium and long term, the growth of the sector of renewable energy sources will keep on, but 2009 is expected to be a year of rethinking and consolidation for many companies. According to the estimates by the Kyoto Club Italy, in 2010 our country will be the world leader for the exploitation of solar energy. We will see a real boom of photovoltaic energy.

Clean energy, jobs and world recognition: all this will be possible in Italy thanks to a progress gained in the field of photovoltaic technologies, for which in 2010 our Country will become a world leader in solar energy production. This has been estimated by the president of the Kyoto Club Italy, Gianni Silvestrini, who, during the conference EnergyMed in Naples, claimed that "in 2010, Italy will be the leading country of photovoltaic energy."

At current Italy is the third world power, preceded only by Spain and Germany, but the next two years will be incredibly positive for the field of renewable energy sources related to photovoltaics. On its part, the Government has not been hanging on, because the Minister of Economic Development Claudio Scajola at the meeting of the National Committee of the Italian World Energy Council (World Energy Outlook 2008) in March concluded his public speech saying that he intended to promote all the necessary steps : i) improving efficiency and energy conservation, ii) the modernization of infrastructure, iii) the diversification of energy sources, with short and long term targets.

The application of his intentions has not arrived late, as they have allocated funds for the university and the research field about energy. The Minister, in fact, launched the new three-year plan 2009-2011 for research in the field of energy allocating 210 million euros for research institutions and universities. During the days that followed, it was also published the Government act that launched the call for the selection of research projects relating to the Plan 2006-2008, financed by the companies for an amount of 53 million euros. "We have made available for research, universities and companies more than 250 million euros - said Scajola - which have the double purpose of giving a boost to the innovation in the key area of energy, and help to alleviate the difficulties in this moment of crisis. This is a strong support to research concerning the streamlining and savings in electricity, development of knowledge for the use of nuclear power source, and the production of electricity and environmental protection". The strategic areas of the Plan 2009-2011 are strictly related to the government, management and

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development of the national electricity system, with particular reference to network infrastructure, the future scenarios and the development and dissemination of renewable energy ².

It is clear that fighting against the climate change is one of the greatest challenges we have to face. According to experts, if we do not act immediately to stabilize global temperatures, which are constantly rising on the earth's surface, damages may be irreparable and the budget catastrophic. As it is a global issue, global warming requires a global repairing action. Hence we can understand the choices made by the various members with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 1992 and the Kyoto Protocol in 1997. These actions marked the beginning of a new path with clear milestones, to take forward the debate on climate change. In this scenario, the EU aims at a 30% collective reduction of greenhouse gases by 2020. In December 2008, the EU adopted an integrated energy and climate strategy, which sets ambitious targets for 2020. The object to pursue is to guide Europe towards sustainability ³. The actions to be made are the following: i) a 20% reduction of greenhouse gases, at least ii) a 20% reduction of the energy consumption through increased energy efficiency, iii) to supply 20% of our energy needs through the use of renewable energy.

Fighting poverty energy efficiency and development models based on clean energy: these are the hinges, adopted by the G8 on energy, which should build the future world politics. In addition to these principles, in the final document it is stated that the key for ensuring global energy needs, and at the same time to limit emissions of CO₂, is encouraging investment in energy infrastructure, efficiency, diversification and innovation in the mix technology. In particular, our goal is improving energy efficiency in all the most important economic sectors, and the operational launch of Ipeec (International cooperation partnership energy efficiency) with a major program to promote energy efficiency. The Great of G8 show that "a strategy to ensure sustainable development and energy security in the long term should provide a diverse range of supplementing sources." In this context, renewable energy will play a vital role in reducing emissions, and reduce consumption and dependence on fossil fuels. And it is necessary that the developing countries share and participate in efforts to combat climate change, committing to reduce CO₂ emissions. This is also true in light of the fact that China has overtaken the U.S. as the country most polluting in the world and India is progressively going this way. The announced goal for the Copenhagen conference on climate change is a 50% reduction in emissions by 2050 that will be possible thanks to strong investment in new technologies such as CCS (Carbon capture storage).

Then, a global partnership to push technology-friendly climate is also needed: this is the most important innovation that emerges from the draft Final Declaration of the Forum on the climate of the leaders of the major economies. Leaders of the Eight more Australia, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico and South Africa are committed to "increase considerably" and "coordinate public investments in research and development of clean technologies", with the idea of doubling this investment by 2015, recognizing the importance of private investment, partnership of public-private institutions and international cooperation, including regional research centers.

² <http://www.agienergia.it>

³ http://ec.europa.eu/climateaction/eu_action/index_it.htm

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But at the G8 nuclear power was also considered. On the nuclear front, the paper points out, “there is a growing number of countries that have expressed interest in developing this source that can make a significant contribution to combating climate change and ensure energy security. Nuclear power in this sense can play a vital role to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and consumption of products derived from fossil fuels. The Great stress then “the prerequisite of the peaceful use of nuclear energy.” In February in Italy the Minister Scajola already reported attention on nuclear power.

The issue of nuclear power is an issue as actual as ever, which triggers a lively debate between industry experts and the different individual opinions. It is sure that it deserves greater attention and a significant cultural overspreading. Indeed, in Italy we’re still paying the cost of rash decisions made twenty years ago which made Italy withdraw in the nuclear industry. The role of the Italian research on nuclear energy in the last eighty years has been fundamental to the international scientific community.

Among the points of interest presented last March by the Government as part of diversification of energy production, the idea of returning to nuclear power is included too. According to the Government to return to nuclear power is necessary for several aspects, first of all:

- reducing the cost of electricity;
- energy independence from other countries;
- diversification of energy sources in the country;
- the nuclear abundance of the resource.

In order to be the actual benefits, the four points above are to be considered as the results of a strategy which want to get them as the strategic objectives to be achieved downstream of a decision-making system that uses a scientific method of analysis, evaluation of CSF (Critical Success Factor) definition of strategies for decision support, identification of management strategies and finally to come into operational policy. Indeed, it is well known that the use of a technology can lead to both positive and negative consequences, and therefore everyone has to maximize positive consequence and minimize the negative factors. It is obvious that the four points mentioned by the government are the positive factors to maximize, but it is also important to understand the great significance of minimizing the negative factors of the question, such as environmental risk, the exposure of the population, real cost reduction - but considered over the production cycle, etc. 9 July 2009 was therefore a memorable day. Indeed, Italian Senate approved the act for the development proposed by Minister Scajola, which provides, inter alia, the development of civil nuclear energy. In that occasion Deputy Minister to the Economic Development, Adolfo Urso, speaking on the sidelines of the roundtable scheduled in Marcianise (Caserta) claimed: “The energy of tomorrow: opportunities and challenges for the future. Finally” - he continued – “we have a clear avant-garde agenda. It was necessary to simplify procedures, make them clear. Only this way the Country will get more and more competitive. "Speaking of the decree of approval yet, Urso said " it will allow us to reduce energy costs and lower carbon dioxide emissions”.

"Nuclear power represents a huge challenge in Italy", as it was pointed out by the Minister of Economic Development when visiting the Central Enel Mochovce. The Minister then drew a timing post-conversion law in the development of the act: "By six months from the publication of the Law on Official Gazette - explained Scajola - the criteria will be adopted for the location

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of installations, the systems will be identified for storage of radioactive waste, as compensation for the territories and the requirements for the conduct of building, in addition to the launch of nuclear safety". He then added: "Many Italian municipalities have already expressed their willingness to accept new nuclear power plants. The first founding stone of the first central will be put 'by the end of the legislature". Scajola then informed that eight months before a committee of ten experts had been established to closely follow the law text, and the experts were then working to get the implementation starting. In addition, the same act provides a new national energy strategy that can fill an over-20-year gap, and deal finally with the unresolved questions, the vetoes and the contradictions of the management of our country, which up to now have made the Italian pay a 30% further amount for the electricity compared to most of the other European countries, and we still have to rely on external supply for 85% of our consumption, and have to suffer high rates of pollution.

With the act on the development - said the Minister –there is a great reduction of the procedures for implementing the energy networks and infrastructures, giving us a major boost to renewable energy sources; it opens the way for nuclear power. It becomes operational the path to reduce our dependence, lower energy costs, reduce pollution, create a mix electricity with 50% of fossil fuels (against the current 83%), 25% of renewable sources (against the current 18%), and 25% nuclear.

Perspectives

Certainly in the first half of 2009 in the international debate the issues more discussed have been energy efficiency, renewable energy sources, and climate changes. It has been highlighted the need to address in a mutually reinforcing way the themes of energy, environment and economy. In a perspective of energy mix, each renewable source energy must be considered significant, and in some countries, such as Italy, the issue of nuclear power is seen as a very useful element to be considered within the future plan of energy mix.

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UNITED NATIONS (INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS) 2009: UN PEACEKEEPING UNDER REVIEW

Valerio Bosco



Between the end of 2008 and the first half of 2009 the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) took very important decisions concerning UN peacekeeping. Following the adoption of resolution 1843 by which the UNSC increased the authorized strength of the United Nations Mission in DRC (3000 additional military and police officers), resolution 1861 establishing the UN mission in Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) and resolution 1863 concerning the UN support package to the African Union force in Somalia (AMISOM) provided the UN peacekeeping with a new significant surge both in terms of costs and human resources. At the end of June 2009, despite persistent delays in full deployment of the hybrid force in Darfur – UNAMID has recently deployed 69 % of troops and 79% of the police authorized by the UNSC - the number of UN personnel serving in the 16 peacekeeping operations lead by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) reached the amount of 112,000 including troops, police officers and civilians. A joint French-British non paper presented at the beginning of the year launched a review process of UN peacekeeping involving all the key-actors of the United Nations System, namely the Secretary-General, the Special Committee on peacekeeping operations, the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly (dealing with financial and administrative aspects of UN operations), the Peacebuilding Commission and all other relevant actors. In the meanwhile, other initiatives complemented the French-British non-paper. A first set of concrete recommendations on ways to strengthen the UN peacekeeping system is expected to be agreed by the end of August 2009.

