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Trust in EU–Russia relations

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Introduction

The so-called strategic partnership between the EU and Russia has been on slow motion for years already. Despite of repeated calls for 'fresh starts' and 'new beginnings' in EU–Russia relations since the early years of the 2000s, the stalemate endures.

There seems to be an established pattern in the EU–Russia relations: before every EU-Russia summit the hopes are whipped up, and every time the summit seems to end up in bitter disappointment and with very little concrete achievements. The last summit on Rostov-on-Don (31 May-1 June 2010) was a case in point: there is no progress in negotiations on a general agreement that will replace the EU–Russia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, visa-freedom is still far from being realised, and no agreement was reached even on the EU–Russia 'modernization partnership' which was expected to be a pushover decision.

Lack of trust could be the key to understanding the current state of the EU–Russia relations. Russia's initiatives – such as the Nord Stream gas pipeline and Medvedev's initiative for a new European security agreement – are greeted with suspicion by many EU member states. Likewise, the

EU's Eastern Partnership (EaP) and human rights and democracy promotion in the post-Soviet world draws ire in Moscow. Both parties claim that they are for constructive, increased cooperation, and that the other one's irresponsible behaviour is what hinders cooperation.

This article sets out to explore the current state of trust in EU–Russia relations. It first discusses the concept of trust in international relations. After that, it analyses the comments on the state of trust in EU–Russia relations from both parties' standpoints. Finally, the article attempts to build a synthesis of how much and what kind of trust exists between the EU and Russia and what that means for future cooperation.

Trust – a precondition for cooperation?

Traditionally, the study of international relations has shunned away from the concept of trust. It has been claimed that there is no room for trust between states but only for fear.[1] However, this view seems somewhat simplistic in today's world characterised by interdependence and a wide institutionalised multilevel nexus of cooperation.

More recently, scholars of international relations have drawn inspiration and insights from cooperation theory of political science and trust has become to be understood increasingly as an important component in cooperative relations between states. If there is no trust between states, then cooperation is doomed to be very limited as every move needs to be monitored and verified. Trust, on the other hand, is connected with easy information sharing, problem solving and deepening and widening cooperation.[2] The

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1 See, for instance, John Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security* 19, no. 3 (1994).

2 Roy J. Lewicki and Edward C. Tomlinson, "Trust and Trust Building," *Beyond Intractability* (December 2003), http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/trust_building/?nid=1210. Last accessed: 14 September 2010

transaction costs of cooperation remain low as need for monitoring is minimal.

In political science, the concept of trust has been most actively developed by game theorists. Reflecting this, trust is understood to be a purely rationalist and interest-based notion.[3] Trusting relationships are based on the pay-off structure: cooperation will continue as long as it is directly beneficial for all parties. In social psychology this kind of trust is usually referred to as *'calculus-based trust'*.[4]

However, recently scholars have started to take note that a trusting relationship between actors can evolve beyond purely rationalist calculations.[5] For example, Nicholas Wheeler and Jan Ruzicka outline a 'binding approach' to trust that emphasises the normative meaning of the trusting relationship that is consistent with a constructivist view of international relations.[6] Binding trust corresponds with what in social psychology is called '*identification-based trust'*. As the cooperation between actors continues and the actors learn more about each other, calculus-based trust may evolve into deeper identification–based trust. Here the actors have shared values and goals; interdependence becomes an accepted – and even valued – fact of life and the structure of pay-offs becomes less relevant. [7]

Sometimes states choose not to cooperate with each other, even if cooperation would bring direct benefits to both parties. This may be due to distrust which is the belief that

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[3] Russell Hardin, *Trust and Trustworthiness* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2004), p. 4.

[4] Lewicki and Tomlinson, "Trust and Trust Building".

[5] In general, trust as a concept has not been widely discussed in constructivist theory of international relations. However, trust plays a prominent role in discussions on 'community' including the debates around the concept of 'security community'. See Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, *Security Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[6] Jan Ruzicka and Nicholas Wheeler, "The Puzzle of Trusting Relationships In the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty," *International Affairs* 86, no. 1 (2010).

[7] Lewicki and Tomlinson, "Trust and Trust Building".

the other actor will take advantage of your vulnerability exposed in cooperative relationship. [8] Due to fear of being exploited, cooperation with the other party is avoided. If distrust is pervasive, it encourages competition and may lead to conflict.[9]

Trust – like distrust – is often issue-specific: the actors may trust each other in some issues but not necessarily in other. Trust and distrust are also multidimensional and the dimensions multiply with the interdependence between the actors. Trust and distrust may coexist in a complex relationship along separate dimensions. The greater the variety of settings and contexts of interaction, the more complex the trusting relationship becomes.[10]

The most crucial question related to trust and distrust is, is it unfounded or not? Distrust is advisable and positive if the other actor is non-trustworthy, and negative and ill-advisable if the actor in reality is trustworthy. Trustworthiness is related to abilities, integrity and benevolence of the actor. In other words, it is related to the following questions: is the actor able to deliver what it promises; are the actor's values and interests close to yours, and how much does the actor take your interests into consideration?[11]

The trusting relationship between the EU and Russia is likely to be complex and multidimensional reflecting the multiple issue-areas, high intensity and degree of institutionalisation in EU–Russia cooperation. In order to pin down the most sensitive questions related to concepts of trust, distrust and trustworthiness between the EU and Russia, the article tracks down comments by Russian as well as

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[8] Hardin, *Trust and Trustworthiness*.

[9] Roy J. Lewicki and Edward C.Tomlinson, "Distrust," *Beyond Intractability* (December 2003), http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/distrust/?nid=1150

[10] Roy J. Lewicki and Carolyn Wiethoff, "Trust, Trust Development and Trust Repair," in *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice*, ed. Morton Deutsch and Peter T. Coleman (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2000), p. 92.

[11] Lewicki and Tomlinson, "Trust and Trust Building".

European actors. When and why do the actors make reference to trust? Is the trust and/or distrust well-founded and what kind of impact does it have on future cooperation?

Russia's take on trust

True to its style, the Russian political elite do not hide dissatisfaction behind pleasantry when it comes to the analysis of EU–Russia relations. The western actors are blamed for the lack of trust in the relations.[12]

The ultimate source of distrust is claimed to be different logics of thinking and acting in international affairs. However, the message suffers from certain dichotomy: on the one hand, the European actors are accused of value-based and over-ideological policy but, on the other hand, they are blamed for zero-sum logic and a policy of spheres of influence in classic realist tradition.[13] Members of the Russian political elite accuse the European actors of reverting back to the cold war mentality that is simultaneously realist and ideological. The most suspicious actors within the EU are the newcomers – such as the Baltic States – which are claimed to be 'obsessed with a desire to 'contain' Russia and take 'historical revenge'.'[14] The EU should abandon ideologies and become more like Russia. Russia's foreign policy is claimed to be based on 'common sense' and 'pragmatism' while ideology has been put aside for good.[15]

The issue areas where trust is seen to be weak are – first and foremost – the European security architecture, international democracy-promotion by western actors as well as

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12 Sergei Lavrov, "Containing Russia: Back to the Future? ," *Russia in Global Affairs*, no. 4 (2007).

13 *Ibid.*

14 *Ibid.*

15 *Ibid.*

European policies in Russia's 'near-abroad'. Harsh words and emotional outbursts by Russian political leaders on and around these issues are not rare.

The issue of international democracy promotion has been a highly charged political issue since the colour revolutions started to appear in Russia's neighbourhood. In the Russian media the colour revolutions in Serbia, Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan were explained away by claiming that they were unconstitutional coup d'états sponsored and planned from abroad, including from the EU. International democracy promotion in the post-Soviet space has come to be understood as insincere action that is harmful to Russia and Russian regional interests. The repeated European criticism of the way in which elections have been carried out in Russia since the legislative elections in December 2003 has strengthened Russia's irritation and bitterness about the issue. In Putin's words, 'There has been an increasing influx of money from abroad being used to intervene directly in our internal affairs. Looking back at the more distant past, we recall the talk about the civilizing role of colonial powers during the colonial era. Today 'civilization' has been replaced by democratization, but the aim is the same – to ensure unilateral gains and one's own advantage, and to pursue one's own interests.'[16] Putin's words gives expression to the dichotomy described above: western democracy promotion is not about the values of democracy but about advancing one's own material interests and hiding them behind the smoke-screen of value-promotion.

The same logic is applied to the practice of international election observation which is carried out in Europe mainly by OSCE's ODIHR – but whose evaluations are backed by

[16] Vladimir Putin, *Annual Address of the President of the Russian Federation to the Federal Assembly*, 26 April 2007. http://www.rusmission.org/policy/2 . Last accessed: 14 September 2010.

the EU.[17] According to the Russian view, 'the monitoring of election processes is not only ceasing to make sense but is also becoming an instrument of political manipulation and a destabilizing factor. We will not accept such a state of affairs.'[18] Members of the Russia ruling elite maintain that trust can be build only if the western actors stop 'interfering in the internal affairs of other countries' and imposing 'a regime that determines how these states should live and develop'.[19]

Russia's initial comments to the launch of the EU's Eastern Partnership in early 2009 were guarded and charged with suspicion: 'What is the 'Eastern Partnership'? Is it a sphere of influence, including Belarus?' The Czech foreign minister holding then the EU's rotating chairmanship was accused of blackmail: '[when he] publicly says that if Belarus recognizes Abkhazia and South Ossetia, it could forget about Eastern Partnership, is it blackmail or is it democracy at work?'[20] By the end of the year, Russian comments seemed to have softened considerably and foreign minister Lavrov even suggested that Russia might be interested in joining it.[21]

The issue of European security architecture is where the

[17] The European Union does not engage in election monitoring in Russia but has the habit of issuing statements in support of ODIHR election observation reports after elections in Russia. This is usually done by the rotating president of the council.

[18] *Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation Mr. Alexey N. Borodavkin at the Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council in Response to the Statement by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Slovenia, Mr. Dimitrij Rupel*, 13 January 2005. http://www.osce.org/documents/pc/2005/01/4086_en.pdf. Last accessed 14 September 2010.

[19] *Speech by the President of Russia Vladimir Putin at the 43rd Munich Conference on Security Policy*, 10 February 2007. http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/02/12/AR2007021200555.html. Last accessed: 14 September 2010.

[20] Foreign minister Sergei Lavrov's comments at a press conference at the EU-Russia summit in Brussels cited in "EU's New Eastern Partnership Draws Ire from Russia", *DW-World Deutche Welle* 21 March 2009 http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,4116554,00.html. Last accessed: 14 September 2010.

[21] Foreign minister Sergei Lavrov in a joint press conference with his Belarussian counterpart Sergei Martynov cited in "Russia 'Could Join EU Eastern Partnership' ", *EUbusiness* 25 November 2009. http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/russia-diplomacy.1mp. Last accessed 14 September 2010.

distrust has been sustained on a high level even after years of institutionalised Nato–Russia cooperation. The Nato enlargement is a source of never-ending bitterness: 'it is obvious that Nato expansion does not have any relation with the modernisation of the alliance itself or with ensuring security in Europe. On the contrary, it represents a serious provocation that reduces the level of mutual trust. And we have the right to ask: against whom is this expansion intended?'[22]

The EU's take on trust

The authoritative discourse on the EU level is not as easy to pin down as in the Russian case. There are many competing views of Russia within the EU that vary from outright hostility to very positive, pro-Russian stances.[23] However, it seems that the most intensive fields of distrust singled out by majority of European policy-makers are Russia's role as a security actor in the post-Soviet space and Russia as an 'energy superpower'.

Different logics of action are offered as an explanation for the lack of trust between the actors also in the European discourse. In the European discussion Russia is often accused of behaving irresponsibly and of not playing by the agreed rules. The EU constantly appeals to Russia to make international, legally-binding commitments and to implement the ones it has already made, and sees this as the key to trust-building. The Russian emphasis on full freedom of action and inconsistencies between words and deeds are

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[22] *Speech by the President of Russia Vladimir Putin at the 43rd Munich Conference on Security Policy*.

[23] See, for example, the categorisation based on the EU states approaches towards Russia in Mark Leonard and Nicu Popescu, "A Power Audit of EU-Russia Relations." (European Council on Foreign Relations, November 2007), http://ecfr.eu/page/-/documents/ECFR-EU-Russia-power-audit.pdf. Last accessed 14 September 2010.

seen as diminishing trust between the actors. These suspicions are at least indirectly linked with the fact that Russia is not a full-fledged democracy. The idea that non-democracies cannot be trusted in international affairs has become popular and widely accepted idea in the circles of policy-makers in Europe since the early 1990s.[24]

There seems to be an understanding that Russia acts as if the post-Soviet space would be its 'privileged sphere of interest' and that – despite of Russia's vocal defence of sovereignty internationally – it easily interferes in internal affairs of its post-Soviet neighbours.

The war between Georgia and Russia in August 2008 and its aftermath significantly lowered the degree of trust between the EU and Russia. After the war broke out between the Georgia and Russia on the issue of the fate of the Georgian break-away republic of South Ossetia, the EU negotiated a ceasefire plan with the adversaries which ended the hostilities. However, Russia has not fulfilled the criteria of the ceasefire brokered by the EU. Furthermore, Russia recognised the independence of Abkhazia and South-Ossetia in late August 2008.[25] As a response, the EU froze post-PCA negotiations with Russia on 1 September. Although the EU's rhetoric is usually cautious compared with Russia's more colourful style of expression, president Nicolas Sarkozy's rant almost rose to the Russian standards: 'What does Russian want: trust and cooperation or defiance and rising tensions? The EU wants real partnership with Russia, but in order to build a partnership, you have to be two', and continued: 'The

[24] See e.g. Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Democratic Peace – Warlike Democracies," *European Journal of International Studies* 1, no. 4 (1995).