UN peacekeeping: gaps, capacities and resources

Despite its spectacular failures in early 1990s in Rwanda and Former Yugoslavia, sixty years of UN peacekeeping can still be considered as a history of success¹. In particular, the success and growth of United Nations peacekeeping over the past decade reflected its strengths. Today the UN peacekeeping operations provide the international community with a credible response to assist the implementation of peace agreements, as well as a platform for a wide range of assistance and support to help countries move from conflict to stability. Furthermore, the “blue helmets” bring in conflict and post-conflict situation the broad legitimacy of the United Nations and its neutrality to bear, and to serve as an honest broker. With proper mandate and resources peacekeepers can be pivotal force in encouraging slow, steady progress in some of the world’s weakest states. As the report issued in 2007 by the RAND Corporations stated “*the UN is an*

¹ Cfr. Kennedy: “*The Parliament of Men. The Past, Present and Future of the United Nations*”, Random House, 2007, New York.

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*efficient and cost-effective force provider. Its specialists, particularly in integrated missions, possess a wide range of civilian and military capabilities need to stabilize and help post-conflict situations*². Compared to the costs of troops deployed by United States and other developed States (NATO or regional organizations) the UN is the least expensive option by far. Furthermore, a recent survey by Oxford University economists found that international military intervention under Chapter VII of the UN Charter is the most cost-effective means of preventing a return to war in post-conflict societies. During the last years and months the UNSC has not only expended the number of peacekeeping operations deployed around the world – 60 % of blue helmets are deployed in the African Continent – but also enlarged the traditional concept of peacekeeping by assisting the UN Secretariat in transforming “simply military operations” into new multidimensional integrated operations, including electoral and post-conflict peacebuilding assistance, support to mediation process, capacity building, promotion of the rule of law and good governance, etc. Furthermore, during the last five years, the UN peacekeeping increasingly struggled with capacity and resources issues. The lack of available and qualified police, as well as of civilian personnel represents also a major problem. Despite its cost-effective profile, the budget of UN peacekeeping for 2009-2019 reached the extraordinary amount of \$7.8 billion. In time of financial crisis and due to the large commitments of developed countries to the UN in Lebanon and ongoing demands in Afghanistan, it appears unlikely that “traditional troop-contributing countries” will be able to provide new resources, both in terms of funding and troops/police officers. At the same time, many of the new contributors to UN operations are developing countries whose military forces often lack infrastructure, equipment and training to effectively integrate into multidimensional and complex peacekeeping operations³. Many African countries, despite their lack of equipment and training, are ready to enhance their role in peacekeeping. Therefore, assisting those countries in building their capacity for peacekeeping missions seems to be crucial. While the upcoming SG’s review of the Prodi report, due by the end of September, could provide further details on how to ensure predictability and sustainability of peacekeeping operations undertaken by regional organization under UNSC mandate, the reform of UN peacekeeping should be pursued as an ongoing process able to draw lessons from continuing reviews of performances of the current UN peacekeeping operations. The decisions taken by the UNSC between the end of 2008 and the beginning of 2009 recalled another dramatic surge in the history of UN peacekeeping when the Council, in a period of only twenty days, established three new peacekeeping operations (resolution 1701 on UNIFIL, resolution 1704 on Timor Leste and resolution 1706 on Sudan) marking an impressive 50% increase in the deployment of blue helmets⁴. Both 2006 and 2009 surge raised some concerns within the UN Membership⁵.

² James Dobbins: “*The Beginner’s Guide to Nation-Building*”, RAND Corporation, 2007.

³ According to the most recent data provided by the UN Secretariat the first ten top contributors in terms of military troops and police officers are Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Nigeria, Nepal, Rwanda, Ghana, Jordan, Egypt and Italy. Cfr: *Ranking of Military and Police Contributions to UN operations*, 31 May 2009.

⁴ Cfr: Valerio Bosco: “*La nuova ondata nella storia del peacekeeping delle Nazioni Unite e la cellula strategica di New York*”, in Osservatorio Strategico, settembre 2006.

⁵ Inspired by the peacekeeping failures in 1990s (former Yugoslavia, Somalia, Rwanda) the Brahimi report flagged out four main recommendations: a) need to set clear and achievable mandate for UN

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The decision adopted in autumn 2008 by the UNSC to reshape the mandate of MONUC in relation to the quick-changing nature of the conflict in eastern RDC, the continuing delays affecting the deployment of the hybrid force in Darfur opened the door for a more pro-active approach of the Security Council in addressing old and new challenges affecting UN peacekeeping operations.

The France-UK initiative

The French and British delegations at the UN took the lead in promoting a new debate on the review and reform of the UN peacekeeping by presenting a joint non-paper at the beginning of January 2009. The idea of the joint initiative was to promote a broader discussion on the issue by involving the Secretary-General, the UN Secretariat, the Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) and member states hosting Peacekeeping operations (PKOs). UN bodies and institutions having complementary mandates in the area of peacekeeping, namely the Fifth committee of the UN General Assembly - dealing with financial and administrative aspects of peacekeeping - the Special Committee of peacekeeping operations (the so called C-34 created in 1964 to conduct on annual basis a comprehensive review of all issues relating to peacekeeping operations), the Peacebuilding Commission, relevant UN agencies and programs, as well as the Security Council working group on Peacekeeping chaired by Japan, were also expected to join the exercise and give their contribution. The non-paper focused in particular on the need to **increase effective strategic oversight, address the resource constraints affecting UN operations, and improve the capacity of the UN system to deal with “gaps between mandate contained in UNSC and their implementation on the ground”**⁶. In the area of strategic oversight the first issues to address was the quality of preparation, planning and evaluation of operations. It was suggested that considerable progress in this matter could be made by improving the information flow between the Security Council, the Secretariat, and TCCs as well as the quality of military advice available to the Council. The idea of strengthening risk analysis capabilities, transparency across the chain of command was mentioned. Furthermore, the need to improve resolution drafting including on benchmarks and exit strategies was also pointed out. The aspect related to the financial and operational overstretch of UN peacekeeping was indicated as an obstacle in allowing the UN system to quickly react to new crises. According to the non-paper, the current strain on efficiency on the ground and at the headquarters could be addressed in six basic ways: 1) *considering alternatives to peacekeeping and rigorously assessing new commitments*; 2) *substituting civilian activities for military activities where appropriate*; 3) *outsourcing activities to third parties and sharing the burden with other organizations* 4) *closing existing operations*; 6) *increasing cost-efficiency, including on the logistic and sourcing side*. Considering the existing gaps between the mandates approved by the UNSC and their implementation on the ground,

operations; b) enabling the UN Secretariat to deploy and manage robust peacekeeping operations; c) equipping UN forces with adequate capacity to deal with violence; d) ensuring political and resources backing from Member States before the deployment of new operations. As it might be recalled, the Brahimi Report also recommended the establishment of just one peacekeeping operation per year.

⁶ *Letter dated 23 February 2009 from the Representative of France and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, 24 February 2009.*

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the paper also stressed the need to assess ‘*which mandate provisions are under-implemented and why*’. This assessment should also cover issues related to the implementation of complex mandates (balance and integration of civilian and military activities, implementation of provisions on human rights, protection of civilians, and judicial issues.). The non paper presented a more articulated set of proposals aimed at addressing the issue of effective strategic oversight. In doing so, the French and British delegations recalled that the Council had already stressed, in a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/10) the “*importance of a more strategic approach to the oversight and direction of peacekeeping*”⁷. It was recalled that the management of peacekeeping operations is decentralized. While Council resolutions create peacekeeping operations, the planning process is entrusted to the Secretariat and the operation itself is directed in the field by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Force Commander, using the resources provided by troop-contributing countries. On preparation and planning, the non-paper suggested that the Council should develop the practice of joint briefings by the Office of Military Affairs and the DPKO with political-military experts of the Council. Furthermore, it was suggested to provide all the Council Members with adequate military advice; the need to promote a more systematic reporting on strategic-level documents (i.e. CONOPS) by the UN Secretariat was also highlighted.

The UNSC debate on the French-British non-paper

The UN Security Council discussed the French-British non-paper in a day-long open debate on 23 January. The Council heard briefings from Mr. Alain Le Roy, Head of the DPKO, Mr. Hédi Annabi, Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), Mrs. Susana Malcorra, Under-Secretary-General (USG) for Field Support. The three UN speakers firmly welcome the initiative launched by France and UK and underscored that 2009 was a pivotal year for peacekeeping. “*A number of missions faced risks that were so significant that there was a potential for mission failure, with terrible consequences for the United Nations*”⁸. It was recalled that in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, the parties had recently brought the country to the brink of catastrophe, and MONUC was hard pressed to manage the crisis. In the meanwhile, in Darfur, UNAMID continued to face difficulties in deploying, while the parties on the ground were increasingly belligerent and the political negotiations moved slowly. It was also noted that, even at full strength – 19,555 military personnel and 3,772 police officers - UNAMID would continue to face “*daunting challenges*”. In fact, *over 2.5 million refugees and internally displaced persons looked to the mission for protection*. According to USG Le Roy, the first fundamental question that the international community faced was whether peacekeeping was being deployed beyond its capabilities. “*Was the current model of peacekeeping up to the challenges of the new mandates? Did it have the right resources? Were there sufficient troops or requisite capabilities? Could the air assets be found to meet those robust mandates with mobility and deterrence?*” According to USG Le Roy in too many cases “*the answer was no*”. It was also noted that there was a *constant strain between mandates and resources, between expectations and the capacity to deliver, and on the Secretariat resources to plan, manage and support the*

⁷ United Nations Security Council, Press Release SC/8933, 15 January 2007.

⁸ United Nations Security Council, Press Release, SC/9583, 23 January 2008.

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current pace and scale of operations. Another important issue raised by UN officials during the debate was the question of where peacekeeping fit in the overall political response of the international community to complex crises. USG Le Roy also added that *peacekeeping, however well resourced, would simply not be sufficient where the parties were not willing to achieve peace. However, in time of financial crisis and operational and financial overstretching of UN peacekeeping, the need to focus on conflict prevention with a view to avoiding additional demands for peacekeeping seems to be a crucial issue.* Several participants in the meeting stressed the need for strengthening the capacity of preventive diplomacy, mediation and peacebuilding, and underlined the importance of cooperation with regional organizations such as the African Union. *Despite the lack of concrete outcome, the debate convened by the UNSC in January provided the international community with a first opportunity to bring together the UN Secretariat, the UNSC and the UN General Assembly in tackling the common challenge on how to improve the peacekeeping system. In particular the pro-active approach taken by the UNSC through the French-British initiative showed the existence of a new political will to accompany and complement the past and more recent UN Secretariat efforts aimed at reviewing and reforming peacekeeping missions. In particular, the Peace Operations 2010 reform agenda - a reform strategy presented in 2006 and setting out the policies and procedures to enable DPKO to support peacekeeping over the next decade⁹ - the 2007 Secretary-General's initiative to split the Department of Peacekeeping Operations by creating the new Department of Field Support (DFS)¹⁰, the 2008 publication on "Principles and guidelines for United Nations peacekeeping" had already confirmed the readiness of the UN Secretariat to improve the performance and management of UN PKOs¹¹.*

The New Horizon Project

Following the debate convened in January by the UNSC the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support launched an internal review of peacekeeping.

⁹ Cfr: United Nations General Assembly: A/60/696, 24 February 2006.

¹⁰ Cfr. Valerio Bosco: *The first six months of Ban Ki-Moon at the United Nations*, Quarterly, summer 2007. The major feature of the restructured Department of Peacekeeping Operations included the creations of seven Integrated Operational Teams (IOTs), which now comprise the primary structure for integration between DPKO and DFS, combining political, military, police, support and administrative specialist officers. IOTs provide operational guidance and support to field offices, particularly in addressing cross-cutting issue and crisis and emergency issues. IOTs also serve as the entry point at UN Headquarters for troop- and police-contributing countries and other partners. Two additional structures were also created, namely the Policy, Evaluation and Training Division and the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions. The Office of Rule of Law integrates police, judicial, corrections, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, mine action and security sector reform structures. The restructuring also involved an increased representation of staff from troop-contributing countries (TCCs) in both DPKO and DFS.

¹¹ Drafted by the Peacekeeping Best Practices Section of the Division of Policy, Evaluation and Training of the UN DPKO, the Principles and guidelines for United Nations peacekeeping was a first attempt in over a decade to codify the major lesson learned from the past six decades of UN Peacekeeping experience. According to former USG for peacekeeping operations, Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, it was intended "to help practitioners to better understand the basic principles and concepts underpinning the conduct of contemporary UN PKOs as well as their inherent strengths and limitations".

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The so called on “*New Horizon project*” aimed at forming a new “Partnership Agenda” for peacekeeping and contributing to the initiative undertaken by France and UK within the UNSC. The New Horizon document, which is currently being finalized in New York, is expected to assess and review challenges confronting UN peacekeeping over the next two to five years. According to USG Le Roy “*a decade after the publication of the Brahimi report, the objective is to arrive at a set of achievable immediate, medium- and long-term goals to help configure UN peacekeeping to better meet today’s and tomorrow’s challenges*”. The paper should focus on critical peacekeeping tasks and functions requiring a renewed consensus on issues such as the role of peacekeepers in delivering on the civilian protection mandate; measures to improve mission design, resourcing and deployment; proposals on assessing and building the capacities needed for future peacekeeping; and a strategy to create a stronger, more flexible support system. Furthermore, the report could include recommendations on political strategy and designs, generating and maintaining political support, increasing partnership with regional organizations.

The follow-up debate and the focus on relations between UNSC-Secretariat and TCCs

On 29 June the Turkish presidency of the UNSC convened an additional meeting on peacekeeping focusing in particular on the Council’s relationship with TCCs, police contributing countries and major financial contributors. Turkey, Pakistan, India and other top contributors to UN peacekeeping underlined the need to intensify dialogue and consultations with the Fifth Committee, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations in order to overcome some of the clearly delineated challenges facing United Nations peacekeeping. *Many speakers suggested the idea to shift the focus on operational requirements and how to better generate capabilities, rather than just on force generation and numbers. The current and persistent lack of helicopter by the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) was referred as a vivid example. The issue of financial overstretched was also addressed. Some concerns were raised about the risk of undertaking overlapping initiatives on the reform of UN peacekeeping. According to the Pakistani delegation although efforts to reform United Nations peacekeeping activities were clearly under way, Member States had not yet had the opportunity to fully and properly assess and review the results or impact of the exercise carried out by the UN Secretariat since the restructuring of DPKO and the establishment of DFS. Other representative of troop contributing countries – namely India, Jordan, Uruguay, and Morocco – stressed the importance of triangular consultations among the Council, the Secretariat and TCCs. The full involvement of TCCs from the conception to the deployment of peacekeeping missions, as well as in the determination and review of mandates was also emphasized*¹². Japan, one the main financial contributor to UN peacekeeping, stressed the need to increase emphasis on quality of personnel deployed in peacekeeping mission more than just number. *The speech given by US Ambassador during the meeting was particularly important. Ambassador Susan Rice told the SC that the US would strengthen its efforts, with the United Nations and others, to expand the pool of troop- and police-contributing countries. In the meanwhile, it was announced that the United States was willing to consider directly*

¹² United Nations Security Council, Press Release, SC/9694, 29 June 2009.9694

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providing more military observers, military and civilian staff officers and other personnel, including women, to United Nations peace operations. Ambassador Rice stated that Washington was also prepared to generate the missing force capacity in UNAMID, the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA) and MONUC to help ensure the protection of civilians in those respective difficult situations. Nevertheless, it was recalled that the Obama Administration was currently planning to further strengthen the US global training program, which had thus far trained some 75,000 peacekeepers and facilitated the distribution of some 40,000 others to 29 operations around the world, mostly in Africa. The Russian delegation focused its intervention on the need to ensure the necessary level of military expertise and involve military experts from Council members in reviewing mandates. Russia also advocated the idea of making the Military Staff Committee (MSF, art. 47 of the UN Charter) more active. According to the Russian delegation, MSF's recommendations on operational aspects and in determining the readiness of contingents and infrastructure would provide the Council with reliable information and increase the military expertise of peacekeeping. The Italian Ambassador at the UN, Mr. Giulio Terzi di Sant'Agata, recalling the Italian contribution to UN peacekeeping, supported the positions expressed by the top contributors and stated that "while it was ultimately up to the Council to craft mandates, it must take into consideration the views of those who would carry out its edicts on the ground". The Italian delegation also underlined that, since most missions were in Africa, the Council should consider ways to strengthen crisis-management capacity on that continent. The June debate confirmed the persistent disillusionment among TCCs who feel that their participation in consultative meetings with the UNSCC is not being fruitful. The need to promote a more inclusive relationship moving beyond monotonous briefings to effective participation and interaction during different stages of a peacekeeping mission seems to be crucial.

Some progress...

While the risk of overlapping initiatives and duplication of exercises related to the reform of UN peacekeeping appears to be real - the Canadian government is currently organizing a series of panel discussions on the issue - the process inaugurated by the presentation of the France-UK non-paper generated a positive momentum and encouraged interesting developments. A more systematic use of benchmarks in mandates and requirements for reporting against these benchmarks has been developed by the UNSC. In January the UNSC, renewed the mandate of the UN Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) by establishing benchmarks towards an exit strategy for MINURCAT. It also asked the UN Secretariat to develop of a strategic working plan containing indicative timelines to assess progress towards the fulfillment of the benchmarks to be included in regular reports. Furthermore, resolution 1868 of 23 March, which renewed the mandate of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), asked the Secretary-General to include benchmarks in his June report. Reviews of benchmarks are also expected in the reports for the AU/UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) in July and the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) in August. The recent decision adopted by the UNSC to renew the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) was also important. The UNSC called upon the SG to include in his upcoming report a contingency plan in relation to a possible settlement of the Cyprus conflict, as well as options for further adjustments of UNFICYP's mandate depending on the evolving situation on the ground. The

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different initiatives undertaken in first half of 2009 also encouraged the revitalization of the Security Council working group on peacekeeping operations currently chaired by the Japanese delegation. The Working Group met to discuss the best way of implement its mandate and decided to deal with generic issues facing TCCs and to discuss them in the context of specific missions. The WG is currently discussing the gap between mission mandates and implementation. The WG and TCCs have so far discussed the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). The missions in Burundi, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste were also reviewed. A closed meeting of the Working Group members is expected to wrap-up the main findings and to circulate a midterm paper assessing the status of consultations with TCCs.

The way forward

All these recent developments will probably feed a further public meeting of the UNSC which will be organized by the UK presidency in August. Additional proposals might be discussed at that time. A change in the work habits of the UNSC has been suggested by some analysts: according to Security Council Report – an influential Non-governmental organization covering the work of the Council – the idea of reintroducing the early 1990s practice when the Council received daily briefing form the UN Secretariat on the last 24 hours developments from the field could proved to be very useful¹³. *Furthermore, as demonstrated by the innovative working methods adopted by the country specific meetings of Peacebuilding Commission, the use of video and weekly teleconference could bring perspective and input from the field able to inform and help the Council decision making*¹⁴. *Nevertheless, a further strengthening and revitalization of the two subsidiary bodies of the UNSC- the MSC and WG on peacekeeping – could provide the UN with an updated oversight system of modern peacekeeping operations. The UK presidency of the UNSC is expected to table a draft-resolution which may include some of the above-mentioned proposals. Nevertheless, the review of UN peacekeeping will continue until the end of 2009.*

¹³ Security Council Report: “Update report – UN peacekeeping operations”, 16 January 2009.