[25] Roy Allison, "The Russian Case for Military Intervention in Georgia: International Law, Norms and Political Calculation," *European Security* 18, no. 2 (2009); Tuomas Forsberg and Antti Seppo, "The Russo-Georgian War and the EU Mediation," in *Russian Policy toward the West in the 21st Century* ed. Roger Kanet (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

return of spheres of influence is not acceptable. Yalta is no more!'[26]

Despite of bitter words, the EU's disappointment in Russia's policy has not been translated into any concrete political action. The negotiations on the agreement replacing the PCA were resumed already in November 2008. The bitterness emerges occasionally to the surface. Czech foreign minister Karel Schwarzenberg, who was the holding the EU's presidency after France, commented submissively in May 2009 that Russia's ignorance of the agreed rules 'means that any hope for trust, which is vital, was destroyed."[27] Complaints about Russia not playing by the agreed rules are made by other EU policy makers on an almost regular basis.[28]

The EU policy makers often blame Russia for irresponsible behaviour also when it comes to the issue of energy security.[29] For instance, in January 2007 when a cut off resulted from a gas price dispute between Belarus and Russia, German Chancellor Angela Merkel accused Russia of not informing the EU in advance on the cut off and claimed that Russia's behaviour 'destroys confidence and this is no basis for smoothly building up a constructive relationship'.[30]

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[26] *Exerpts of the Extraordinary European Council Press Conference Given by President of the Republic of France Nicolas Sarkozy, Brussels, 1 September* 2008. https://pastel.diplomatie.gouv.fr/editorial/actual/ael2/bulletin.gb.asp?liste=20080904.gb.html. Last accessed: 14 September 2010.

[27] Bruno Waterfield, "EU Accuses Russia of 'Destroying Trust'," *Telegraph.co.uk* 1 May 2009. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/georgia/5256961/EU-accuses-Russia-of-destroying-trust.html. Last accessed: 15 September 2010.

[28] "Statement by High Representative Catherine Ashton on Russian Plans on Missle Deployment in Abkhazia," (Brussels, 13 August 2010, A 160/10). http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/116161.pdf. Last accessed: 15 September 2010.

[29] Phillippa Runner, "EU Cannot Trust Russia or Ukraine, Barroso Says," *EUObserver.com* 20 January 2009. http://euobserver.com/9/27442. Last accessed: 15 September 2010.

[30] David Byers, "Merkel Warns Russia Not to Destroy Trust on Energy," *Times Online* 8 January 2007. http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/article1290892.ece. Last accessed: 15 September 2010.

In December 2008 Ukraine and Russia had a similar kind of disagreement on the price on which Russia sells gas to Ukraine. Due to the dispute, the gas delivery to south-eastern Europe was cut off. Despite of the ad hoc negotiations and the arrangement of special EU monitors, the supply disruption continued for days in January 2009. After the episode was over European Commission president Jose Manuel Barroso accused both Ukraine and Russia of behaving irresponsibly: 'Gas coming from Russia is not secure. Gas coming through Ukraine is not secure. This is an objective fact.'[31] However, later in 2009 an agreement on early warning mechanism in case of an energy crisis was struck between president Barroso and president Medvedev. Barroso complemented the achievement by making a reference to the issue of trust: 'The enhanced Early Warning Mechanism is clear evidence of the goodwill of both sides to work together on a trustworthy and mutually beneficial manner, building ways to prevent and solve problems, even before they happen.'[32] Hence, at least in the question of energy security, trust has been increasing rather than decreasing between the EU and Russia recently.

Is there any trust left?

Although complaints about untrustworthy behaviour by both the EU and Russia are a common occurrence, it does not give a full picture of the issue of trust. If there are major discrepancies between words and practical policies, more complex explanation is needed. This, indeed, seems to be the case with EU–Russia relations.

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[31] Runner, "EU Cannot Trust Russia or Ukraine, Barroso Says".

[32] *The EU and Russia Reinforce the Early Warning Mechanism to Improve Prevention and Management in Case of an Energy Crisis*, 16 November 2009, IP/09/1718. http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1718. Last accessed: 30 September 2010.

There are quite a few points that speak of diminishing trust between the EU and Russia. First of all, the mutual verbal complaints and lingering cooperation point towards weakening trust. Problematic issues have remained unsolved and the list of points of irritation has been growing. There have not been any breakthroughs in recent years in EU–Russia relations and the legal structures regulating the relationship are eroding. The post-PCA negotiations are currently in a stalemate with Russia's postponement of the WTO membership to an undefined point in future. After the war in Georgia, security cooperation and information sharing are likely to be even harder than before. Trust is weak and seems to be weakening, but this article argues that there still exists some of it.

Let's start with the question do the actors perceive one another as non-trustworthy? It is this question that really reveals the complexity of the trusting relationship between the EU and Russia. If one evaluates the actors using the criteria of ability, integrity and benevolence the answer seems to be ambivalent.[33] The ability of Russia to deliver what it promises has increased significantly since 1990s and hence Russia has become more trustworthy as an actor. The EU's ability to live up its promises cannot be seriously doubted either. The degree of integrity between the actors has suffered serious blows in recent years. Parties decreasingly adhere to same principles and commitment to same values has been questioned. Weak integrity also explains why negotiations on the next general agreement between the EU and Russia have proved out to be so difficult. However, and perhaps somewhat surprisingly, the level of benevolence seems to relatively steady. In other words, there seems to be mutually experienced basic trust that the other party will not intentionally try to harm one's interests.

[33] Lewicki and Tomlinson, "Trust and Trust Building".

It is this basic benevolence and acceptance of interdependence that inhibits weakening trust developing into pervasive distrust and hostility. Despite of disagreements, the possibility of outright hostility between the EU and Russia is practically ruled out. Thus, one can conclude that although deep, identification-based trust of shared values is absent, certain basic level of interest-based trust remains and, moreover, it has proved out to be relatively stable regardless of political disagreements.

Hence, the picture of the trusting relationship between EU and Russia is, indeed, a complex and multifaceted one: there is a need for constant vigilance and frustration and scepticism seems to take over the relationship every now and again but this is balanced by regular expressions of hope and positive expectations and initiatives for future on both sides. Also, in political crisis situation such as gas wars and Russo– Georgian war, the channels of communication have never failed completely between the EU and Russia. In the case of energy security, trust has been significantly strengthened with the agreement on the Early Warning Mechanism in November 2009. Even before, there has not been a real danger of things getting completely out of control in EU-Russia relations in a crisis situation.

In conclusion, there is stable interest-based trust, and that forms the very basis of EU–Russia relationship despite of political disagreements and rhetorical accusations of non-trustworthy behaviour by both sides. The level of this interest-based trust in EU-Russia relations is low enough not to bring any major achievements in the field of problem-solving, evolving cooperation and information sharing. It is, however, high enough to prevent distrust ever becoming pervasive in the relations. Following from this, one can argue that the skipping record of 'fresh starts' and 'new beginnings' repeating itself from

summit to summit can be interpreted as a positive sign of modest, yet enduring interest-based trust between the EU and Russia.[34]

[34] See the most recent appeal: 'The most important factor in building a strong EU-Russian relationship is mutual trust and playing by the same rules. On many issues, the ball is now in Russia's court, but when the ball comes back to our court, we have to be ready and fit to play. Together, Russia and the EU can do a lot to help make the world a better and safer place.' Janos Martonyi and Alexander Stubb, "3 Priorities, 3 Solutions in EU-Russian Ties," *The Moscow Times*, 9 September 2010. http://www.themoscowtimes.com/opinion/article/3-priorities-3-solutions-in-eu-russian-ties/415319.html. Last accessed 14 September 2010.

Is the EU (still) attractive for Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova?*

Kristi Raik

Ever since the enlargement of 2004, the EU's policy towards its eastern neighbourhood has been shaped by the tension between, on the one hand, an urge to extend enlargement further to the East, and on the other, pressure to declare the final borders of the EU and offer partnership, with no undue expectations attached, to the outsiders. Neither of these strategic views is likely to become EU policy in the next years.[1] In an attempt to fit together the two irreconcilable positions, the EU launched the ENP in 2004 and added under its umbrella a specifically eastern-oriented and more ambitious Eastern Partnership in May 2009[2].

In the meantime, the three immediate neighbours in the East – Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus – have been moving each in a different direction. Ukraine seems to be walking a circle, as its strong turn to Europe after the 2004 Orange Revolution has been replaced with a return to "multi-vec-

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* The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not represent the official views of the European Union.

1 See Ronald D. Asmus, "Is Enlargement Dead?", German Marshall Fund, 10 May 2010, on a need for a new vision and strategy. http://209.200.80.89//doc/OnWider_Series_May_Asmus_Final.pdf

2 See Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, "Eastern Partnership", Brussels, 3 December 2008, COM(2008) 823; "Joint Declaration of the Eastern Partnership Summit", Prague, 7 May 2009, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/er/107589.pdf

toralism" by president Yanukovych. Moldova had its European moment as a consequence of the Twitter Revolution of 2009, but it remains to be seen if this marked a more enduring change of course. Belarus has remained the most stable country in Europe under the iron rule of president Lukashenka, but one whose relationship with the EU entered a profound change in 2008, moving from a long-term isolation to cautious engagement.

This article discusses first the power of attraction of the EU towards its eastern neighbours. It will then examine the EU's attraction – or lack thereof – from the perspective of each of the three countries, looking first at the rather tumultuous developments over the past couple of years, and then considering future prospects. In conclusion, I will underline that it is openness and further creation of multiple links between the EU and the neighbouring countries that can best serve the aim to increase the appeal of our norms, values and ways of life in the eyes of the neighbours. Attractiveness based on shared values, in turn, is a key prerequisite for promoting the EU's interests in the region. By contrast, if the EU turns inwards and further loses its appeal to the neighbouring countries, it will have few tools in its disposal to support their Europeanisation and ability to shape their own destiny.

Attraction as a source of EU power

The EU's power of attraction has been celebrated as an "incentive for stability and democracy" that has helped the Union to "expand the area of peace and freedom in its vicinity"[3]. In academic debate, the attraction of the EU is often linked to the concept of normative power – a power

[3] Olli Rehn, "The EU – from civilian power to premier league security policy player?", SPEECH/08/399, 28 August 2008

based on the legitimacy of ideas, values, political culture and economic and social models, which enables the EU to exert influence on outsiders through establishing shared understandings[4]. In other words, normative power is about making the neighbours want what the EU wants, and making them want to be what the EU is. The EU itself, as well as many academics, tend to understand this kind of projection of values as an ethical and morally laudable exercise, based on the belief that our political and economic model is superior to existing alternatives and that spreading it is for the best of others. Taking this reasoning further, one can even claim that the EU bears a responsibility to promote democracy, human rights, the rule of law and market economy in other parts of the world[5].

In order to examine critically the EU's foreign policy and seek to understand it from the perspective of outsiders, it is more useful to see normative power merely as an ability to establish shared norms, while leaving aside the question of whether these norms are universally legitimate or morally superior. Defining what is normal, good or bad for others is not necessarily a more ethical exercise than any kind of non-violent pursuit of one's interests. It can only be judged subjectively, and it is inherently linked to interest-promotion. It is in the EU's interest to spread its norms and values beyond its borders, as it is to maintain and strengthen an international environment based on shared norms. In the case of the EU's eastern neighbourhood, it is quite impossible to make a distinction between extending the EU's norms and values and pursuing its strategic interests. (It may be easier in more remote regions, where the EU has no strong strategic interests.) In Eastern Europe, the EU also cannot avoid

[4] Elsa Tulmets, "Can the Discourse on "Soft Power" Help the EU to Bridge its Capability-Expectations Gap?", *European Political Economy Review* No. 7 (Summer 2007), pp. 195–226, http://eper.htw-berlin.de/no7/tulmets.pdf

[5] Hartmut Meyer and Henri Vogt (eds.) *A Responsible Europe? Ethical Foundations of EU External Affairs* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

competing with Russia that in its own ways also tries to be attractive and seeks legitimacy[6]. We may disagree about the moral or practical desirability of the competing models offered by Russia and other global players, but in order to assess what the EU does and is able to do in relation to its neighbours, we have to acknowledge these alternatives as a matter of fact and take them seriously.

While some of the above may have sounded cynical, I would underline that in cases where the EU's values are actually shared by others and where our neighbours do make efforts to adopt EU norms, the EU has not only a strong interest but also a moral responsibility to help the neighbours become more like us. It is thus essential to look at whether there actually is attachment to EU values in the neighbouring countries; differences in this respect have to be reflected in EU policy. At the same time, we should keep in mind that norms and values are by no means fixed or stable, but change over time, differ between generations and social groups and are influenced by internal as well as external factors.

The history of European integration and the self-expressed (foreign policy) identity of the EU strongly define the Union's normative power as based on both what it is and what it does. Internal and external policy are thus inextricably linked – the EU's credibility as a normative power relies on the extent to which it implements and promotes its underlying principles in relations to outsiders. The distinction between what the EU is and what it does is also of key importance for understanding the attraction of the EU and directs our attention to some major weaknesses and limits of the EU's policy. Let us take a closer look at what is attractive about the EU, and what are the practical implications of its different kinds of attractiveness.

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[6] On the normative and structural power of the EU and Russia in relations with their shared neighbourhood, see Derek Averre, "Competing Rationalities: Russia, the EU and the "Shared Neighbourhood"", *Europe-Asia Studies* 61:10, (December 2009).

The underlying values of democracy, the rule of law and human rights are the most enduring source of attraction – but only for those who share these values. Countries that are geographically close to the EU and (want to) share the same norms and values have unsurprisingly tended to find the EU very attractive – so much so that they have wanted not just to become like their neighbours inside the Union, but to become equal members of the club. Enlargement has thus effectively harnessed the EU's attraction and translated it into unprecedented normative power, making what the EU is the guideline for what it does. A critical question for countries such as Moldova and Ukraine is, how can the EU maintain its attractiveness in the eyes of neighbours even if full membership is not in the offer? And is it still able to generate shared understandings and establish norms, i.e. exercise normative power, if it loses attraction?