¹⁴ Cfr. Valerio Bosco: “Il nuovo slancio della Peacebuilding Commission e la presidenza Britannica del Consiglio di Sicurezza”, in Osservatorio Strategico, aprile 2007.

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AFGHANISTAN AND ITS REGION: FROM CHALLENGE TO OPPORTUNITY

Lorena Di Placido



The solution of the current Afghan crisis cannot be achieved without a clear and comprehensive geopolitical vision of the region. The main actors of the international community would make a mistake if they considered Afghanistan as a stand-alone case. On the contrary, history, geography and politics of the entire region are inextricably linked.

For a number of reasons the country has often been perceived as a challenge by neighbouring countries and as a geopolitical opportunity by foreign powers. Due to the current critical internal situation, the spread of illicit traffic and the Taliban revival, Afghanistan is basically considered a threat to regional stability and a potential threat also to other areas geographically connected to Eurasia.

Background

The spread of illicit trafficking from Afghanistan is helped by the grey area of security inside and around the country. This complex situation guarantees the suitable environment for traffickers and criminal groupings, who take advantage from permeable borders, political and economical instability, corruptible officials and overwhelmed state institutions. To worsen the situation there is also the spreading of Taliban influence along the Afghan-Pakistani border which is reason of concern for the whole international community.

The geographical proximity to Central Asia makes this area a major route of illicit transit from Afghanistan and a potential vehicle for the spreading of extremist ideologies.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the consequent difficulties in border control, the campaign against drugs in Iran and the civil war in Tajikistan, around 20 per cent of Afghan heroine is smuggled through Turkmenistan and Tajikistan. Other factors that help the trafficking are the long frontier that Central Asian countries share with Afghanistan and the fact that these countries are becoming consumers instead of being only a crossroad to Russia and Europe. Moreover, from a geographic point of view, this area is located between a producing country, Afghanistan, and the main market of destination (Europe)¹. Central Asia (in its extended

¹ The porous borders between Afghanistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan allow any kind of illicit traffic to go through and even to reach Europe along the so called Northern route. Well developed transportation corridors go from Afghanistan to Tajikistan through the border settlements of Shuroabad, Moskovskiy, Panj and Shaartuz; limited amounts of stuff are smuggled through the Gorny-Badakshan Autonomous Viloyati. Then, from Khujand narcotics get into Uzbekistan and across Batken district enter in Kyrgyzstan. Moreover, since 1998 evidence show that Dushanbe airport is very actively used for drug

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definition) is one of the regions where security has most been jeopardised by organized crime linked with narcotics traffic.

Of course, the closest neighbours are the first victims of Afghan instability and the weakest ones. In the case of Tajikistan, the lack of security has made the state a prey to crime and religious extremism and has led to five years of exhausting internal conflict. Along its southern border, together with forms of small trade, illicit traffic (principally drug trade) has begun to flourish². Generally speaking, we can say that the spreading of illicit traffics out of Afghanistan together with the worsening situation along the Afghan-Pakistani border are both sources of deep concern for the Central Asian states that still need the support of foreign countries.

Border control is widely perceived as a key factor. Due to the lack of a stable situation in Afghanistan and an ineffective control of the territory, the only way to stem the spread of any threat to regional security could be an effective policy of border control. Current international programmes such as the EU led BOMCA or the NATO led Counter-Narcotics Training of Central Asian and Afghan Law Enforcement Personnel - NRC project are just drops in the sea.

The issue of border security is particularly sensitive for Tajikistan, which is directly involved in Afghan matters also for ethnical reasons. Aside from the main international assistance

transit, especially towards China. Narcotics from Tajikistan go mainly into Kyrgyzstan from four directions: across the Khorugh-Osh border; through the area of Pamir and Zhalayaski mountains; across Jirkatal mountain; via the Khujan main roads to Batken region and the Ferghana valley in Uzbekistan. The main gate from Afghanistan and Uzbekistan is Termez, while from Tajikistan the main traffic route are in Surkhondaryo region, the Namangan and Tashkent neighbouring area; the area around the Jizzakh district. The route from Kyrgyzstan goes through Andijan and the Namangan district in Uzbekistan and through Batken and Osh regions in Kyrgyzstan. Narcotics come in Turkmenistan mainly from Afghanistan and much less from the Uzbek Khorezm area. Moreover, illicit traffics from Turkmenistan go to Azerbaijan and to Astrakhan from the port of Turkmenbashi and also the Ashgabat airport became one of the most important transit points. From Kyrgyzstan narcotics go straight into Kazakhstan, where the main routes are in the Western, Southern and central part of the country. From there they go straight to Europe.

According to the Russian office of UNODC almost the 20% of the heroin produced in Afghanistan uses the Northern route and at least part of it reaches the European markets, while an increasing amount is consumed in Central Asian countries and Russian Federation. Although the higher quantity of opiates which arrives in Europe is smuggled through the Balkan route, nonetheless due to the huge amount of heroin coming from Afghanistan, the Northern route “takes advantage” from the boom of production. Moreover, unlike the Balkan route, where the Turkish criminal groups dominate all the supply chain from origin to European markets, the Northern route is not organized in the same capillary way and opiates are sold and re-sold from different national criminal groups to others, while public officers corruption dominate without any real opposition.

Rustam Burnashev, *Terrorist Routes in Central Asia: Trafficking Drugs, Humans, and Weapons*, in “Connections – The Quarterly Journal”, volume VI, number 1, Spring 2007

² Erica Marat, *Impact of Drug Trade and Organized Crime on State Functioning in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan*, China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly, Vol 4, No 1, 2006, www.silkroadstudies.org

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programmes, the US Embassy in Dushanbe has been cooperating, since 1992, with Tajikistan law enforcement structures through assistance projects to provide border security, support rule of law and combat drug trafficking.

The huge effort provided³ gives the sense of how urgent the border security matter is perceived, but, on the other hand, it's clear that an external support is at the base of any effort, due to the lack of sufficient internal financial resources and experience for Central Asian countries to act alone. Because of that, there are no large scale bilateral projects supporting Afghanistan but just an attempt to a multilateral approach supported by the main regional organizations.

A multilateral approach

In the last years, Afghanistan has been perceived by neighbouring countries as a potential threat to their stability due to the spread of illicit trafficking and extremist ideologies out of the country while their weakness in the post soviet transition did not allow any attempt of bilateral cooperation.

Besides from that, Central Asian countries tried to implement a comprehensive approach to common challenges to regional stability through existing structures led by regional powers. On November 4th 2005, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) members signed in Beijing a Protocol on the establishment of SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group between SCO and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, "with the purpose of elaborating proposals and recommendations on realisation of cooperation between the SCO and Afghanistan on issues of mutual interest"⁴. This tool had a deep symbolic meaning but did not bring practical results. Its establishment gave the impression that regional powers (namely Russia and China) felt the need to reaffirm their presence in Central Asia after almost four years of western involvement in Afghan matters. On the other hand, Afghanistan's neighbours were trying to find their own role in the attempt to manage the common goal of ensuring regional security together with Afghan leadership.

The current security worsening inside Afghanistan and the ongoing spread of illicit trafficking forced the Russian presidency of the Organization to re-launch a regional effort through a special conference on Afghanistan under the SCO auspices, held in Moscow on March 27th 2009, just few days before a similar NATO led initiative in The Hague. At the end of the conference, SCO members signed a Declaration, a Statement on combating terrorism, illicit drug trafficking and organized crime and a Plan of Action.

³ Moreover, on March 27 2009 the US Embassy International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Office (INL) provided two KAMAZ trucks and equipment for the Tajik Border Guards, while in 2008 INL provided 424,000 US dollars for reconstruction of the Sari Gor border post and in 2007 it supported the reconstruction of border posts in Bog (338,000 US dollars) and Bakhorak (298,000 US dollars), in addition to the bridge over the Nijniy Pyandj river (37 million US dollars). All these projects have been implemented along the Tajik-Afghan border. <http://dushanbe.esembassy.gov>

⁴ http://english.scosummit2006.org/en_bjzl/2006-04/21/content_150.htm

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In the Declaration, SCO members stress that the conference results are in line with the efforts of the international community (UN, NATO, OSCE, CSTO, OIC, CICA) to counter the threats of terrorism, drug trafficking and organized crimes and recognize the need to strengthen Afghan leadership through the aegis of United Nations. The ISAF contribution also got a positive evaluation, especially for the need of a closer coordination and cooperation with Afghan authorities in fighting illegal production and drug trafficking.

The Declaration underlined the importance of coordination and cooperation between Afghanistan and its neighbours.

Moreover, SCO members welcome the initiative of G8 “to facilitate development projects aimed at social and economic development in Afghanistan and Pakistan in the context of cooperation with all neighbouring States. They also welcome the enhancement of counter-narcotics’ regional dimension by reaching out, in the next G8 meeting (26th and 27th of June 2009 in Trieste), to the interested Countries and relevant Organizations; and in the same vein, commended the Ankara Trilateral Summit Process”.

In the Statement, SCO members address their attention to combating illicit drug trafficking, international terrorism and trans-national organized crime. This will be done through the creation of “anti-drug and financial security belts” and “anti-terrorist security belt” and the enhancement of the cooperation with all relevant states and international and regional organizations. The Plan of Action establishes deeper cooperation in the above mentioned fields through exchange of information at law enforcement and intelligence level, the strengthening of the SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group and a possible interaction with the CSTO Foreign Ministers Council Working Group on Afghanistan.

These statements have a political relevance, since they demonstrate the will of Russia’s SCO presidency to reaffirm its role on Eurasia through the tool of a successful regional organization however, but this approach is only a piece of the solution.

Final remarks and suggestions

The worsening of the Afghan crisis and the long presence of foreign troops in the heart of Eurasia stimulated regional powers to support new efforts for a possible regional solution.

According to some analysts, 2008 was for SCO “the year of Afghanistan”, the top priority issue. In fact, the August tensions between Russia and Georgia changed the agenda, but the local sensitiveness was ready to support any initiative for a regional approach to stabilize Afghanistan⁵. Presently the Obama Administration thinks that a regional approach is of basic importance for the solution of the Afghan situation and that it is directly linked to what is going

⁵ On June 10-12 2008 it was held in Issyk-Kul’ (Kyrgyzstan) the regional conference “Afghanistan, SCO, security and geopolitics in Central Asia”, organized by the Afghan foundation “Ahmad Shah Massud”, the Kyrgyz foundation led by professor Alexander Knyazev and the German Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

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on in Pakistan: Afghanistan and Pakistan are finally considered two faces of the same problem of regional security.

Even if the SCO initiative for Afghanistan is the sign of this awareness, it does not represent a complete solution of the problem. Although the proposal of a regional approach is a significant step, rather than facing the situation in a comprehensive approach the SCO effort is oriented towards stemming the threats to regional security coming from Afghanistan instead of eradicating them. In the above mentioned official documents, often SCO members talk about “belts” around Afghanistan, but they do not properly stress problems such as the ongoing guerrilla, the lack of control by central government and the need to sustain an autonomous and effective role on the whole country.

Another limit is that the SCO conference was held just two days before the NATO initiative on Afghanistan at The Hague: two events in the same period of time, two initiatives (after many others held over the years!) and no coordination between them. The risk is a real waste of resources, while a joint effort among all the actors could be a winning approach.

Considering the positive meaning of the current development within SCO, there are some very interesting elements at the basis of a possible attempt to a shared solution.

First of all, the proposal of a regional approach towards Afghanistan comes from an Organization led by the main regional powers, Russia and China, which are two permanent UN Security Council members with a deep political and economical influence in the region. They work in Eurasia through SCO, a successful Organization which comprises four Central Asian countries as members, and key regional players such as Iran, India and Pakistan as observers. The same framework could represent a privileged forum where the main actors that provide regional stability feel comfortable and have always had a fruitful dialogue. They are all interested in a peaceful and secure Afghanistan, in order to achieve the regional stability that they need for trade, energy cooperation⁶ and the return to the best conditions of a modern Silk Road.

The role of China is also to be considered. Although up to now it has only proposed (at bilateral level) economic cooperation, its contribution in the economic reconstruction of Afghanistan cannot be ignored⁷.

The SCO conference Statements, however, lack in some crucial points, such as the internal security of Afghanistan and the control of territory, two issues where ISAF (the UN approved mission directed by NATO) is active since 2003. On the other hand, SCO members do not call

⁶ If the current Afghan crisis comes to an end, the TAPI project of a gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to Indian and Pakistani markets, crossing Afghanistan, could be finally implemented.

<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/news/articles/eav032609c.shtml>

⁷ Inter alia: Niklas Norling, *The emerging China-Afghanistan Relationship*, Central Asia Caucasus Analyst, www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/4858

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upon themselves any military role and are not interested at a possible future involvement. This means that the military role can be maintained by ISAF itself, generating a sort of division of labour. In fact, if SCO wants to become a political mediator between Kabul and the regional key actors in order to satisfy needs of dialogue and effective cooperation in common interests and achievements, ISAF could help Afghan authorities in the training of local personnel, in order for them to gradually provide for their national security.

If a real cooperation between SCO and NATO will become effective instead of only writing it in official statements, the joint and coordinate effort of the main organizations active in and around Afghanistan could achieve important results oriented to the establishment of a stable and peaceful state and NATO could find an exit strategy⁸ from the current involvement in Eurasia. As final result, Afghanistan could become an opportunity of broader cooperation, instead of being a steady challenge for regional security.

⁸ For an example of best case exit strategy from Afghanistan, see Giovanni Marizza: “No surge is needed to exit from Afghanistan”, 14 March, 2009 in www.loccidentale.it (Italian only). In this article (<http://www.loccidentale.it/articolo/exit+strategy%3A+un+%E2%80%9Csurge%E2%80%9D+al+contrario+per+vincere+in+afghanistan.0067490>) the author, a Major General currently chairman of a NATO working group, proposes the following strategy based on the principle “NATO is there to leave, SCO is there to remain”. UNSC should launch a sort of “relay race” between NATO and SCO. Initially, while SCO secures the Afghan border and defeats the drug trafficking, USA and NATO should enhance the governance and development activities, combat corruption, negotiate with moderate factions, unilaterally reduce the military presence, train and equip the local army and police, enhance the intelligence activities (with related “*covert operations*”) and help the stabilization of neighbouring countries like Pakistan. End state: only SCO (since Afghanistan and all neighbouring countries are either SCO full members or observers) will manage that regional crisis.

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We are glad to inform our readers that starting from this issue we decided to publish some articles or papers of researchers we meet during our activities in Italy as well as abroad.

We do hope to receive a constant flow of articles to fill regularly the “Focus On” of all future issues of this Quarterly

RUSSIA: THE ARCTIC REGION PERCEPTION

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The Arctic is a polar part of Earth, which includes the Arctic Ocean, some adjacent parts of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, islands located in that area and coastline of the Eurasian and North American Continents.

The Arctic has a 27 million square km of land and is rich in mineral resources such as gold, diamonds, nickel, platinum, copper, manganese, cobalt, oil and natural gas. According to some data, the Arctic region accumulates 25% of the world deposits of oil and natural gas. Moreover, the Arctic region is the major resource of fish and sea-food and is used as the major sea transportation route.

Nowadays, due to the melting of the Arctic ice sheet resulting from the global warming, new possibilities come to the agenda in terms of extraction of mineral resources and navigation. These factors, on the one hand, and the lack of energy resources, on the other, have resulted in the increased competition of the states of the Arctic region, as well as other states, for using the natural resources of the Arctic region.

Protection of the environment

The main sources of environmental pollution of the Arctic are connected with natural resources extracting and processing enterprises, sea ports and vessels, fuel storage facilities, water-borne wastes discharges from human developments and nuclear power facilities. In the Arctic waters many nuclear waste containers and submarine nuclear reactors were submerged. The Barents Sea, the Laptev Sea, the White Sea and the Kara Sea are among those that suffered most of all from pollution. The Barents Sea fertility has reduced five times throughout 30 years, Arctic bird rookeries have decreased in number many times. The Arctic seas have been polluted by oil products, phenol, heavy metals and nitrogen compounds.

Severe climate of the Arctic poses a real threat of sea disasters that may result in environmental pollution. Among those well-known ones is a tragedy of Chelyuskin ship, which was crushed by the Arctic ice while passing along the Northern Sea Route in 1934. Therefore, according to Article 234 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982) “Coastal States have the right to adopt and enforce non-discriminatory laws and regulations for the prevention, reduction and control of marine pollution from vessels in ice-covered areas within the limits of the exclusive economic zone, where particularly severe climatic conditions and the presence of ice covering such areas for most of the year create obstructions or exceptional hazards to

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navigation, and pollution of the marine environment could cause major harm to or irreversible disturbance of the ecological balance”. In other words, the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982) envisages the right of a coastal state (in our case these are the states of the Arctic region) to adopt corresponding domestic legislation that may contain even more strict requirements to navigation in the Arctic than those stipulated by the norms of the international law of the Sea.

Thus, for instance, in Canada there is a law that has been in force since 1970 called “Act to prevent Pollution of Areas of Arctic Waters adjacent to the mainland islands of the Canadian Arctic”. Under the Act, “Arctic Waters” were defined as all those waters above latitude 60 north within 100 nautical miles of shore plus continental shelves or other substrata that Canada had the right to exploit. If a disaster strikes a foreign ship or vessel in the Arctic waters and such a disaster may result in water pollution, Canada has the right to take measures to prevent pollution, right up to the destruction of such a ship or vessel. Moreover, responsibility for inflicting such damage is absolute and its scope is unlimited.

In Russia the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR “On the improvement of protection of nature in the regions of the Far North and sea areas adjacent to the Northern coastline of the USSR (1984)” continues to be in force. This Decree provides for creation of the whole system of wildlife preserves, reserves and other protected areas (including sea areas). If necessary, wildlife protected zones are established; special requirements to navigation, air and ground traffic are worked out. Any kind of activities within the limits of the mentioned wildlife preserves, reserves and other protected areas, which may be hazardous to wildlife or damage the corresponding natural areas, is prohibited.

The sea areas adjacent to the Northern coastline of the USSR, where especially severe climatic conditions and ice sheets create obstacles or threaten navigation, while sea pollution could inflict serious damage to the environmental balance and damage it irreversibly, special rules of navigation of ships or other vessels are established by the Soviet competent authorities. Navigation of ships and other vessels within the limits of sea areas of wildlife preserves, reserves and other protected areas is carried out only along the sea corridors established by the Soviet competent authorities. Entry of ships of other transportation means into the areas of wildlife preserves, reserves and other protected areas, as well as passing through these areas outside the boundaries of sea corridors are allowed only in cases of disasters or for ensuring safety of people, ships or other transportation means.

Besides various kinds of pollution, a negative impact upon the Arctic environment is also caused by the global warming and climate change that lead to melting of the Arctic ice sheets.

All this results in slurry slumps, sea levels rising that are hazardous for the whole fragile Arctic ecosystem. According to some data, if the tendency of the current years continues, Arctic ice sheets may be completely disappearing in the summer time by the years 2040-2060¹.