First it is important to note that the current Eastern Partnership countries never found the EU's values as attractive as the Central and Eastern European countries that joined the EU in 2004. The latter shared from the outset a strong attachment to the EU's core values, which made the adoption of the whole set of EU norms – a lot of which have nothing to do with democracy – desirable and legitimate in the eyes of their populations. The EU could act as a major transformative power without, however, having to transform the fundamental principles, but rather building on a joint foundation and helping to translate sometimes abstract principles into concrete policies. The attachment of the current eastern EU neighbours to democratic values has been weaker ever since the collapse of the Eastern bloc, and has further weakened over the past 20 years[7]. This difference between the two groups of countries makes it more difficult for the EU to extend its norms to the eastern neigh-

[7] Pew Research Center, "Pew Global Attitudes Project", 2 November 2009, http://pewglobal.org/files/pdf/267.pdf. More details in the section on Ukraine.

bourhood. It would need more transformative power than it did during the latest enlargement, but without offering membership perspective to the neighbours, it can only have less.

Apart from democratic values, another major source of EU attraction has always been its economic model and material wellbeing. There is a two-way connection between democratisation and economic development. Modernisation scholars have long ago identified an empirical link between democracy and development, arguing that economic growth and societal development are likely to increase democracy[8]. On the other hand, for example in Central and Eastern Europe a popular belief that more democracy brings more prosperity has played an important role in legitimising democratic transitions and accepting the hardness of the process.

In the case of the eastern neighbourhood, the EU operates in an environment where the neighbours can turn to other sources of economic benefits if they dislike the conditions attached by the EU. With strong economic growth in Russia and other authoritarian countries over the past years[9], the attractiveness of the EU's political and economic model has suffered. Nevertheless, millions of people in the eastern neighbourhood still want closer ties with the Union in the hope that this brings material benefits. This kind of economic attraction is far more volatile and more prone to competition than attraction based on shared values. It tends to lead to "declarative Europeanisation"[10], that is, express-

[8] For a recent contribution, see Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel, "How Development Leads to Democracy: What We Know About Modernization", *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2009.

[9] With the exception of 2009 when Russia suffered hard from the global financial crisis and its economy declined 7.9%.

[10] This concept was launched by Kataryna Wolczuk, "Integration without Europeanisation: Ukraine and its Policy towards the European Union", RSCAS Working Paper 2004/15, Florence, European University Institute, Robert Schuman Institute for Advanced Studies.

ing one's commitment to European norms and values in words, but not in deeds – Ukraine being a vivid example.

The EU has used its economic power to pursue a normative agenda, linking carrots such as assistance and access to markets to the commitment of neighbours to European values. It has been often criticised for not being consistent or effective in applying this kind of conditionality policy. The European Neighbourhood Policy aims to make the linkage between values and aid more explicit and transparent through the Governance Facility that rewards progress on democratic reforms[11]. It is important to continue to offer substantive additional assistance to countries willing to adopt and implement EU norms and values – in year 2010, the most obvious case being Moldova. At the same time, the EU also needs to improve ways to offer benefits to people in (semi)authoritarian countries, even at the cost of strengthening the authoritarian leaders in the short term. As the case of Belarus shows, isolation does not work as an instrument of democracy promotion, and it also damages the EU's strategic interest to shape developments in its neighbourhood. While negative conditionality – such as freezing aid, restricting trade and imposing sanctions – has not proved successful, it is positive conditionality that deserves to be developed further.

Being a political and economic model, the EU is attractive as a place to visit, study and work; as a source of inspiration and experience. A freer access to the EU is a key objective for the neighbouring countries and one that really matters to the populations. The EU should not respond to declarative reforms in some of the neighbouring countries with declarative openness on its side. So far, the EU's record in this regard is worrying: the actual number of visi-

[11] Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, "Taking stock of the European Neighbourhood Policy, Brussels, 12 May 2010, COM(2010) 207.

tors from the eastern neighbours has fallen in the past years. However, the ENP attaches particular importance to promoting mobility as a "crucial" element for "any meaningful engagement of the EU with its neighbours"[12]. Visa dialogue to examine the conditions for visa-free travel to the EU was launched with Ukraine in October 2008 and with Moldova in June 2010, but progress is slow and this area remains politically sensitive for several member states. Both countries also aim to conclude a deep and comprehensive free trade agreement with the EU – another key element of the ENP and an extensive exercise of normative power, as it entails approximation of neighbouring countries to EU law.

Ukraine: re-visiting "multi-vectoralism"?

While the EU has struggled to create a new eastern policy that is not enlargement, but uses the same instruments and does not close the doors definitely, the three neighbours in the East have each surprised us in different ways. The biggest surprise – followed by the biggest disappointment – was of course the Orange Revolution of Ukraine in late 2004. Its major driving force was the attraction of European values, as millions of Ukrainians called for replacing their corrupt, semi-authoritarian system with an open, honest and democratic one. As Krastev has put it, it was an event that showed that "the EU can exert transformative force even while a majority of its member states are committed to preserving the status quo"[13]. The breadth and intensity of the demands for change inspired comparisons to the velvet revolutions of the late 1980s. The Orange Revolution was a positive shock that could have perhaps become the starting

12 *Ibid*.

13 Ivan Krastev, "Ukraine and Europe: a fatal attraction", openDemocracy, 16 December 2004, http://www.opendemocracy.net/democracy-ukraine/article_2267.jsp

point of a strong EU engagement and exercise of long-term, profound transformative power.

Yet what followed were years of chronic instability, fierce political fighting and poor progress on reforms in Ukraine, and no major policy shift on the EU side. The "Orange camp" that came to power in early 2005 fell apart soon due to destructive competition between its main leaders, then President Yushchenko and Yulia Tymoshenko who served as prime minister from January to September 2005, and again from December 2007 to March 2010. Yanukovych, the adversary of Yushchenko in the 2004 presidential elections who was then held responsible for election fraud, soon became a possible partner to both former orange allies in a dirty struggle for power and served as prime minister from August 2006 to December 2007. All of this led to a disillusionment of the Ukrainian people with not only the orange leaders, but – what is more problematic – with democracy.

In the run-up to the 2010 presidential elections, Yanukovych adapted to democratic rules of the game and remade himself (with the help of American PR services) into a moderate, pragmatic leader. As Yanukovych won the presidential elections in early 2010 with a narrow margin of victory over Tymoshenko (less than 4 % in the second round), there were hopes not only in Ukraine but also in the West that he would bring stability and pragmatism[14]. Already during the first half-year of his leadership, however, a combination of authoritarian tendencies, lack of professionalism and strongly divisive policies targeted against Ukrainian identity and language dampened the relatively positive expectations[15]. According to opinion polls, the share of those Ukrainians who fully support the activities of presi-

[14] Sabine Fischer, "Has the EU lost Ukraine", ISS Analysis, European Union Institute for Security Studies, February 2010; Andrew Wilson, "Dealing with Yanukovich's Ukraine", Policy Memo, European Council on Foreign Relations, March 2010.

[15] Alexander J. Motyl, "Ukrainian Blues: Yanukovich's Rise, Democracy's Fall", *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2010.

dent Yanukovych dropped from 39 % in May to 22.5 % in August 2010, accompanied by an almost as significant drop (but starting from a lower level) in support to the government and parliament[16]. Ukraine's western partners and observers have become increasingly concerned about violations of freedom of speech[17], centralisation of power into the hands of the president and his closest allies, and disregard of parliamentary procedures and principles[18]. Yanukovych has also spoken for amending the constitution so as to create a presidential system. Amendment of the constitution is in itself most necessary and has been repeatedly called for by the EU, since the lack of clarity of the division of power, introduced hastily in late 2004 as part of the outcome of the Orange Revolution, has been one of the root causes of Ukraine's political instability in the past years. However, there is a danger that a presidential system would more easily tilt to authoritarianism than a parliamentary democracy.

The victory of Yanukovych in the latest presidential elections and his tendency towards strongman rule reflect popular feelings in the country. Commitment to democratic values is considerably weaker in Ukraine than in the new eastern EU member states, standing on a level comparable to Russia. For example, in 2009, 69 % of Ukrainians preferred a strong leader over democratic government, whereas only 20 % felt that democracy would serve better to solve the country's problems. According to the same survey, Ukraine was the only country among thirteen cases (including Russia) where the number of people disapproving of the change from communism to democracy and capitalism

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16 Razumkov Centre, "Yanukovych's rating sharply decreased", 1 September 2010, http://www.razumkov.org.ua/eng/news.php?news_id=346

17 Reporters Without Borders, "Press Freedom in Ukraine: Temptation to Control", August 2010, http://en.rsf.org/IMG/pdf/_rapport_ukraine_anglais.pdf

18 Motyl *op.cit.*; Nico Lange, "The first 100 Days after Change of Power in Ukraine: Authoritarian Tendencies and Rapprochement with Russia", Country Report, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 27 May 2010.

was larger than the number of those who approved of the transition. Furthermore, the share of people approving of the change to democracy had dropped dramatically over 18 years, from 72 % in 1991 to merely 30 % in 2009.[19] Obviously Ukrainians have plenty of reasons to be unhappy and disappointed about the development of their country since the collapse of the Soviet Union, and this disappointment has undermined their belief in the superiority of a democratic system.

Nonetheless, the developments since the Orange Revolution have proved that there is a significant number of Ukrainians who do value democracy and can actively defend their civic rights. Although the 2004 events were followed by chronic instability, they also opened the way for an unprecedented degree of freedom of speech, strengthening of civil society, and repeated (for too many times) democratic elections. Many Ukrainians do care strongly about setbacks in these fields and have already protested against the policies of Yanukovych. They may yet again organise broad protests, or they may turn the direction of the country through elections – the latter option would require the emergence of a credible political alternative, which was missing in the latest presidential elections. Altogether, Ukrainian society is too pluralist and democratic to be simply subsumed under (semi-)authoritarian rule, and yet lacks a sufficiently broad-based commitment to democratic values which could serve as a solid basis for long-term reforms. It is democratised only half-way, but an attempt to move it backwards is hardly a recipe for stability. There are gaps between regions, generations and social groups, which would call for a moderate and cautious reform policy. Such policy was expected by many from Yanukovych, but so far he has failed these expectations. We can expect more political instability in Ukraine in the coming years.

[19] Pew Research Center, *op.cit*.

Ukraine also differs from eastern EU members with regard to identity, especially the perception of the nation of its place between "East" and "West". A strong sense of belonging to the West, and adversely of being different and separate from Russia, served as a strong incentive in many former eastern bloc countries to pursue western-oriented reforms. An overwhelmingly negative attitude, mixed with fear and contempt, towards the former Soviet rule supported the western identity. The eastern Slavic identity of Ukrainians, by contrast, encompasses Russian culture and history as part of what "we" are. Overall attitudes of the Ukrainians towards the Soviet past are also on average more approving than for example those of the Balts, so there was never a very strong urge to make a clear break with the past.

The lack of a broad anti-Russian sentiment and genuine will of Ukrainians to have close and good relations with Russia are a relief for the EU that has little appetite for confrontation with Russia over common neighbours. The unprecedented worsening of Ukrainian-Russian relations during president Yushchenko's rule was an uncomfortable development for the EU that has consistently called for good-neighbourly relations between all its neighbours. Thus, when Yanukovych became president, the EU viewed positively his aim to improve relations with Russia. It was also expected that the normalisation of Russian-Ukrainian relations would make it easier for the EU to develop its policy towards Ukraine[20].

However, the radical turn towards Russia that Yanukovych quickly embarked on amazed most observers and raised concern in the West. The frequency, visibility and brotherly tone of top-level meetings and the number of significant agreements (e.g. on economic cooperation, cooperation in the nuclear industry and in aviation, and border

[20] Wilson, *op.cit*.

demarcation) between the two countries during the first half-year of Yanukovych's presidency left no doubt over a turn of direction in Ukraine's foreign policy. Most importantly, Yanukovych agreed to extend the lease of the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Crimea for a further 25 years beyond 2017 in exchange for a 30 percent reduction of gas price – initially a rather popular move among the Ukrainians who thus expected to avoid an increase of gas price which otherwise seemed inevitable. Yet an increase of gas price for consumers did remain a necessary component of energy sector reform, and an essential requirement for ensuring a badly needed loan from the IMF. So, contrary to his election campaign promises, Yanukovych did raise gas price for households by 50 percent as of 1 August, which was a major deception of his voters and one of the main reasons for a plunge of his popularity.

Ukraine's rapprochement with Russia and authoritarian tendencies in domestic politics have been accompanied by downgrading of integration with the EU as a foreign policy priority and return to "multi-vectoral" foreign policy practiced by president Kuchma before 2005. No doubt Yanukovych and his entourage are aware of the threat of weakening of Ukraine's sovereignty involved in increasing dependence on Russia. On the other hand, EU integration is all about pooling sovereignty, so coming closer to the EU would also reduce the room for maneuvre in Ukraine's domestic politics. For example, the deep and comprehensive free trade area that is being negotiated between the EU and Ukraine involves costs related to the adoption of EU norms that are not, at least in the short term, favourable to some influential Ukrainian business interests.

In words, Yanukovych remains committed to the aim of joining the EU and continues to define European integration as Ukraine's priority. He has also pledged that he

will "not allow Ukraine to abandon the path of democratic reforms, economic reforms, fight against corruption, freedom of speech and rule of law" and will "make Ukraine a modern, strong, European state"[21]. So the EU's normative power is still there on a rhetorical level, but in practice it has evidently weakened. Nevertheless, the EU can take Yanukovych by his words in calling for further political and economic reform. It is also important to be openly critical of the weakening of freedom of speech, continuing lack of independence of courts, problematic changes to the electoral legislation and other similar problems that partly existed already before Yanukovych's presidency. The EU cannot afford to sanction Ukraine for failures in these areas – it could only weaken its influence over Ukraine and fuel further strengthening of Ukraine's orientation towards Russia. Rather, the Ukrainian leadership has to be constantly reminded that it can benefit more from its relations with the EU if it does live up to its commitment to European values.

The European turn of Moldova

It was Moldova's turn to surprise the world in 2009 with the first ever Twitter Revolution, seen by many as a continuation of the wave of colour revolutions in Eastern Europe. Indeed, there were similar features: parliamentary elections held in April 2009 gave rise to mass demonstrations by mostly younger generation who perceived of the "Communist" leadership as unjust, oppressive, ineffective and merely paying lip-service to democratic values and European-oriented reforms. The broad violations of human rights committed by the law-enforcement authorities in the course of smashing the demonstrations further fuelled the claims

[21] President's Independence Day address at the Independence Square in Kyiv, 24 August 2010, http://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/17881.html

of protesters. The opposition declared the election victory of the Communist Party, led by then President Voronin, as fraud and called for repeat elections.