Among international legal documents that provide for the environmental protection of the Arctic one can mention The Nuuk Declaration on environment and development of the Arctic (1993). Denmark, Iceland, Canada, Norway, the Russian Federation, the United States of America, Finland and Sweden are Parties to this Declaration. The Declaration is based upon principles of sustainable development, responsibility for inflicting transboundary damage, precautionary measures and information exchange. In accordance with this Declaration, states

¹ Irina Sergun. “Khoroshaya novost’: Arktika ischezaet!”. (“Good news: the Arctic disappears!”) <http://www.inopressa.ru/article/27Apr2009/lejdd/arctic.html>

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commit themselves to take preventive measures in terms of water basin pollution in the Arctic, whatever such sources of pollution may be, and observe strict standards of restricting pollutant emissions into the air.

The latest international legal document that stipulates norms of protection of the Arctic environment is The Ilulissat Declaration, adopted on 28 May 2008 at the Arctic Ocean Conference Ilulissat, Greenland. The Declaration was signed by Canada, Denmark, Norway, the Russian Federation and the United States of America – that is by all countries that have a coast line in the Arctic Ocean. The Declaration makes a special focus on the global climate change, which results in the melting of ice having a negative impact upon the vulnerable Arctic ecosystem. The Document underscores a special position of five states located in the Arctic region and stresses that by virtue of their sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction in large areas of the Arctic Ocean the five coastal states are in a unique position to address these possibilities and challenges and have to take the leading role in doing this. The Ilulissat Declaration envisages the need of implementing norms of responsibility for damage inflicted by the activities in the Arctic Ocean into the national legislation of the Arctic coastal states and other states involved in such activities. Meanwhile, of a special interest is a provision of the Declaration, which reads that there is no need to sign a separate international treaty, which would regulate the legal regime of the Arctic Ocean. In particular, the text of the Declaration reads as follows: “We see no need to develop a new comprehensive international legal regime to govern the Arctic Ocean. We will take steps in accordance with international law both nationally and in cooperation among the five states and other interested parties to ensure the protection and preservation of the fragile marine environment of the Arctic Ocean”. In accordance with the Declaration such cooperation includes the collection of scientific data concerning the continental shelf, the protection of the marine environment and other scientific research. The Prime-Minister of Denmark has underlined: “With the Ilulissat Declaration we have created a solid political framework for a peaceful development in the Arctic Ocean in the years ahead. We have sent a clear political signal to the local inhabitants and the rest of the world that we will act responsibly when addressing the development in the Arctic Ocean. Thus, hopefully, we have eradicated all the myth about a “race for the North Pole”. The legal framework is in place and the five States have now declared that they will abide by it”².

The signing of the Ilulissat Declaration was conditioned by two main reasons. The first one is the urgent need of legal regulation of environmental protection in the Arctic and preventing environmental disaster in this region due to human economic activity and the global climate change. The second reason is the absence of regulation of territorial delimitation in the Arctic and different views of the Arctic coastal states on that issue. The international law in force and, in particular, the abovementioned Article 234 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982), as well as the national legislations of the Arctic coastal states mainly provide for environmental protection jurisdiction outside the territories of these states. This means that the Arctic coastal states enjoy sovereign right outside their state border in the Arctic. Regardless of the fact that these rights pertain mainly to environmental protection, the Arctic coastal states, however, obtain quite a substantial volume of jurisdiction outside of their state borders in the

² Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark. Udenrigsministeriet. Conference in Ilulissat, Greenland: Landmark political declaration on the future of the Arctic. <http://www.ambmoskva.um.dk/CMS.Web/Templates/Content%20Pages/DefaultPage>.

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Arctic region. Therefore, the issue of environmental protection in the Arctic and that of the delimitation of this region are closely interrelated.

Territorial delimitation

Nowadays all open land territories in the Arctic are under the sovereignty of the Arctic Ocean coastal countries such as Denmark, Canada, Norway, Russia, the USA, Sweden, Finland and Iceland.

Only Denmark, Canada, Norway, Russia and the USA have coasts that are washed by the waters of the Arctic Ocean. This is explained by the fact that only Canada, Russia and Alaska in the USA have Arctic coasts, which make up limits of their northern land frontiers. In 1933 the Permanent Arbitration Court Chamber of Denmark passed a ruling recognizing sovereignty of Denmark over the whole island of Greenland. Norway, in accordance with the Treaty on the Spitsbergen Archipelago (1920) enjoys full and absolute sovereignty over the Spitsbergen Archipelago.

The fact that “the country has a sea coast creates a document of title, which has been not once confirmed by the rulings of the UN International Court”³. Thus, for instance, in the court decision on the dispute concerning the continental shelf in the North Sea between the Federal Republic of Germany and Denmark (1969), which is located between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Netherlands, the Court made a focus on the “most essential from all others legal norm, which refers to the continental shelf”⁴, in particular, on the rule “that the rights of the coastal State in respect of the area of continental shelf that constitutes a natural prolongation of its territory into and under the sea exist ipso facto and *ab initio*”⁵, by virtue of its sovereignty over the land and as extension of it in an exercise of sovereign rights for the purpose of exploring the sea and exploiting its natural resources”⁶.

In the decision on the dispute of delimitation of the continental shelf between Libya and Tunisia in the Mediterranean Sea the Court stated back in 1982 that “The geographic correlation between coast and submerged areas off the coast is the basis of the coastal State's legal title” and that “the coast of the territory of the State is the decisive factor for title to submarine areas adjacent to it”⁷.

In the previously mentioned case of 1969 the Court ruled that “Equity does not necessarily imply equality. There can never be any question of completely refashioning nature, and equity does not require that a State without access to the sea should be allotted an area of continental shelf; any more than there could be a question of rendering the situation of a State with an extensive coastline similar to that of a State with a restricted coastline. Equality is to be reckoned within the same plane, and it is not such natural inequalities as these that equity could remedy”⁸.

³ Intervyu s professorom Vylegzhaninym A.N. (An interview with Professor Vylegzhanin A.N.). <http://www.mgimo.ru/system/php/print.phtml?url=%2Fstudy%2Ffaculty%2Fmp%2F>

⁴ Vylegzhanin A.N. Resheniya Mezhdunarodnogo syda OON po sporam o razgranichenii morskikh prostranstv. (Decisions of the UN International Court on the issues of delimitation the maritime areas”). – M. “Yuridicheskaya literatura”, 2004. – Ɖ;95.

⁵ By virtue of the fact that has been mentioned and from the very start.

⁶ I.C.J. reports 1969. – P. 22.

⁷ I.C.J. reports 1982. – P. 61.

⁸ I.C.J. reports 1969. – P. 49–50.

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However, irrespectively of the way the Arctic coastal states may resolve the delimitation issue, the specific feature of this region is that it contains shared natural resources.

Shared natural resources are such that are available on the territories of two or more sovereign states. It means that such states make use of such resources jointly. Therefore, the use of shared natural resources and their protection from the negative impacts from economic activity directly depends upon the efficiency of co-operation between countries, on the territories of which such resources are located. Therefore, the legal regime with reference to shared resources should be based upon the branch principles of international economic law, as well as on the branch principles of international environmental law. Moreover, a peculiar feature of shared natural resources lies in the fact that it is defined both by the norms of international law (in cases if there is an international treaty signed between the sharing states) and by the norms of the national law if the resource is located in the area belonging to each of the states. The difficulty of the legal regime of the Arctic is outlined below.

Firstly, some of the Arctic coastal states enforce national legislation, which provides for territorial delimitation of the Arctic, for ensuring the legal regime of activities and environmental sustainability measures in the region. However, some other countries of this region do not have such special legislation.

Secondly, not all of the Arctic coastal states are Parties to the United Nations Convention on the law of the Sea (1982), which stipulates the procedure of delimitation of sea areas, including seabed and continental shelf.

Thirdly, some of the countries, which do not belong to the group of the Arctic coastal states, consider that the Arctic should be granted an international regime status, as it was done with the Antarctic and thus open access to this region to all states.

Nowadays, only Russia and Canada have national legislation that defines the territorial frameworks and the scope of exercising power in the Arctic. This is explained by the fact that these two countries have the longest coastline in the Arctic. Thus, back in 1926, the Law on North-Western Territories was adopted in Canada.

It was Canadian law-making initiatives of the years 1907-1925 that outlined the concept of the Arctic sector together with strict borders, which go along the meridians of the Canadian Arctic sector and meet at the North Pole⁹. The essence of the Arctic sector concept is that a polar state may extend its sovereignty to its Arctic sector. This sector is a triangle, the base of which is the Arctic coastal line of the state, and its sides are lines connecting the end points of coastal line with the North Pole.

O. Sanders, Director of the Canadian Institute of the Natural Resources, said that Canadian legislation on the Arctic Polar sector has been the earliest (since 1906), however Canada has a very flexible approach to its enforcement. The major focus in this legislation is being done on environmental sustainability. However, there are other reasons why sectoral delimitation in the Arctic is so attractive to Canada. Thus, in the Beaufort Sea, while delimitating the continental shelf with the USA, Canada insists on using the sectoral principle to delimit the shelf and its interior. Within the limits of its sector, Canada defends its right to regulate maritime navigation

⁹ Intervyu s professorom Vylegzhaniym A.N. (An interview with Professor Vylegzhaniy A.N.). <http://www.mgimo.ru/system/php/print.phtml?url=%2Fstudy%2Ffaculty%2Fmp%2F>

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throughout the whole of the Northwest Passage (along the Canadian coast). On the official maps of Canada sectoral borders are shown as state borders, which meet at the North Pole¹⁰.