In spite of all its flaws, however, Voronin's Moldova was more democratic than Kuchma's Ukraine. The broad popularity of the Communist Party was propped up by control over public media and harassment of the opposition, independent media and NGOs, but it was also built on the painful experience of chaotic and mismanaged leadership by a variety of democratic parties during the 1990s, skilful use of Soviet nostalgia, and a longing for a strong leader and stability among a large share of the population. The International Election Observation Mission recognised the April elections, concluding that "while many of the OSCE and Council of Europe commitments were met, further improvements were required to ensure an electoral process free from undue administrative interference and to increase public confidence"[22]. The early elections held in July 2009 did thus not result from election fraud, but from the inability of the new parliament to elect a president, which according to the Moldovan constitution led to the dissolution of the parliament.

Like the Orange Revolution in the case of Ukraine, the Twitter Revolution marked a strong turn of Moldova towards Europe, with high expectations of first the protesters and then the new leadership for EU support. And like in the case of Ukraine in late 2004, many in the EU would have preferred stability. Since the international observers gave their approval to the April 2009 election outcome (although being critical of the electoral process), the EU had no ground to call for repeat elections. It focused its efforts on facilitating dialogue between the main political forces,

[22] Republic of Moldova, Parliamentary elections, 5 April 2009, OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report http://www.osce.org/documents/html/pdftohtml/38185_en.pdf.html

with a primary aim to enable the election of a new president, and on ensuring investigation of the human rights violations. An early election did not seem a likely way out of the political stalemate, as the Communists were expected to remain the largest party, and the opposition was fragmented and lacked a uniting leader.

However, the political atmosphere was too tense and mistrust between the two main political camps too high for a constructive dialogue, not to speak of an agreement on presidential election that would have been necessary to avoid the dissolution of parliament. The April protests and their crack-down were a shock for the society that launched new political dynamics, culminating in the establishment of the four-party "Alliance for European Integration" that reached a slim majority in the new parliament. A decisive move that ended the eight-year rule of the Communist Party was the departure of one of its most popular members, former speaker of parliament Lupu, to a competing Democratic Party that entered the new Alliance.

Once the early elections had led to the creation of a strongly pro-European government in September 2009, the EU responded with high-level visits, additional assistance[23], launch of negotiations on a new agreement and visa dialogue. Moldova had suddenly become the most dynamic, European-oriented and serious partner for the EU, whose professionalism in dealings with Brussels was a positive surprise. The EU's normative power experienced a high-point that went beyond Ukraine in 2005, as Kiev's expectations towards the EU at the time were focused on gaining membership perspective, while domestic reform process had a stumbling start. Moldova, by contrast, had a rather realistic view of what it could expect in short perspective and seemed to understand the importance of homework

[23] Most importantly, a donor's conference hosted by the EU in March 2010 pledged € 1.9 billion for the period 2010–2013, including €550 million from the EU.

prescribed by Brussels – as the EU mantra goes, above all for the best of its own population and development.

At the time of writing, the future of the Alliance for European Integration looks uncertain. The country only has an acting president, and an attempt to change the constitution so as to move to popular presidential election failed. Yet another early parliamentary election will have to be held in November 2010, while rifts and competition inside the coalition are gathering strength. At the same time, the Communists remain the most popular party in Moldova, and their return to power (together with a coalition partner) is far from excluded. The population has become increasingly discontent with the government, which is partly explained by the grave economic difficulties that followed the global financial crisis in 2009[24].

The polarisation of society that was revealed and aggravated by the April 2009 events is not going away. Moldova lacks a strong, shared national identity and agreement on the overall direction of the country, which makes it more difficult to maintain support for painful reforms. A majority of Moldovans would like to join the EU, and yet according to a recent poll, 50% of the population considered that Russia should be the most important strategic partner of Moldova, with only 36% choosing the European Union[25]. While the ability of Ukraine to strengthen its statehood and economy while picking benefits from east and west is questionable, it is far more so in the case of Moldova that lacks a similar geopolitical weight. The settlement of the Transnistrian conflict that has divided the country already for twenty years is also unlikely to succeed without further Europeanisation of Moldova and continued involvement of the EU in the settlement process.

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[24] Barometer of Public Opinion, April-May 2010, http://www.ipp.md/libview.php?l=en&idc=156&id=552&parent=0

[25] *Ibid*.

Belarus: the most stable country in Europe – so far

After the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, there were expectations in the West and among the Belarusian opposition that the wave of colour revolutions could move to neighbouring Belarus. Yet the authoritarian regime of president Lukashenka, who has been in power since 1994, has proved to be surprisingly enduring. Lukashenka has effectively suppressed all forms of independent political and civic activity that could undermine his rule, and at the same time provided a basic level of social security that has made him popular above all among the older generation. Independent surveys show that support for Lukashenka has remained fairly stable, mostly above 40 per cent, over the past years[26]. Belarus has stood out in the region by its stability, reminding us that stability is not necessarily a primary goal of the EU's neighbourhood policy.

The relative economic success of Belarus was built on an exceptionally profitable energy relationship with Russia, which allowed Lukashenka to postpone for years transition to free-market economy. The regime sustained on buying cheap energy from Russia and re-exporting it with considerable profit to the west. However, in the past years the relationship with Russia has been marred with nasty disputes and tensions. Lukashenka has flirted with the EU and has refused to submit to the role of an obedient vassal of Moscow that the latter has expected in return for the sizeable economic profits that Belarus has received since the 1990s. The most significant case of Belarusian "intransigence" has been its refusal to recognize Abkhazia and South-Ossetia, in spite of pressure from Moscow. As a result, Russia has sought to normalise energy trade between the two countries and has used worsening trade conditions in other areas as an instrument to squeeze Lukashenka. It

[26] Independent Institute for Socio-Economic and Political Studies (IISEPS) http://www.iiseps.org/trend.html (accessed 10 September 2010)

is plausible that Russia has been looking for an opposition candidate that it could support in the upcoming presidential elections, but if it fails to find a suitable one, weakening Lukashenka is a tactic to make Belarus more controllable.

The EU's policy of isolating Belarus, introduced in 1997 and complemented with additional sanctions and restrictive measures over the following ten years, obviously had no desired influence and became under serious re-consideration in 2008–2009. The restrictive measures have not been lifted, but suspended as a response to "positive developments" in the country. Contacts at the highest political level have been re-launched, and Belarus has been included in the Eastern Partnership. New technical cooperation in a number of fields has proved the interest of Belarus to cautiously open up to the EU and seek concrete benefits in areas such as energy, transport and agriculture. The release of political prisoners in Belarus provided legitimisation to the change of course by the EU, although the authoritarian nature of the regime has remained essentially unchanged. Ahead of the presidential elections to be held in December 2010, Lukashenka has again stepped up oppression of the opposition, using his old tactics of creating an atmosphere of fear by deaths and disappearances of prominent opposition activists.

The steps taken by the EU towards normalisation of relations with Belarus have been often interpreted as placing interests above values, and allowing geopolitics to undermine the EU's soft power identity[27]. There have been voices also inside the EU that have seen warming up to a dictator as damaging to the EU's credibility – as if continuation of a policy that had failed to provide expected results during a decade would have been more credible.

[27] Sabine Fischer (ed.) "Back from the cold? The EU and Belarus in 2009", *Chaillot Paper* No. 119, November 2009, European Union Institute for Security Studies.

Geopolitical interests would indeed speak in favour of EU engagement with Lukashenka or any other Belarusian leader who cherishes the country's independence from Russia. However, it is not only the logic of geopolitics that should guide the EU towards activating its relations with Belarus. As argued above, norms and interests cannot be separated – and it remains in the EU's interest to make its neighbours adhere to European norms and values. Engagement with Belarus, including authorities, is the best possible way to push the country towards liberalisation and democratisation in the long term. Support to economic development of Belarus and social links with the EU are more likely to gradually undermine the legitimacy of authoritarianism than isolation, even though they provide no guarantee of rapid changes. Continued support to independent civic activity is important, but it is also essential to keep in mind that there are a number of individuals inside the administration who are inclined to favour European-oriented reforms and who could do valuable work in that direction also after regime change that is bound to come sooner or later.

Increasing ties between the EU and Belarus could also be the way to improve the EU's image and popularity among the Belarusian population. Similarly to the populations of Ukraine and Moldova, the Belarusians are divided over whether to favour closer relations with the EU or Russia[28]. Support for EU membership (of course a highly hypothetical question for the Belarusians) is, however, lower in Belarus than the other two neighbours. Belarus is also the only EU neighbour for which a state union with Russia has actually been a political option, but one that has become decreasingly likely and less popular over the past years. Possible benefits of a closer relationship with the EU

[28] In a survey conducted in June 2010, when asked if they would prefer to join the EU or Russia, 39 % of respondents chose the former and 38 % the latter option. IISEPS, *op.cit*.

are not well known to the Belarusians, and actual benefits are so far rather few. Increasing movement of people and economic and social links would most likely make the EU more attractive.

Conclusion: The importance of openness

On the whole, the EU's appeal to the eastern neighbours tends to depend on concrete benefits to be gained, whereas a European orientation based on values and identity is not widely rooted in the societies and mostly does not play a dominant role in domestic politics. It is possible that a realistic perspective of EU membership would promote a gradual change of not only policies, but also values and political culture. As long as the EU remains divided on the issue of further enlargement, however, it has to find other means to enhance its role in the neighbourhood and accept having a limited influence. The declining attractiveness of the EU for Ukraine, both value-based and economic, is particularly worrying, first of all because of the importance of this country in its own right, but also because developments in Ukraine can have spill-over effects and set a model for the neighbouring countries. In the past years, Ukraine has been a model of relative freedom and democracy. Its possible development into a model of creeping authoritarianism and state control over free spaces in society is a danger for the whole region.

Yet there is potential in the neighbourhood for new surprising outbursts from people who mobilise against their authoritarian and corrupt leaders and turn their eyes to Europe, calling for support to democratic reforms. The EU has valuable experience of facilitating dialogue between conflicting political forces in the Orange and Twitter Revolutions of Ukraine and Moldova. With the new External

Action Service, it can further develop its ability to involve in similar situations and can play an indispensable role in helping neighbouring countries to find a way out of political stalemates also in the future.

In daily relations between the EU and its neighbours, the principle of openness should be a key guideline. The ideal of openness lies at the core of European integration and has brought concrete benefits to the member states and citizens of the EU. Similar benefits provided by movement of people, trade and economic cooperation are attractive for people living in the neighbouring countries, and can be offered in the framework of the Eastern Partnership policy. At the same time, increasing social and economic links can make the EU's norms and values better known, understood – and supported. The current lack of openness undermines the attractiveness and normative power of the EU, especially as it contradicts with its self-expressed external policy goals. The more the EU opens up to the neighbouring countries, the better chances it has to influence their development and act as a transformative force.

International law in foreign policy documents of the Russian Federation: construction*

Lauri Mälksoo

Introduction

The bombing of Yugoslavia (the 'Kosovo intervention') in 1999 marked a watershed in the relations between NATO and the Russian Federation with repercussions that have lasted until today. In Russia, the conflict confirmed the Cold War-era common wisdom that NATO was a geopolitical threat and was constructed against the interests of Russia. The Kosovo intervention also triggered intense debates about international law – when is the use of military force legal under the UN Charter and whether the respective law of *jus ad bellum* needs any reform?

Diplomats at the UN have argued that international law is metaphorically a 'language of international relations'.[1] Since the creation of the League of Nations in 1919 and the adoption of the Kellogg-Briand Pact in 1928, the questions of the legality of use of military force and the architecture of collective security have become central elements in the

* Research for this article was supported by the European Research Council's starting grant to study contemporary concepts of international law and human rights in the Russian Federation.

[1] United Nations Organization, (ed.), *International Law as a Language of International Relations* (Leiden: Kluwer Law International, 1996).

body of international law. Of course, to argue that international law is a language of international relations is to take a normative stance. International law does not have to be such a language – nor does it have to be the only or the most important language of international relations. For realists, the language of international relations continues to be the struggle for power.

Nevertheless, it is quite useful to use the metaphor of 'language' for the analysis of the collective security aspects of international relations. Global languages are usually spoken with different accents. This analysis is about present day Russia's 'accent' when it speaks the language of international law.

Russia has recently adopted three important foreign policy, national security and military strategy documents. The Foreign Policy Concept was adopted on 12 July 2008, the Strategy of National Security on 12 May 2009 and the Military Doctrine on 5 February 2010. Common to these documents, is the extensive and occasionally even obsessive reference to international law. For instance, the Foreign Policy Concept refers to the importance of international law on at least 13 different occasions. The general pattern followed in these documents is clear: Russia sees itself as a country that values international law very highly; whereas it sees elsewhere, particularly in the US, alarming signs of unilateralism and of violations of international law.

The importance of international law is also emphasised by other states and blocks of states. For example, Article 3 para. 5 of the consolidated treaty on European Union emphasises that the EU will contribute to the "strict observance and the development of international law, including respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter." US President Barack Obama also stressed the importance of international law in his Nobel speech. However, Russia's insistence on international law in these documents

surpasses Western statements in its intensity and repetitiveness.

However, as in life generally, what one thinks about oneself and what others think about you may differ somewhat. At least among Eastern European elites, Russia does not currently enjoy the reputation of being the guardian angel of international law. As far as respect for international law is concerned, there is a certain discrepancy between Russia's self-image (as reflected in the above three documents) and how the country is perceived in a number of European countries, Rather, the Russian Federation is partly accused of the same evils that it accuses the US of: playing the game of power politics too easily, using international law selectively, and twisting the arms of weaker neighbours.