“Sectoral” approach to the territorial delimitation of the Arctic was also supported in the Soviet Union. In 1926 the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR adopted a Resolution “On proclaiming lands and islands in the Arctic Ocean to be the territory of the USSR”. This Resolution proclaimed as the territories of the USSR “all discovered, as well as those that may be discovered in future, lands and islands, which, by the time of publication of this Resolution, have not been recognized by the Government of the USSR as territories of any other foreign states located in the Arctic Ocean to the North of the coastline of the USSR up to the North Pole between the meridian 32 degrees 4 minutes and 35 seconds of East longitude and meridian 168 degrees 49 minutes and 30 seconds of West longitude”.

Some experts do not support the “theory of sectors”. Thus, for instance E.S. Molodtsova points out that “the theory of sectors did not receive support in international practice” and that “the status of the Arctic is determined by the United Nations Convention on the law of the Sea (1982)¹¹. Other specialists believe that in this case international legal custom may be the case pertaining to the territorial delimitation of the Arctic. I.N. Mikhina, in particular, stresses that the Resolution of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR (1926) was, in fact, a practical implementation of the polar sector concept, which is considered by the doctrine of international law as one of the possible grounds to obtain a legal title for the Arctic lands¹². R.A. Kalamkaryan and Yu.I. Migatchova believe that back in the 30th of the 20th century a customary norm of the international law came to life, the essence of which was to delimitate northern polar territories into sectors according to the principle of proximity to the coastlines of the coastal states. The authors point out that the delimitation of the Arctic into sectors was supported by Canada and Norway in 1925, by Denmark in 1933 and by the USSR in 1926¹³.

I.I. Lukashuk writes that “each state enjoys an equally sovereign right to participate in drafting ordinary norms. The consent of the subject to recognize ordinary international legal norms as the binding ones may be expressed in the form of explicit or silent recognition (i.e. – absence of the protest)”¹⁴.

The majority of states expressed their silent consent with the positions of the USSR and Canada with respect to territorial delimitation of the Arctic. However, regardless of the fact that some

¹⁰ Quoted from: Mezhdunarodnaya diskussiya o pravovom statuse Arktiki. Proshla v MGIMO. Aprel', 2008. (International discussion on the legal status of the Arctic held at the Moscow state institute of international relations in April, 2008).

http://www.mgimo.ru/news/international_contacts/document11410.phtml

¹¹ Mezhdunarodnoye pravo. (International law) Ed.:Shestakova L.N., Talalayeva A.N., Shibayeva Ye.A., Korobova M.A. – M.: “Yuridicheskaya literatura, 1999. – C. 413.

¹² Mikhina I.N. Mezhdunarodno-pravovoy rezhim morskikh prostranstv Arktiki. (The international legal regime of the Arctic seas). – M., 2003. – C. 8.

¹³ Kalamkaryan R.A., Migatchov Yu.I. Mezhdunarodnoye pravo . Kurs leksiy. (A course of lectures in international law). – M.: Eksmo Education, 2006. – Đj. 331.

¹⁴ Lukashuk I.I. Mezhdunarodnoye pravo. Obschysya chast. (International law. The general part). Đe.: BEK Publishers, 1997. – Đj. 128.

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states and authoritative academics recognize the delimitation of the Arctic, a number of issues still have not been regulated yet.

Firstly, delimitation, suggested by Canada and supported by the USSR, refers only to land, i.e. the continental parts and islands. Questions referring to delimitation of the continental shelf, sea bed, water and air spaces of the Arctic remain unregulated. Delimitation of these areas and spaces still remains a disputable question despite of the United Nations Convention on the law of the Sea (1982), which is in force. Besides, the United States are not a Party to this Convention. However, it is believed that the United States recognize the norms of the United Nations Convention on the law of the Sea (1982) as ordinary norms of international law with the exception of the provisions on the sea bed regions and their boundaries¹⁵.

The second issue that needs regulations follows from the first one. Is there any open sea and the sea bed regions under the open sea in the Arctic? "If there is a positive answer to this question, then, according to the United Nations Convention on the law of the Sea (1982), this means that to such territories the regime of "Common Human Heritage" has to be applied. It means that any country of the world will have the right to use this territory without any consent of the Arctic coastal states. Naturally all the Arctic coastal states are against granting the regime of "Common Human Heritage" to the Arctic. Legally such position finds its grounds in the implementing of the international legal custom, according to which it is recognized that environmental protection jurisdiction of the Arctic coastal states extends to the corresponding Arctic sector. Moreover, this usual legal norm appeared long before the entry into force of the United Nations Convention on the law of the Sea (1982) and Conventions on the law of the Sea (1958). The norms of the abovementioned Conventions may and have to be interpreted and enforced in compliance with the norms of the ordinary international law. This stand is confirmed by the practices of the UN International Court. Thus, in the decision of the Court on the dispute of delimitation of the sea border between the USA and Canada in the Gulf of Main, it was stated that "conventions, codifying the law of the sea ... must, moreover, be seen against the background of customary international law and interpreted in its light"¹⁶.

While interpreting norms of the Conventions on the law of the Sea (1958 and 1982) the Arctic coastal states stick to a position, according to which the territory of the high latitude Arctic has to be divided between five Arctic coastal states. Thus, at the round table meeting "The Arctic subsurface and international law" held in Moscow in April 2008, where experts from five countries participated (Denmark, Canada, Norway, Russia and the USA), the following point of view was expressed and supported by all participants: "The rights of the coastal state for its continental shelf, which is a natural prolongation of its land, exist "ipso facto and ab initio". The inalienable rights of the coastal states for its continental shelf shall not depend upon any restrictions. The only restriction applicable to the Arctic is a commitment to delimitate the shelf between five Arctic coastal states with regard to the opposite and adjacent coastlines"¹⁷.

¹⁵ Intervyu s professorom Vylegzhaninym A.N. (An interview with Professor Vylegzhanin A.N.). <http://www.mgimo.ru/system/php/print.phtml?url=%2Fstudy%2Ffaculty%2Fmp%2F>

¹⁶ -I.C.J. Reports 1984. – P. 291.

¹⁷ Mezhdunarodnaya diskussiya o pravovom statuse Arktiki. Proshla v MGIMO. April', 2008. (International discussion on the legal status of the Arctic held at the Moscow state in statute of

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The need to consider the specific conditions of each particular case of the territory delimitation as well as peculiar characteristics of the region, where this territory is located, is underscored in the rulings of the UN International Court. Thus, the ruling of 1984 quoted above stresses that “each specific case is, in the final analysis, different from all the others, that it is monotypic and that, more often than not, the most appropriate criteria and the method or combination of methods most likely to yield a result consonant with what the law indicates, can only be determined in relation to each particular case and its specific characteristics”¹⁸.

Such position of the Arctic coastal states found its reflection in the Ilulissat Declaration of 2008. However, some countries, and in particular – the USA, taking advantage of the absence of proper regulation, come out with quite unexpected initiatives.

In 2006 the US Corporation “Joint Administration of the Oil and Gas Consortium” sent to the addresses of the UN General Assembly, International Agency on the Sea Bed, leaders of Canada, Norway, Denmark and Russia a Notice of Arctic Commons Area Exclusive Oil and Gas Resource Exploration, Development and Extraction Rights Claim. Thus, the Joint Consortium proclaimed itself to be “a responsible mediator” in the development oil and gas resources of “the common human heritage” and claimed its “exclusive rights” with regard to the region that is located outside 200 miles of exclusive economic zones of five Arctic coastal states. The Consortium claimed its “obligation” and “priority right” to safely develop “the common Arctic heritage” and did it on behalf of other states and the whole of the mankind. The right of the Consortium is that of priority with regard to the rights of other states, private corporations and the rest of the world due to moral and technical reasons (paragraph “a”, Article 7); and the prepared technical plan was advertised as “the most viable and equitable”¹⁹. It is unlikely that other Arctic coastal states will accept this variant suggested by the USA.

International bodies dealing with environmental sustainability in the Arctic and with the issues of economic and other kinds of activities in the region are represented by the Arctic Council and by the Council of the Barents Sea, European and Arctic Region. The Commission on the Borders of the Continental Shelf deals with continental shelf delimitation issues. However, most of the Arctic coastal states prefer to develop mutually acceptable decisions bilaterally, especially if the Arctic territories delimitation issues are on the agenda.

Thus, the declaration of Norway from 20 March 2002 points out that the delimitation issue in the Barents Sea is the subject of continuous negotiations and, therefore, the decision of the Commission on the Borders of the Continental Shelf cannot forejudge the results of the negotiations²⁰.

Therefore, regardless of various positions that lack coordination within the community of the Arctic coastal states, several conclusions can still be made.

international relations in April, 2008).

http://www.mgimo.ru/news/international_contacts/document11410.phtml

¹⁸I.C.J. Reports 1984. – P. 290.

¹⁹Quoted from: Bunik I.V. “Obosnovaniye prava Rossiyskoy Federatsii v Arktike: obzor yuridicheskoy doktriny”. (Grounds for the rights of the Russian Federation in the Arctic: legal doctrine review)

<http://www.pravo.ru/review/view/5178/>

²⁰[²⁰] Ibid.

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Firstly, with due consideration of the complexity of the issue on the scope of rights for the Arctic territory, the fact that Denmark, Canada, Norway, Russia and the USA enjoy such rights is generally recognized.

Secondly, five abovementioned states do not share the idea that in the high latitude Arctic there exists the “international sea bed region” and that it is subject to the regime of “common humanity heritage”. These countries stress upon the need of delimitation of the Arctic continental shelf both between the Arctic coastal states with adjacent coastlines and those coastline that are opposite.

Thirdly, five Arctic coastal states are in a special situation and are ready to assume responsibility and make appropriate steps to prevent damage to the environment of the Arctic, which may be inflicted by all possible human economic activities, including even stricter measures that were adopted within the framework of the World Maritime Organization.

Fourthly, the delimitation lines of the Arctic sectors are not state borders between Arctic coastal states and the states outside the state borders do not have full sovereignty, but enjoy sovereign rights, including those to ensure protection of the Arctic environment.