Of course, it may well be that this negative perception is partly there because the elites in Eastern European countries tend, for historical reasons, to be critical of Russia no matter what it does. However, for a more objective reference point, one could take a look at the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights. Russia's record in this court is good only to the extent that the government complies with its judgments. Apart from this, the nature and scale of human rights violations that the Strasbourg system has to deal with create a rather negative impression of Russia's compliance with the human rights field of regional international law. Moreover, the OSCE has repeatedly criticised the state of rule of law and democracy in Russia. But of course, one can also argue – as some have done in Russia – that these organisations are somehow biased.

What is behind this discrepancy between Russia's self-image and its perception abroad, as far as international law is concerned? The aim of this article is to reflect further on Russia's claim to be particularly respectful of international law, and to put this claim in a historical and comparative perspective. In the time of *perestroika*, someone wittily asked: if

power belongs to the people, then to whom does it actually belong? We may paraphrase this question here: when Russia refers to international law then what exactly does it refer to?

Extensive references to international law

Let us first illustrate the previous introductory points with some concrete examples. To start with the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, it makes the case that "coercive measures with the use of military force in circumvention of the UN Charter and Security Council cannot overcome deep social, economic, ethnic and other differences underlying conflicts. [They] undermine the basic principles of international law…" According to the same document, there is a global tendency of

> *ignoring by individual States and their groups of major principles of international law. Russia advocates full universality of the generally recognised norms of international law both in their understanding and application. (…) Attempts to lower the role of a sovereign state as a fundamental element of international relations and to divide States into categories with different rights and responsibilities, are fraught with undermining the international rule of law and arbitrary interference in internal affairs of sovereign States.*

If other countries and international actors still decide to violate international law, they will face a negative reaction from Russia:

Adherence to international law is important for safeguarding the interests of our country, its nationals and legal entities. Russia intends to: ensure compliance by the international stakeholders with their international obligations both to Russia and to the world community as a whole; combat violations of international law by States, interna-

tional organizations, non-governmental organizations and individuals.

Moreover, the Foreign Policy Concept suggests that countries violating international law should not attempt to justify their actions by 'creative interpretation of international law'. According to the document, Russia intends to

> *counter the attempts by individual countries or groups of countries to revise the universally accepted norms of international law enshrined in universal documents such as the UN Charter, the 1970 Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the UN Charter, as well as in the CSCE Final Act of 1975. Arbitrary and politically motivated interpretation by certain countries of fundamental international legal norms and principles such as non-use of force or threat of force, peaceful settlement of international disputes, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, right of peoples to self-determination, as well as the attempts to portray violations of international law as its 'creative' application, are especially detrimental to international peace, law and order. Such actions erode the basis of international law and inflict a lasting damage to its authority.*

The most ambitious question in contemporary international law is the regulation of the use of military force. In the decades since the adoption of the UN Charter in 1945, states have come up with extensive interpretations of the only exception to the prohibition of the use of force (Article 2 para. 4 of the Charter) – the right to self-defence (Article 51). Here, Russia argues against the broadening of the concept of self-defence. Russia "regards Article 51 of the UN Charter as an adequate and not subject to revision legal basis for the use of force in self-defence, including in the face of existing threats to peace and security such as international terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction."

Another document, the Strategy of National Security

was adopted by the President on 12 May 2009 and will be applicable until 2020. Approximately one year passed between the adoption of the two documents. However, during that year the August 2008 war between Georgia and Russia happened. While the 2008 document takes international law for granted, the 2009 strategy takes a more reflective stance, admitting that existing legal instruments and mechanisms are incomplete.[2] The main position, however, remains the same: Russia will support the rule of law in international relations and pursue its foreign policy strictly in the framework of international law. Russia continues to criticise the fact that NATO has expanded its borders and that NATO has illegally taken upon itself global functions – things that should be done through the UN Security Council. The Strategy maintains that Russia's level of willingness to co-operate with NATO will depend on whether the military alliance respects international law in its activities.

Finally, one may briefly mention a third document, the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation, adopted on 5 February 2010. Perhaps the most important element here is Russia's concept of the legality of the use of military force. Point 20 of the Military Doctrine lists the uses of military force that Russia considers legal: self-defence against aggression, use of force authorised by the UN Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security or by other structures of collective security, and finally, the protection of Russian citizens abroad. All these uses would be interpreted, according to the document, "according to generallly recognised principles and norms of international law and international treaties of the Russian Federation".[3] Later on, it is specified that protection of Russian citizens abroad means protection from a 'military attack' against them.[4]

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2 *National Security Strategy*, p. 8.
3 *Military Doctrine*, p. 20.
4 *Military Doctrine*, p. 27.

Which aspects of international law do countries emphasise?

Historically, international law has developed in stages. Thus, major landmarks in its development were the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, the Congress of Vienna in 1815, the Versailles Peace Treaty in 1919 and, finally the creation of the United Nations in 1945. Something significant also happened in 1989–1991, especially in Eastern Europe, but the exact international legal implications of these changes have remained unclear. Did the democratic revolutions in Eastern Europe change something in international law or not? Certainly, the changes in Eastern Europe had a major impact on the development of regional international law in Europe – for the European Union, the Council of Europe's human rights protection system and the OSCE. But did the Eastern European democratic revolution change much in terms of universal international law? An honest treaty text-oriented answer would be: no, or not so much. For example, the long-planned reform of the United Nations failed again in 2005. Moreover, after 9/11, the main focus of the West seems to have moved from democracy and human rights to anti-terrorist activities, i.e. from something proactive to something reactive.

In the 1990s, optimistic scholarly attempts were made to translate the effects of the Eastern European democratic revolutions on international law. For example, in a landmark article, New York University's international law professor Thomas M. Franck, argued that inernational law had come to recognise an 'emerging right to democratic governance'.[5] (The sovereignty-centred argument of international law throughout the preceding centuries had been that whatever form of government a country chooses remains its own business and other nations have no right to interfere.) In another noteworthy article, international law professor

[5] Thomas M. Franck, "The Emerging Right to Democratic Governance", *American Journal of International Law*, vol. 86 (1992): 46–91.

Anne-Marie Slaughter (currently directing the policy planning department in the US State Department) argued that states with a liberal domestic order will constitute a special privileged circle of trust in the international community, a circle that is more likely to respect international law and whose members are more likely to solve their disputes with each other in a peaceful way.[6] Essentially, the 1990s saw the re-emergence of the Kantian concept[7] that the international community should be (re-)constituted of democratic republics. Fernando Tesón, another international law scholar from the US, has strongly advocated humanitarian and pro-democratic interventions and forcible sanctions against tyrannical regimes.[8] Some have called for the creation of a League of Democracies, going beyond the UN which tends to accept each state as it is (North Korea and Sudan are member states). In these opinions and developments, one can detect some background to Russia's Foreign Policy Concept complaint about "attempts to (…) divide States into categories with different rights and responsibilities."

A crucial philosophical dilemma has been whether to look at international law from the perspective of the rights of states or from the perspective of the rights of individuals. Nowadays, most theoretical approaches to international law constitute some sort of compromise between the two approaches. While the state remains the central subject of international law, the individual has usually also been raised to the status of a subject of international law. Yet this shift from an entirely state-centred perspective to international law to an approach which also acommodates individuals and non-state actors, has been far from universal. Moreover, even accepting both states and individuals as subjects

[6] Anne-Marie Slaughter, "International Law in a World of Liberal States", *European Journal of International Law*, vol. 6 (1995): 503–538.

[7] See further Immanuel Kant, *Zum ewigen Frieden*, 1795.

[8] Fernando R. Tesón, *A Philosophy of International Law* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998).

of international law does answer the question of what to do in a concrete situation when a decision maker has to choose between the rights of the state and those of persecuted individuals or groups. The more conspicuously Russia's foreign policy documents emphasise 'international law', the less they put emphasis on 'human rights' (as a special part of international law). If the documents do mention 'human rights', they usually also criticise 'double standards' in their application, which is a way to say defensively that those who feel like criticising Russia should first look in their own backyards.

A number of leading international law textbooks in Russia still have a hard time in recognising individuals as subjects of international law.[9] It is not just that Russia's theoretical concepts of international law tend to be state-centred (Grotian) as opposed to individual-centred (Kantian).[10] This in itself would not be anything outside the global mainstream; theoretical appoaches in the West proceed from the same presumption. Even so, a lot depends on how statehood is conceived domestically. Is the state there to serve its citizens or is it some sort of Hegelian Absolute, a goal in itself and the highest (mandatory) value for the respective community? This question is at the core of today's debates about who violates and who respects international law. From the liberal perspective, if 'international law' is constructed on ethically questionable premises (potentially enabling, via the concept of state sovereignty, the killing, persecution or repression of one's own citizens), why make a fetish out of its observance?

The biggest criticism of the liberal concept of interna-

[9] See further Lauri Mälksoo, "International Law in Russian Textbooks – What's in the Doctrinal Pluralism?", *Göttingen Journal of International Law*, vol. 1, no. 2 (2009): 279–290.

[10] See more on the distinction between the Grotian, Kantian (and Hobbesian) approaches in Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society. A Study of Order in World Politics*, 3rd edition (New York: Palgrave, 2002), p. 23.

tional law is that its main purpose may not even be to do justice – rather, it may be to have peace. Even an unjust peace may be better than violent crusades in the name of liberal justice (or socialist revolution or any other ideology, for that matter). Pro-democratic or humanitarian interventions may seem morally right to liberal doctrinairres; yet such interventions can be highly destructive from the point of view of international peace, order and stability. They create the damaging impression that 'everything is permitted' for liberal states. These states are exeptional and when they go against the letter of international law, it is meant to be a violation or precedent for the others. Among other things, such interventions give a bad example to non-democratic or less democratic great powers (who by their own illiberal domestic concept of law may have less faith in the international rule of law anyway).

In any case, when Russia emphatically refers to international law, it refers to international law as crystallised in 1945. The approach is strictly textual-formalistic and clearly prioritises sovereignty over human rights interventionism. In raising the shield of international law (of 1945), Russia is also, in a way, making a point against codifying the results of the Eastern European democratic revolutions of 1989/1991 into future international law. Russia's argument is that whatever the West or Europe (minus Russia) may value politically is not necessarily universal. Most importantly, it has not become new international law, which binds everyone.

One must admit that Russia has a strong argument from the point of view of strict formalist legal logic: while the spirit of the Eastern European revolutions of 1989–1991 has been introduced into European (i.e., regional) international law, it has not been succesfully universalised. International law continues to be based on state consent; there

is no reform without consent and approval. Russia itself is halfway in (Council of Europe, OSCE), and halfway out (NATO, EU) of European/Western regional international legal arrangements.

So far, the most significant recent attempt to introduce the Kantian (human rights-based) influence into the Grotian (state-centred) tradition of international law has been the report compiled by the UN Secretary General's High-level Panel on Threats and Change, of December 2004. (In this high-level panel, the whole region of Eastern Europe was represented only by former Russian Prime Minister, Yevgeni Primakov.) First, the report makes clear that nowadays, sovereignty can no longer be absolute: "Whatever preceptions may have prevailed when the Westphalian system first gave rise to the notion of State sovereignty, today it clearly carries with it the obligation of a State to protect the welfare of its own peoples and meet its obligations to the wider international community."[11] In the context of the regulation of the use of military force, the report endorsed the Western-initiated idea of the responsibility to protect:

> *We endorse the emerging norm that there is a collective international responsibility to protect, exerciseable by the Security Council authorizing military intervention as a last resort, in the end of genocide and other large-scale killing, ethnic cleansing or serious violations of international humanitarian law which sovereign Governments have proved powerless or unwilling to prevent*.[12]

This endorsement cuts into the Hegelian concept of state soveregnty as an absolute right; in this context as the absolute right of the veto power-holding permanent members of the Security Council. The 1945 text did not put any moral or ethical limits on the use of veto power. However, the

[11] www.un.org/secureworld, para. 29.
[12] *Ibid*., para. 203.

endorsement by the UN's High-level Panel of the concept of the responsibility to protect shakes a little the concept of veto power as absolute power. What would have been the implication of the responsibility to protect in the case of the bombing of Yugoslavia in March 1999? NATO countries at least presented their case to the UN Security Council and only withdrew the matter after the realisation that Russia (and probably China) would have vetod any 'Western' intervention anyway. At that time, Russia did not bother to present its own case too extensively; veto power was veto power. If the responsibility to protect doctrine had already been recognised in 1999, there would have been a need to study all the relevant facts in the crisis from its viewpoint. (Somewhat ironically, Primakov, member of the High-level Panel, was Russia's prime minister at the time of Kosovo crisis in 1999. One wonders who then had the responsibility to protect the population of Kosovo?)

However, even with the adoption of the UN High-level Panel's report, the fact remains that no state has been able to initiate an amendment of the UN Charter. For lawyers, the UN Charter is a 'hard' legal document and the High-level Panel's report is a political document, at best a 'soft' instrument with potential legal significance. After initial ideological confusion in the 1990s, Moscow seems to have made a clear decision that it is not interested in the revision of the main emphases of the international law of 1945.

Of course, my intention has not been to argue that the UN Charter leaves human rights unprotected. On the contrary, the Charter contains significant references to human rights. Yet in the most critical context where sovereignty and human rights may collide – the use of force for humanitarian purposes – the wording of the Charter (Article 2 para. 4 and Article 51) gives preference to state sovereignty and the discretion of each and all of the UN

Security Council's five permanent members. Of these five, as we know, not all are 'liberal' states. In any case, Russia's message is: what we value (e.g., a strong state, protection of sovereignty), also happens to be (international) law; what the West preaches is at best regional international law (Eastern Europe could 'return' to the West after 1989–1991) but, universally speaking, the talk of human rights and democratisation is just a Western political programme, not international law.

It has sometimes been said that post-Yeltsin Russia has become a revisionist power (the sentence is usually uttered somewhat pejoratively.) Whether this is true or not, depends on one's historical viewpoint. If we accept the revolution of 1989/1991 as a normative starting point then, yes, Putin-Medvedev Russia has a revisionist agenda. Yet Russia's argument is that the fruits of the revolution of 1989/1991 remained local (East European); they were not translated into universal international law. For Russia, the core of international law is constituted of a Hegelian interpretation of the 1945 UN Charter. Whatever Kantian human rights professors may have dreamed about the future in the 1990s, none of this was translated into a revision of the UN Charter. Seen from this historical vantage point, it is the liberal pro-human rights interventionists of the post 1989/1991 era who appear as revisionist powers. In any case, it has become increasingly clear that Russia will not easily allow the revision or re-interpretation of the core of international law to the further disadvantage of (its) state sovereignty. Russia is acting like a classical *status quo* power, with no interest in changing international law.

Leaving aside the chicken-and-egg question of what constitutes reform and counter-reform, it is clear that there is at least one important aspect where Russia cannot go back to 1945: the country's borders are now quite different. This has created a new situation for Russia – some millions of

ethnic Russians living abroad. Many of them are also Russian citizens. It is in this context that Russia's concept of the use of force actually differs from the Soviet concept. The USSR did not need to use military force to protect its citizens abroad; it had (almost) no citizens abroad. The only problem is that the very same text of the UN Charter that arguably prioritises state rights over the rights of the individual, which Russia refers to as a shield against Western interventionism, is not so favourable towards the idea of using military force for the protection of citizens abroad.[13] The protection of citizens abroad is not universally accepted as a legitimate cause for the use of military force under the UN Charter; indeed during the Soviet era, the USSR criticised such claims by the US, Great Britain and Israel as illegal. Apparently, *tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis*. What remains is a contradiction that says we generally we remain conservative as far as the use of military force is concerned; except in the case where our special interests (nationals abroad) are affected.

Conclusions

International law is an important tool and a restrictive framework in the regulation of collective security and the use of military force. As such, it is laudable if a state emphasises its importance and criticises attempts to circumvent it – as the Russian Federation has done in its recent foreign policy documents. Nevertheless, simply emphasising the importance of international law does not answer the question of what aspects of international law the respective state want to be protected most, or what developments in international law it sees as a threat. We should not forget

[13] Cf. the most authoritative scholarly commentary on the UN Charter – Bruno Simma (ed.) *The Charter of the United Nations. A Commentary*, 2nd edition, 2002.

that the most reactionary European regimes of the 19th century – members of the Holy Alliance – fought any political change with arguments based on international law and referred to the legitimacy of absolute monarchies as a legal principle.

A tough question for the international community continues to be how to change aspects of international law when normative expectations change in parts of the community.[14] Is everyone's consent neeeded and how will this consent be achieved? Will there be new winners and losers if a new order is established?

In terms of reforming international law since the end of the Cold War, the West and Russia have together experienced one modest breathrough and one relative failure. Advancements in the field of human rights law can be called a relative success.[15] It is true that Russia's attitude towards (European) human rights standards remains ambivalent and the last word has not been said on the topic. However, at least Russia has joined, and remains in, the Council of Europe human rights protection system. The often difficult normative debate between the West and Russia already takes place within the new normative structure which includes post-Communist Russia. Notwithstanding numerous backlashes reported in the media, this has been an achievement when seen from the historical perspective.[16]

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[14] See e.g. Antonio Cassese, Joseph Weiler (eds.), *Change and Stability in International Law-making*, (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 1988).

[15] See also Daniel C. Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect: International Norms, Human Rights, and the Demise of Communism*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

[16] See further Lauri Mälksoo, "The History of International Legal Theory in Russia: A Civilizational Dialogue with Europe", *European Journal of International Law*, vol. 19 (2008): 211–232 and "The Science of International Law and the Concept of Politics. The Arguments and Lives of the International Law Professors at the University of Dorpat/Iur'ev/Tartu 1855–1985", *British Yearbook of International Law*, vol.76 (2005): 383–502.

The situation invokes less optimism in the field of collective security and developments in international law concerning the use of military force. The universal system of collective security envisaged in the UN Charter never started to work with full effectiveness.[17] In many respects, the permanent members of the UN Security Council simply went their own ways, systematically blocking each others' initiatives. Somewhat unexpectedly for many, the collapse of the USSR in 1991 did not entirely reverse the antagonistic tendencies between the two former superpowers.

If there was a moment in the 1990s to translate the achievments of the Eastern European democratic revolutions into universal international law, it was not used, or not used energetically enough. The new democracies in Eastern Europe could have been more active and efficient in advocating reforms in international law, but their legitimacy and capacity to lead was in doubt for some time because they were seen as having been too dependent for too long.

On the other hand, international law continues to be based on consent and mutual compromise. International law cannot be easily 'imposed' from above. Its main doctrines and solutions are already some centuries old. Therefore, fundamental reforms are by definition not easy to carry out. However, the history of collective security and the UN demonstrates that there is a link between the relative success and relative failure of the post-Cold War reform of international law. Countries which respect human rights and at least strive to be democratic and open tend to trust each other more in terms of security as well. Herein lies also one answer to the legal relationships between the West and Russia in the future – further democratisation

[17] See further Peter G. Danchin and Horst Fischer (eds.), *United Nations Reform and the New Collective Security*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

and increasing respect for human rights in Russia will inevitably lead towards more trust in 'hard' security matters as well. If that happens, the antagonism between Russia and NATO and the rhetoric about foreign 'violators of international law' will decrease or even fade away one way or another.

Modernizing Sovereign Democracy? Technocratic neoliberalism and Russia's doctrine of multipolarity*

Viatcheslav Morozov

"We have changed", was the main message of President Dmitry Medvedev's speech at the June 2010 St. Petersburg Economic Forum.[1] Trying to persuade foreign governments and investors to provide support for his policy of modernizing Russia, the Russian president sought to create an image of his country as an open and dynamic society which has made a big step forward even in comparison with the situation a year ago, when he announced modernising Russian society as his top priority.[2] The language of this and other similar speeches made by the current Russian president is in sharp contrast with the rhetoric of Vladimir Putin's second presidential term, whose motto was "sovereign democracy." Although Putin never formally endorsed the concept, it is possible to demonstrate that he in fact relied on it both in his statements (most prominently, in the February 2007

* This article is a significantly revised and extended version of a policy memo presented at the PONARS-Eurasia Policy Conference in Washington, D.C., on 22 October 2010. The work on the text has been supported by the Estonian Science Foundation (grant ETF8295).

1 Dmitry Medvedev, *Vystuplenie na plenarnom zasedanii Peterburgskogo mezhdunarodnogo ekonomicheskogo foruma*, 18 June 2010, http://kremlin.ru/news/8093. Sometimes official translations of the presidential speeches, available at http://eng.kremlin.ru, diverge from the original text in important nuances. I therefore prefer to use the Russian originals throughout my article; all translations, unless a reference to an English-language text is given, are my own.

2 See Dmitry Medvedev, *Rossiya, vpered!*, 10 September 2009, http://news.kremlin.ru/news/5413.

speech at the Munich Security Conference[3]) and in his policy choices.[4]

Experts across the globe are racking their brains trying to determine whether the visible change of rhetoric signifies a new departure in Russia's policies vis-à-vis the West, or whether the transformation is going to remain purely rhetorical. As always, policy developments are contradictory and provide enough evidence to prove both that the glass is half empty and that it is half full. On the one hand, Medvedev's presidency was opened by the August 2008 war with Georgia – the first inter-state war in the history of the Russian Federation since it emerged out of the ruins of the USSR. Later on, Russia undertook a number of unambiguous balancing moves against the West, such as the April 2010 Kharkiv agreement with Ukraine, which provides for continued presence of the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol after 2017.[5] In South Caucasus, an agreement with Armenia has been reached on the continued use of the Gyumri military base, effectively implying, at least according to some reports, that Russia would provide Armenia with military support against any external aggression.[6] To alleviate the obvious anxiety that this deal caused in Baku, but also to put even more pressure on the West, Moscow has ensured a contract between Gazprom and the Azerbaijan State Oil Company to double the import of Azerbaijani natural gas, thus undercutting the resource base for the Nabucco pipeline.[7]

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[3] Vladimir Putin, *Vystuplenie na Miunkhenskoi konferentsii po voprosam politiki bezopasnosti*, 10 February 2007, http://archive.kremlin.ru/appears/2007/02/10/1737_type63374type63376type63377type63381type82634_118097.shtml.

[4] See Viatcheslav Morozov, "Sovereignty and Democracy in Contemporary Russia: A Modern Subject Faces the Post-Modern World", *Journal of International Relations and Development*, 2008, 11(2): 152–180.

[5] See e.g. Philippe Conde and Vasco Martins, "Russia's Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol Beyond 2017", *IPRIS Viewpoints* 15, May 2010.

[6] See Vladimir Solovyev, "Voyui i Gyumri", *Kommersant*, 21 August 2010.

[7] Aleksandr Gabuev et al., "Dmitry Medvedev ogranichil Azerbaidzan", *Kommersant*, 4 September 2010.

On the other hand, 2010 was a year of major breakthroughs in Russia-U.S. relations. Most significantly, the two countries signed the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, while Moscow for the first time cautiously supported Washington on the Iranian issue. Another crucial development was reconciliation with Poland over difficult issues of common history – a reconciliation that had been in full swing even before the death of the Polish President Lech Kaczynski in a plane crash near Smolensk. The relations with the EU as a whole seem to have thawed out around the time of the Rostov summit in late May, although this is suggested more by the tone of the official statements than by any concrete decisions. In general, even with some geopolitical reasoning still at play, Russia's approach to its immediate neighbourhood has become much less confrontational and much more oriented towards dialogue and compromise.[8]

All these events and their relative significance are subject to conflicting interpretations. Depending on the agenda of a particular analyst, they can fit the accounts predicting an imminent strategic partnership between Russia and the West as well as the new round of rivalry in the post-Soviet space. This article attempts a different approach: by relying on a broader range of sources, it analyses Russian foreign policy thinking trying to determine whether the change has really taken place at the conceptual level. My conclusion is that there is fundamental continuity in Russian foreign policy thinking ever since the late 1990s, and therefore a continued improvement in relations with the EU and the U.S. is bound to be limited to "pragmatic" de-politicized cooperation. Any more radical transformation would necessitate a re-opening of the dialogue on the contentious political issues, but it is also important not to repeat the mistakes of the early post-Cold War years.

[8] Nikolai Silayev, "How to Make Peace with Neighbors", *Russia in Global Affairs* 2010, no. 2.

Technocratic modernisation?

A careful analysis of Dmitry Medvedev's statements postulating the need for and outlining the plans of modernization suggests at least one significant observation. They extensively rely on the precepts of economic liberalism, while the need to protect the political rights and freedoms of Russian citizens is brought up more as a ritualistic figure of speech than as an issue of substance. Even the most radical manifestation of Mr. Medvedev's liberal political views up to date, his web-address on the Day of Memory of the Victims of Political Repressions in October 2009, was focused on the moral imperative to remember the tragic past. Its key thesis was the need "to accept one's past as it is", which, according to the Russian president, is a sign of "mature citizenship".[9] While crucially important in itself, this declaration is hardly comparable to his very detailed and practice-oriented descriptions of the proposed economic, administrative and legal reforms, which are presented every time he hits one of his favourite topics.

In the much-publicized speech to senior Russian diplomats in July 2010, with its strong emphasis on cooperation with the West, "consolidating the institutions of democracy and civil society" was only named once, as a second priority after economic modernization. The remaining part of the address, which provides more detailed guidelines to the diplomats, focuses exclusively on technological cooperation, innovations, investment and so on.[10]

The statement at the St. Petersburg Economic Forum is another example of neoliberal technocratic thinking. Having described information technologies as "one of the

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[9] Dmitry Medvedev, *Pamiat' o natsional'nykh tragediyakh tak zhe sviashchenna, kak pamiat' o pobedakh*, 30 October 2009, http://kremlin.ru/transcripts/5862.

[10] Dmitry Medvedev, *Vystuplenie na soveshchanii s rossiiskimi poslami i postoyannymi predstaviteliami v mezhdunarodnykh organizatsiyakh*, 12 July 2010, http://kremlin.ru/transcripts/8325.

key routes towards democratic development," the Russian president emphasized the importance of "technological expansion of the safeguards for the freedom of speech, of web-based technologies in the functioning of the political and electoral systems for the development of the political system, political institutions".[11] There is nothing wrong in linking information technologies and democracy, but in the absence of a more far reaching strategy for political reform this statement reveals the technocratic approach to politics very characteristic of neoliberalism in general, and of the "liberals" in the Russian government in particular.

This way of thinking presents democracy not as a result of resolute effort and critical re-evaluation of political reality, but as a by-product of "correct" technological and institutional solutions – in particular, of the free market. It is by no means exclusive to Russia: in an article published in 2003, Boris Kapustin registered a universal trend towards "the attenuation and exhaustion of the normative content of modernity, that is, its commitment to autonomy, reflexivity, criticality, and to liberty as something always yet to be achieved rather than something already possessed because of this or that institutional arrangement".[12] The EU's neoliberal discourse of achieving security through democratic transformation, as well as the US project of democracy promotion tend to equate democracy with the formal presence of institutions shaped after their western analogues, and to show deep mistrust towards local politics.[13] In the countries that do identify with the West and therefore find it relatively easy to conform to the disciplining practices of the EU,

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[11] Dmitry Medvedev, *Vystuplenie na plenarnom zasedanii Peterburgskogo mezhdunarodnogo ekonomicheskogo foruma*.

[12] Boris Kapustin, "Modernity's Failure/Post-modernity's Predicament: The Case of Russia", *Critical Horizons* 2003, 4(1): 99–145.