Fifthly, the peculiarity of the Arctic legal regime is defined by the usual international legal norms in force, Conventions on the law of the Sea (1958 and 1982) and by the national legislations of the Arctic coastal states, while interpretation and enforcement of the norms of these legal acts should be with due regard to the fact that the Arctic region is a shared natural resource.

Nowadays the Arctic coastal states don't see the need of signing a specific international treaty, which would regulate the legal regime of the Arctic. Existing international legal instruments that are in force, such as, first of all, the United Nations Convention on the law of the Sea (1982), and the national legislations, are considered to be quite sufficient. Great hopes are laid on bilateral regulating of relationships between the Arctic coastal states and on co-operation within the framework of the Arctic Council, the Council of the Barents Sea, European and Arctic Region and the UN Commission on the Borders of the Continental Shelf. Under the conditions of severe Arctic climate, global environmental challenges and high cost of developing the Arctic region (one day of icebreaker operation costs, for instance, about 100 thousand US dollars), it is only efficient and productive co-operation of the Arctic coastal states that will ensure progress in solving the problems outlined above.

Position of the Russian Federation

Russian Arctic sector includes about 9 million square kilometers, 6,8 million of which are Arctic waters. Russia considers as its internal sea waters of the White Sea, the Kara Sea, the Laptev Sea, the East Siberian Sea, the Pechora Sea, the Cheshskaya Bay, the Biydaratskaya Bay and those of the Gulf of Ob. All these Arctic waters are under the regime of the internal seas, stipulated by the Federal Law of the Russian Federation “On internal seas, territorial seas and contiguous zone of the Russian Federation” of 1998. This regime is not litigated by any state.

All the abovementioned seas are bay like seas separated by numerous archipelagos and islands from the ocean. There are no international waterways and the main Russian national waterway – the Northern Sea Route – runs its course there²¹.

²¹ Kalamarkyan R.A., Migachov Yu.I. *Mezhdunarodnoye pravo. Kurs lektsiy (Lectures in international law)*. – M.: Eksmo Education, 2006. – P. 332.

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According to Article 14 of the Federal Law of the Russian Federation “On internal seas, territorial seas and contiguous zone of the Russian Federation” of 1998 navigation in the Northern Sea Route waters (a historical national common transportation waterway of the Russian Federation in the Arctic, including Vilkitski Strait, Shokalski Strait, Dmitriy Laptev Strait and Sannikov Strait) can be carried out pursuant to this Federal Law, other federal laws and international treaties of the Russian Federation, as well as by the rules of navigation in the Northern Sea Route waters adopted by the Government of the Russian Federation and published in the “Notice to Seafarers”.

In Russia the Rules of navigation in the Northern Sea Route waters of 1990 are now in force. These Rules stipulate requirements to navigation in the Northern Sea Route waters for vessels of all states on a non-discriminatory basis in order to provide safety of navigation, prevention, limitation and keeping under control pollution of sea waters by ships and vessels (Article 1).

According to Article 6 of the Rules in case of unfavorable navigational, hydrographic, meteorological or other conditions, creating a risk for the vessel or in case of risks of sea or Northern coast of Russia pollution, representatives of Northern Sea Route administration may inspect the vessel during its navigation in the Northern Sea Route waters.

In case of risks of pollution of sea waters or Northern coast of Russia, inspection of the vessel may be carried out by other authorized state authorities.

According to the article 7 of the Rules piloting of ships in the Northern Sea Route waters may be carried out in the navigation period, initial and final dates of which are defined by the Northern Sea Route administration and Amphibious Headquarters according to glacial, navigational, hydrographic, meteorological and other conditions. Navigation of vessel under the piloting may be carried out in the Northern Sea Route waters according to the specified line following the way recommended by the Amphibious headquarters.

In September of 2008 the President of the Russian Federation has approved the document called “Basics of the national policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic for the period until 2020 and for the future”.

According to this document the basic national interests of the Russian Federation in the Arctic are:

- the use of the Arctic sector of the Russian Federation as a strategic resource basis of the Russian Federation, contributing to solving of problems of social and economic development of the country;

- preservation of the Arctic as a zone of peace and co-operation;

- saving of unique ecological systems of the Arctic;

- the use of the Northern Sea Route as a single transportation line of the Russian Federation in the Arctic.

Implementation of the national interests of the Russian Federation in the Arctic is provided by the state authorities together with the civil society institutions in strict compliance with the legislation of the Russian Federation and its international treaties.

In the foreign mass media and even in the Russian press the real position of Russia concerning the Arctic and its legal status in particular are often perverted.

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In particular, one can read that “Russia prefers a partition of the region instead of its internationalization or development of the local international co-operation”²².

Such interpretations contradict real facts. First and foremost Russia in every possible way welcomes co-operation between the Arctic coastal states, participates in all multilateral international documents, already mentioned above in this article, as well as in the Arctic Council and in the Council of the Barents, European and the Arctic Region.

This position of Russia has been reflected in the national Russian legislation. According to Article 7 of the Basics of the national policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic for the period until 2020 and for the future strategic priorities of the Russian state policy in the Arctic are as follows:

1. Realization of active co-operation between Russia and other Arctic coastal states in order to ensure the delimitation of the maritime space according to the international law, mutual commitments, taking into account Russian national interests as well as for the solution of a problem of delimitation of the outer limit of the Russian Arctic sector.

2. Building up capacities of the Arctic coastal states to create a common regional system of search and rescue, as well as prevention of industrial accidents and elimination of their consequences, including efficient functioning of emergency services.

3. Consolidation on the bilateral basis and in the framework of regional organizations, including the Arctic Council and the Council of the Barents, European and the Arctic Region of good neighborly relationships between Russia and the Arctic coastal states, promoting co-operation in the spheres of economy, research, high technologies, culture, as well as in the area of frontier co-operation including development of the natural resources and protection of the Arctic environment.

Secondly Russia is not the only state which is against the internationalization of the Arctic, all five Arctic coastal states adhere to this position. The Ilulissat Declaration is an evident argument in favor of this as it was signed by all five states and stipulates that “there is no need to work out the international legal regime of the Arctic”. Besides such position corresponds to the Law of Sea Convention of 1982, in particular, to Article 234 of this Convention and to the abovementioned decisions of the International Court of Justice which confirm constitutive effect of the fact of existence of the sea coastline of the state.

Thirdly Canada was the first state which came out just at the beginning of the 20th century for “dissolution” of the Arctic, Russia and other Arctic coastal states supported this position later.

Unjustified tizzy threatening the world with “terrible Russia” lead to installing placing of a titanic Russian flag at the bottom of the Arctic Ocean by the expedition of Artur Chilingaov in 2007.

This installing of the Russian flag does not entail any legal consequences. This act even is not an “act of terrifying the world community”. Unfortunately it is very often that any events with regard to Russia are used in such a negative context.

E. Zagainov, Deputy Director of the Legal Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation stated in particular: “The goal of the expedition to the region of the North Pole was not to state out a claim of Russia for particular Arctic sea territories. This symbolic action of placing the Russian flag at the bottom of the Arctic Ocean must not confuse anybody.

²² Tomislava Penkova. “Russia in the Arctic race”// Istituto per gli studi di politica internazionale. 124. – March 2009

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When three American astronauts placed in 1969 American flag at the Moon the whole world was joyful”.^{23[23]}

Moreover, some of the Russian scientists are skeptical about the possibility to prove belonging of the Lomonosov Ridge to the Russian continental shelf with the help of samples, collected by the expedition of Artur Chelingerov. In particular, L. Lobkovsky, Russian Deputy Director of Oceanology Institute of the Russian Academy of Science notes that: “there is no doubt that the fact that expedition to the North Pole with diving of bathyscaphs and taking the samples became a great achievement of Russian polar explorers, engineers and other specialists. But taking the samples of the bottom deposits does not prove anything”.

Moreover, the samples collected by the bathyscaphs can not be seriously taken into account. So the chance for the next presentation which is expected to be ready approximately in half of year to be approved by world community is non-existent”²⁴.

It is also necessary to draw attention of the European Union to the problem of reclaiming of the Arctic. This is of interest at this time of co-operation between Russia and the EU in the sphere of energy safety and active environmental protection efforts of the EU, including the sphere of prevention the global climate change. To our mind it is necessary to give at least an observer status to the EU in the Arctic Council. Especially as the EU countries are parties to the Law of Sea Convention of 1982 and Convention on biological diversity of 1994.

Therefore the Russian position is as follows:

- delimitation of the Arctic and determination of its legal regime must be carried out according to the norms of international law including norms of international treaties and norms of customary law;
- five costal Arctic states: Denmark, Canada, Norway, Russia and the United States possess a special unique status in respect of Arctic territory, first and foremost in the sphere of environmental protection of the Arctic region;
- delimitation lines of the Arctic sectors are not state borders of the Arctic costal states and in this connection any further regulation of the relationships of the Arctic coastal states is needed in the sphere of the scope and nature of powers applicable to the Arctic sector.
- there exists an urgent need for further international legal adoption of the norms, stipulating responsibility and liability for transboundary harm, because the Arctic is a shared natural recourse.
- only active and fair co-operation of the Arctic coastal states, the EU and other interested states in accordance with international law could help to efficiently reclaim the Arctic region under severe climatic conditions of the Arctic and in strict compliance with the legal norms ensuring environmental sustainability.

²³ Perviy kanal. Novosti. (Channel One. The News). 03.08.2007. “Tchem meshaet flag na dne Ledovitogo okeana kanadskomu ministru?” (Why the Canadian Minister is bothered by the flag at the bottom of the Arctic Ocean?) http://wap.1tv.ru/news?p_topic_id=106838

²⁴ Kulikov S. Arkticheskaya lovushka dlya Moskvy (The Arctic trap for Moscow) // Nezavisimaya gazeta, 10.08.2007