[13] David Chandler, "Back to the Future? The Limits of Neo-Wilsonian Ideals of Exporting Democracy", *Review of International Studies* 2006, 32(3): 475–494; Morozov, *Sovereignty and Democracy*.

this often leads to a replacement of popular legitimacy with vicarious power – a rule in the name of external authority, which substitutes politics with management, and disproportionately expands the executive. In the Estonian context in particular, Alexander Astrov has diagnosed the dominant technocratic interpretation of "European norms and values" as a source of the 2007 "Bronze Soldier" crisis.[14]

Even in the Russian context, the normalisation and normativisation of the West is a widespread phenomenon – references to western norms and practices are often used to justify political choices, sometimes of the most illiberal nature. Perhaps most famously, in a bid to justify the systematic suppression of public protests in major Russian cities, Vladimir Putin has recently claimed that the authorities take absolutely the same measures all over the world: "Look, in London they have assigned one place [for political manifestations]. Anywhere one may not do it, one gets hit on one's skull with a club. You may not? You have come? Get what's due. And no-one complains!"[15] This was quickly followed up by the head of the Moscow Directorate of the Ministry of the Interior Vladimir Kolokoltsev, who, referring this time to the French experience, came up with the proposal to introduce tougher sanctions against anyone taking part in the "illegal" political actions. In a fascinating debate about this proposal in a live broadcast of the BBC Russian Service, Chairman of the Moscow City Duma Vladimir Platonov again referred to "the western experience", only to argue later on in the discussion that Russian democracy

[14] Alexander Astrov, *Samochinnoe soobshchestvo: politika men'shinstv ili malaya politika?* (Tallinn: Tallinn University Press, 2008). See also Alexander Astrov, "The 'Return of History' or Technocratic Administration? The Effects of Depoliticization on Estonian-Russian Relations", in Eiki Berg and Piret Ehin (eds), *Identity and Foreign Policy: Baltic-Russian Relations and European Integration*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 85–100.

[15] "Vladimir Putin: dayu vam chestnoe partiinoe slovo" [Interview with Andrei Kolesnikov], *Kommersant*, 30 August 2010.

was too young and therefore not ready to grant the citizens the same degree of civil liberties as in the West.[16] This apparent contradiction between simultaneous absolutisation and relativisation of the western norm is by no means a uniquely Russian schizophrenia – on the contrary, it is a manifestation of a global hegemonic struggle for the control of the universal norm.[17]

At a certain level, shared adherence to neoliberal dogmas does indeed create prerequisites for a possible rapprochement with the like-minded political forces in the West, and this is arguably why the first phase of "the reset" has been so successful. Pavel Baev points out that a "modernisation alliance" with Germany would be even more important for Medvedev's administration, and the latter's appeal to the pragmatic forces all over Europe has not been without response.[18] The recent improvement of the Polish-Russian relations, which, inter alia, made possible inviting Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov to Warsaw as the keynote speaker at the annual meeting of the Polish ambassadors, has also been justified by some in the language of forgetting about politics for the sake of the economy. At least this was the message brought forward by Lavrov's Polish colleague Radoslaw Sikorski, who argued after the meeting that the relations between the two countries must move "from militarisation to economisation".[19]

Yet at the same time it also sets limits to mutual under-

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[16] "Tiur'ma za nerazreshennye mitingi?", *BBC Russian Service*, 8 September 2010, http://www.bbc.co.uk/russian/radio/radio_utro/2010/09/100908_a_utro_russia_protests.shtml.

[17] For a more theory-oriented treatment of this issue, see Viatcheslav Morozov, "Western Hegemony, Global Democracy and the Russian Challenge," in Christopher S. Browning and Marko Lehti (eds), *The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy* (London, New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 185–200.

[18] Pavel Baev, "Medvedev Moots Russia-Germany 'Modernization Alliance'", *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 7(138), July 19, 2010.

[19] Pavel Sheremet, "Sergei Lavrov otchital poslam kak studentam", *Kommersant*, 3 September 2010.

standing, because the historical experience and political context in which this technocratic thinking operates are substantially different. The persistently poor state of the Estonian-Russian relations illustrates how difficult it is even for technocratic governments to hold out against the societal ruptures and international tensions generated by the diametrically opposed foundational historical narratives. The recent downturn in relations with Moldova, prompted by the attempts of acting president Mihai Ghimpu to re-activate the discourse of the dangerous Russian Other which has continuously harassed Moldova throughout its history, can be another illustration of this point.

Back to multipolarity

The mechanism producing these rifts and ruptures is certainly not, or not only, someone's ill will or some sort of irresistible social law. Rather, it has to do with the structural factors, with what may be termed discursive inertia. The meanings and images originating in the earlier periods of the nation's history continue to circulate under the surface of de-politicized official ideology and burst out at times of crisis, when all resources need to be mobilized to provide legitimacy to the regime. The continued relevance of the old imperial discourse is evident in how the foreign policy priorities are being set in contemporary Russia. Again, neoliberal priorities form the top layer of foreign policy discourse. It was declared as far back as in the early 2000s by the then President Vladimir Putin that the key aim of Russian foreign policy must be the well-being of the Russian citizens. This principle found its way into the Foreign Policy Doctrines. The Doctrine approved by President Putin in 2000 lists among the overall goals of Russia's foreign policy "creating favourable external conditions for the steady de-

velopment of Russia, for improving its economy, enhancing the standards of living of the population".[20] Dmitry Medvedev's 2008 version replaces the abstract goal of economic progress with the imperatives of modernising Russia and putting its economy on the innovation-driven path of development.[21] The pre-eminence of the economic goals is most visible in the very title of the most recent strategic document, *The Program for the Effective Use on a Systemic Basis of the Foreign Policy Factors for the Long-Term Development of the Russian Federation*.[22] Such an approach suggests — and this is unambiguously spelled out in all key recent documents and statements — that a geopolitical confrontation with the West be a thing of the past.[23] It is replaced by competition, to quote the 2008 Foreign Policy Doctrine, "between different value systems and development models within the framework of the universal principles of democracy and market economy."

However, as technocratic neoliberalism deliberately withdraws from all grand political debates, it is unable to produce a foreign policy vision of its own. The result is that the old concept of multipolarity continues to dominate foreign policy thinking and practice. *The Program*, even more than the Foreign Policy Doctrine, abounds with references to the traditional foreign policy goals inherited from both Russian and Soviet empires. The first target to be achieved to ensure

[20] *The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation*. Approved by the President of the Russian Federation V. Putin, June 28, 2000, http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/russia/doctrine/econcept.htm.

[21] *The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation*. Approved by the President of the Russian Federation on 12 July 2008. http://www.un.int/russia/new/MainRoot/koncept.html.

[22] "Programma effektivnogo ispolzovania na sistemnoi osnove vneshnepoliticheskikh faktorov v tseliakh dolgosrochnogo razvitia Rossiiskoi Federatsii", *Russky Newsweek*, 11 May 2010.

[23] See e.g. *Interview of Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, 'We can't say that NATO presents a threat to us", Kommersant, June 11, 2010*, http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/e78a48070f128a7b43256999005bcbb3/e62cee06c813b266c3257742003462f5?OpenDocument.

"the long-term development of the Russian Federation" is to protect its – real or imagined – great power status. This is phrased as "preservation of sovereignty and territorial integrity, Russia's solid and authoritative position in world community," and "neutralization of the attempts to radically reform the UN Security Council to the detriment to the prerogatives of the current permanent members." The document continues the old tradition of criticism against "the expansionist activism of NATO" and "the imbalances in the work of the OSCE," — a code phrase for "too much" emphasis on the political freedoms and the state of democratic institutions. Russia's traditional spheres of influence in the former Soviet republics are another priority: the U.S. "attempts to work towards disintegration, fragmentation and separation from Russia of our geostrategic environment" are to be countered, "access to the Arctic by the non-regional players, including NATO and the European Union" is to be prevented, the Black Sea Fleet must stay in Ukraine, and so on.[24]

The politics of common sense

It might even seem, at first glance, that the foreign policy documents quite simply represent a different trend in current Russian politics in comparison with the presidential addresses. Inconsistency between, and even within, key strategic texts is nothing new for Russia – it has, for instance, been argued that the current National Security Doctrine is a poorly edited compilation of fragments produced by different bureaucracies.[25] In a similar vein, Pavel Baev argues that one must distinguish between two types of pragmatism.

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[24] "Programma effektivnogo ispolzovania..."

[25] Henning Schröder, "Russia's National Security Strategy to 2020", *Russian Analytical Digest*, no. 62, 18 June 2009, p. 9.

Medvedev's preference in favour of economic rather than political modernisation is still based on an idealist vision of the Russian economy "driven by innovations spilling over from the pilot-project in Skolkovo". Putin's pragmatism, on the other hand, "has a far more solid economic foundation in the inter-penetration of corrupt business and predatory bureaucracy, and its focus never waivers from the imperative of retaining political control over the feuding clans and shadow networks".[26] The Prime Minister does not even bother to pay lip service to the idea modernisation proclaimed by his formal boss; foreign policy documents do that, but this in itself is of course no proof of conceptual affinity. What really links the two approaches – and in this sense there is no gap between the two pragmatisms – are the attempts to present political decisions as self-evident by employing the language of common sense, thus putting politics in a subordinate position to technocratic management. In Medvedev's rhetoric of modernization the correct solutions are always already there — the challenge lies in implementing them by overpowering corruption and inertia. In a similar vein, Russia's struggle for multipolarity at the international arena is presented in the Foreign Ministry documents as a no-brainer. The main obstacle in the way towards universal harmony in diversity is the selfish and short-sighted policies of the West, in particular of the United States which struggles in vain to dominate the world.

Ever since his appointment back in 2004, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has been the leading advocate of "great power pragmatism" (to use the label introduced by Russian-American scholar Andrei Tsygankov[27]). In the cover letter introducing *The Program for the Use of Foreign Policy Factors*, he does his best to present the decline of western

[26] Baev, "Medvedev Moots Russia-Germany 'Modernization Alliance'".

[27] Andrei P. Tsygankov, *Russia's Foreign Policy. Change and Continuity in National Identity* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006).

hegemony and the arrival of the multipolar world as objective reality. "The material basis of the western supremacy in global politics has been shaken" by the crisis, and this is according to Mr. Lavrov a welcome fact, because the "unipolar U.S.-centred configuration of contemporary world financial system itself is a powerful source of instability." "Imperatives of modernization," he continues, "have become common to all states with no exception," but it seems that some have difficulties reconciling themselves with this fact. "The right-wing conservative forces" in the U.S. are trying "to go back to the confrontational policies of the previous administration" by pushing President Obama towards the expansion of the war on terror, confrontation with Iran and China, and unilateral development of anti-ballistic missile defence. In the long run these policies have no chance because they run counter to the most fundamental trends in global politics and economics, but in the short run the risk of serious destabilization.[28]

Similar technocratic logic applies to Russia's dealings with its neighbours in the post-Soviet space: thus, the ban on the imports of Moldovan wine in 2006–2009, as well as Georgian wine and mineral water since 2006, has been presented as a completely de-politicised decision based exclusively on public health reasons. Characteristically, Mihai Ghimpu's attempts to galvanise the image of Russia as violent historical Other during 2010 (most probably, for domestic consumption) led to a new discovery of dangerous substances in Moldovan wines exported to Russia, as well as to restrictions on Moldovan companies selling fruits and vegetables on the Russian market.[29]

Thus, the rhetoric of common sense, promoting the idea

[28] Sergei Lavrov, "O Programme effektivnogo ispolzovania na sistemnoi osnove vneshnepoliticheskikh faktorov v tseliakh dolgosrochnogo razvitia Rossiiskoi Federatsii", *Russky Newsweek*, 11 May 2010.

[29] Vladimir Solovyev, "Moldavia poprobuet smenit' izbiratelei", *Kommersant*, 3 September 2010.

of a multipolar world as a "natural" condition of the global system and using the "self-evident" public health concerns to promote a hidden political agenda, provides a means of delegitimising both western interventionism and Moscow's opponents in what it considers its sphere of influence. Apart from describing the allegedly detrimental effects of intervention for international order, technocratic pragmatism downplays the significance of value-based politics and thus successfully deals with the external criticism of Russia's democratic record. As already pointed out, Russian "sovereign democracy" is based on the formal imitation of western institutions and procedures. If one looks at the letter of the law, the Russian parliament is democratically elected with four parties represented in the lower house, Russian judiciary is independent, there is a functioning free market economy and no formal censorship in the media. The outside criticism is successfully countered by dismissing it as a case of "double standards".[30] This cliché – a favourite response to Russia's critics since late 1990s – has most recently been repeated by President Medvedev in his speech at the Yaroslavl Global Policy Forum. Talking about future universal standards of democracy, he emphasized that double standards, or "sly" standards would not be acceptable, because they could be used for limiting certain states' sovereignty or for interfering into their domestic affairs – something that, in his view, has repeatedly happened in relation to Russia.

Characteristically, right after making this point, the Russian President went on to one of the most widely cited statement from that speech: "Russia, beyond doubt, is a democracy".[31] Such bold statements are reinforced, at the more

[30] See e.g. the way Vladimir Putin handled such criticisms in the Q&A session after the Munich speech: Putin, *Vystuplenie na Miunkhenskoi konferentsii*.

[31] Dmitry Medvedev, *Vystuplenie na plenarnom zasedanii mirovogo politicheskogo foruma "Standarty demokratii i kriterii effektifnosti"*, Yaroslavl, 10 September 2010, http://kremlin.ru/transcripts/8887.

concrete level, with technocratic procedural argumentation. If the critics say, for instance, that the elections are not free and fair, the response would be that the election law largely complies with the 'European' norms. Anyone claiming that the law has been violated is told to "go prove this in courts" – this was the killer counterargument of the Chairman of the Central Electoral Commission Vladimir Churov after the most controversial round of regional and municipal elections in October 2009. In a court of law, however, one would have to cite specific violations on the ground. Most probably, the court would dismiss the charges – and everyone's knowledge that the Russian judicial system is biased in favour of the government cannot serve as a valid argument for an appeal.

Yet even if the domestic opponents of the regime would have been able to obtain a court ruling in their favour, the counterargument would be that no democracy is perfect and that even in the West small violations happen all the time. Thus, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin in a recent interview to the French media has defended his country's democratic record in the following way: "As for infringements, they are to be found everywhere. Take, for example, human rights abuses in the French penal system, in prisons... [...] I think there is much in the Russian political system, too, that requires correction, change and improvement, but this process is a natural part of any society coming of age".[32]

And since no-one is perfect, the western project of democracy promotion acquires a sinister dimension, being accused of cynical and instrumental abuse of universal values. Prime Minister Putin made a very logical step along this path when he effectively accused the West of neocolonialism:

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[32] *Prime Minister Vladimir Putin Gives an Interview to Agence France Presse and France 2 Television Channel Ahead of His Working Visit to France*, 10 June 2010, http://premier.gov.ru/eng/events/news/10948/.

> *Imposing their standards and rules on others is a long-standing tradition among European countries. Recall the period of colonisation of, say, Africa. Europeans went there with their regulations, their rules to educate and civilise the natives. I have the feeling that this old tradition has transformed itself into a democratisation drive in places where Europeans and our western partners would like to secure a greater foothold. After all, there are very ancient civilisations across the world and they should be respected.*[33]

In a fascinating twist of rhetoric, the anti-colonial discourse, with its universalist appeal, is reduced to the good old idea of the plurality of civilisations with their independent values.[34] Viewed in this light, the whole passage is a testimony to "the superb ability of established essentialist discourses to appropriate the legacies and language of the critical Western trends".[35] But this evidence of self-reflexivity and skilful strategic use of the established norms of political correctness is not, in itself, an indication of its weakness.

On the contrary, it is important not to underestimate the potential appeal of Russia's counter-hegemonic discourse in other societies throughout the world which find themselves in structurally similar positions. This is something that is being already used as a resource in the context of BRIC and other Russian diplomatic and economic offensives in South America and elsewhere. It must be emphasized that in terms of substance the interpretation of the key universal values, such as democracy, by the Moscow-based ideologues has not that much in common with the South American discourse. The Russian understanding of

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[33] *Prime Minister Vladimir Putin Gives an Interview to Agence France Presse and France 2 Television Channel*.

[34] This is not to say that anti-colonial ideologies are themselves immune to the particularist romanticist influences. In the global context, this statement is of course more repetitive than innovative.

[35] Maxim Waldstein, 'Theorizing the Second World: Challenges and Prospects', *Ab Imperio* 2010, no. 1: 103.

democracy and freedom is very tightly linked with the idea of sovereignty and thus tends to prioritize state grandeur over individual liberty. It also has a much more favourable disposition to the pro-market dogma of the western neo-liberals than the South American discourses, which are so much dominated by the idea of social justice.[36] However, if any two nations face the same outside hegemonic force which they perceive as oppressive, or which can be presented as such, this is already enough for their leaders to create alliances in spite of what differentiates them. And if they find common language to describe their situation and to advance their claims, this makes such alliance potentially even stronger.

Bringing politics back in

Thus, it seems that technocratic modernization cannot be accepted as a self-sufficient policy. By replacing politics with management, it tends to reduce the reforms to improving the investment climate and bringing the Internet to every Russian home. A grotesque example of where it leads to in terms of freedom and justice is the move to protect entrepreneurs from being put behind bars when charged with tax evasion, money laundering and similar non-violent crimes. While a welcome move in itself, this presidential initiative smacks of prioritizing the haves over the have-nots. Arguably, the rationale is that when the business people suffer from their rights being violated, this does more harm to society as a whole than when commoners do. And it goes without saying that these new provisions did not affect Mikhail Khodorkovsky and his fellow prisoner in the Yukos affair Platon Lebedev, whose

[36] Elena Pavlova, 'Latin America and Russia: Illusory Rapprochement', *Russia in Global Affairs*, forthcoming.

attempts to have detention replaced with bail in a new case that is currently brought against them was repeatedly rejected by courts.[37]

It is also quite characteristic that in his July 2010 speech President Medvedev repeated that the key goal of Russian foreign policy was "promoting material well-being of our citizens and their cultural development, […] protection of their health and human dignity."[38] As usual, the Russian leaders prefer to highlight the state's role in "securing" citizens' rights and never encourage the people themselves to stand up for their rights at the grassroots level. Consequently, it is hardly surprising that, according to *Kommersant*, at the closed part of the same meeting Vladimir Chizhov, Russian representative to the European Communities, continued to criticize Brussels for trying to intervene in Russia's domestic affairs by insisting on strengthening the rule of law and civil society as targets of the new "Partnership for Modernisation" programme.[39] The fact that the President in the opening speech demanded the diplomats to give up the old confrontational rhetoric and to start working on establishing genuine cooperation with the West, including on such issues as democracy, apparently fell on deaf ears, at least in this particular case.

To repeat, the problem is not the lack of sympathies towards the West on the part of the current Russian leadership (at least of the presidential team). The current impasse is caused by the attempts to isolate economic well-being from all other major policy challenges and to advance the project of modernisation in the most technocratic of all possible ways. The issues of democracy, human rights and independent civil society are interpreted as secondary in

[37] See Evgenia Kuznetsova, Nikolai Sergeev, "Osnovania ne otpali i ne izmenilis", *Kommersant*, 17 August 2010; Aleksei Sokovnin, "Mikhailu Khodorkovskomu i Platonu Lebedevu ne propisyvayut obshchii rezhim", *Kommersant*, 3 September 2010.

[38] Medvedev, *Vystuplenie na soveshchanii s rossiiskimi poslami*.

[39] Vladimir Solovyev, "Ne ot MIDa sego", *Kommersant*, 13 July 2010.

importance, and deliberately sidelined in the dialogue with the western partners. This logic is undoubtedly flawed and needs to be exposed as such. In the worst case, it could lead today's reformers to repeating the mistakes their predecessors made in the early 1990s, when pro-market reforms took precedence over the urgent need to consolidate the fragile Russian democracy. Moreover, economic modernisation as such, even if successful, will not improve the standard of leaving of the Russian citizens overnight. So far, as Baev rightly notes, the "exclusive high-tech zone" of Skolkovo "exists only in Medvedev's imagination, and he would hardly be able to harvest any fruits from the generous financing in the short time left in his presidential countdown".[40] Thus, in order for this project to be sustainable, it needs a more consciously and explicitly framed political dimension, perhaps centred on the notion of the quality of life (including political rights and freedoms) rather than merely on the standard of living.

Similarly, the apparent depoliticization of the international agenda, manifest in the "forget about values, let's talk business" approach, in effect leaves in place the old geopolitical thinking, which, in turn, translates into action. Baev is right to point out that in Putin's pragmatic vision of politics, as opposed to Medvedev's version of pragmatism, "partnerships with the West could be abandoned with few doubts when domestic mobilization against external threats is found expedient for consolidating the grasp on power".[41] A trend in that direction might be already discernible, especially in the increasing competition in the post-Soviet space where Moscow is trying hard to counterbalance the West. It seems that few people have any clear idea of why this would be necessary, except for maintaining the image of

[40] Baev, "Medvedev Moots Russia-Germany 'Modernization Alliance'".
[41] *Ibid.*

"enemy at the gate"[42] for domestic mobilisation. It is even less clear how this geopolitical expansion helps in achieving the declared goal of modernization. It has been repeatedly pointed out that the Black Sea Fleet deal with Ukraine is far too expensive for Russia in comparison with even such a costly alternative as creating a full-scale naval base in Novorossiisk to replace Sevastopol.[43] The diversion of such enormous resources in crisis times can only be justified in terms of the zero-sum game approach to geopolitical competition in the post-Soviet space, but not in terms of a pro-western modernisation agenda. Similarly, the August 2010 agreement with Armenia, in the context of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation, apparently puts Russia in the position where it has to fight on the Armenian side in any war Yerevan might initiate or be drawn into.[44] Potentially this is a very awkward position not just for the relations with the West, but also vis-á-vis Turkey – one of Russia's key economic partners – and especially Azerbaijan. The gas deal with the latter, reached in the following month, is also justified in geopolitical rather than economic terms, since the price of Azerbaijani gas for Gazprom is the highest in the entire CIS space, and increasing the import can hardly be motivated by economic considerations. So undercutting Nabucco, which is seen in Moscow as an encroachment on Russia's natural interests in the energy sphere in the post-Soviet space, obviously is the main goal.[45]

If nothing is done about this predicament, it is bound to produce yet another confrontation at the next sharp turn of international politics. Therefore, big political issues, such as democracy, human rights and the future of the international

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42 This catchphrase of the main Kremlin ideologue Vladislav Surkov dates back to the post-Beslan moment in 2004, see Dov Lynch, "'The enemy is at the gate'", *International Affairs*, 2005, 81(1): 141–161.

43 Conde and Martins, "Russia's Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol Beyond 2017".

44 Vladimir Solovyev, "Voyui i Gyumri".

45 Aleksandr Gabuev et al., "Dmitry Medvedev ogranichil Azerbaidzan".

order must be brought back on the agenda. At the same time, one probably has to agree with Foreign Minister Lavrov that a return to the pro-democracy interventionism of the George W. Bush years is not an option. Western haughtiness repeatedly alienated Russia over the last 15 years, and there are no grounds to believe that it will not lead to the same result this time around. Dmitry Medvedev was absolutely right when in his 2009 article he rejected the idea of "importing" democracy:

> *Russian democracy will not unthinkingly copy models from abroad. Civil society cannot be bought for foreign grants. Political culture cannot be transformed by imitating the political mores of the progressive societies. [...] We certainly will learn from other peoples. [...] But no-one will live our life for us. No-one will achieve for us the goal of being free, successful, responsible. It is only our own experience of democratic development that will give us the right to claim that we are free, we are responsible, we are successful.*[46]

This emotional appeal must of course be weighed up against the realities of Russian soft authoritarianism, but this does not invalidate the argument. Democratic preaching is not simply useless, it encourages the development of phantasms like "sovereign democracy." Instead, the emphasis must be on encouraging the political forces within Russia – and not just those among the radical opposition – to move from technocratic modernization to a full scale political reform. This, however, can only be done if the western partners are ready to agree that no democracy is perfect and to combine their criticism of Russia with self-critical reflection of their own democratic record.

Viewed in this light, the most significant foreign policy innovation in President Medvedev's July speech to the ambassadors was his offer to the West to start working together

[46] Medvedev, *Rossiya, vpered!*

on the common standards of democracy,[47] and his attempt to offer his own vision of how such standards might look like in more detail in the Yaroslavl speech.[48] It might be also viewed as part of a broader agenda that also includes a call upon the western leaders to critically reassess the existing European security architecture, resulting in the proposal for a European Security Treaty.[49] Neither of these statements and proposals is perfect, and there are indeed even reasons to suspect that some of the concerns expressed by the Russian leaders are not entirely sincere. At the same time, discarding them right away would be a mistake that can only alienate Russian leaders, and perhaps also the Russian people. Instead of trying to occupy the moral high ground, one should treat democracy as a universal goal that needs to be achieved and defended by joint effort. While some are doing better than others, those lagging behind must not be denied the right to critical judgment. After all, democracy's worst enemies are complacency and self-righteousness.

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47 Medvedev, *Vystuplenie na soveshchanii s rossiiskimi poslami*.

48 Medvedev, *Vystuplenie na plenarnom zasedanii mirovogo politicheskogo foruma*...

49 Pertti Joenniemi and Sergei Prozorov, "European Security at Ground Zero", *OpenDemocracy*, 28 April 2010, http://www.opendemocracy.net/opensecurity/sergei-prozorov-pertti-joenniemi/european-security-at-ground-zero.

Alliance solidarity versus 'business as usual'? The sale of French Mistral warships to Russia

Matthieu Chillaud and Arnaud Kalika

There is sympathy between Russia and France (…) Situated at the two extremities of Europe, France and Russia share no borders; they have no potential points of conflict; they are not commercial rivals and Russia's natural enemies (the English and Austrians) are also France's enemies. In peace-time, if the French government remains Saint Petersburg's ally, then nothing can move in Europe.

François-René de Chateaubriand, 30 November 1828[1].

While it would be almost redundant to argue that the foreign policy of France is maverick and occasionally fascinating in its audacity, numerous scholars who have studied it agree that there has been a permanence of its strategic options shaped by its very long experience established throughout centuries and its responsibilities inherited from its history. Indeed, France has a keen sense of the past and a self-conscious awareness of being different[2]. Belonging to the West-

[1] Quoted in Anne Hogenhuis-Seliverstoff, *Une alliance franco-russe: la France, la Russie et l'Europe au tournant du siècle dernier,* (Brussels: Bruylant, 1997).

[2] See for instance, Charles Cogan, *French Negotiating Behavior: Dealing with* La Grande Nation (USIP Press, 2003); Robert Gildea, *France since 1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); John Keiger, "Foreign and Defense Policy", in Alistair Cole, Patrick Le Galès and Jonah Levy (eds.), *Developments in French Politics 3* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 138–153; Philip H. Gordon, *A Certain Idea of France. French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Hubert Védrine with Dominique Moïsi, *France in an Age of Globalization* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2001).

ern world, France claims, at the same time, the right to have a conflicting opinion even if it may be misapprehended by its partners within the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), particularly by some newcomers from Eastern Europe, who suspect France of balancing its interests with Moscow to their detriment, the most recent example being the sale of the state-of-the-art French warship (Mistral-type "*projection and command ships*") to Russia. For some countries, particularly the riparian ones, like Georgia, Poland and the Baltic countries, who have bitterly criticized the sale since they fear that such military equipment, might increase Russian capabilities to attack some countries in the Baltic or the Black Sea, it is definitely a litmus test of France's commitment to NATO cohesion. According to them, within the "western community", the responsibility of protecting each other – "one for all, and all for one" – demands comprehensive solidarity. The sale of the *Mistral* reflects obviously a dissonance in the attribution of the definition of being a member of a military alliance. Does being a member of NATO imply no more than fulfilling its explicit obligations (in a case of a *casus fœderis* the only obligation is to help the attacked country), or does it also require fulfilling the alleged implicit ones (not to increase by hook or crook the military potential of a third country which might use it against the other members of the alliance)? In a book that has become a classic of international relations, Robert Rothstein showed that the disposition of power within alliances was a matter of size. He points out that there are three characteristic ways that small states most often get involved with alliances: 1) bilateral alliance with a great power; 2) alliance with other small power states; 3) multilateral alliance with great powers and other small power states[3]. The Baltic States as small states

[3] Robert Rothstein, *Alliances and Small Powers* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1968), p. 244.

are inevitably disposed to express their suspicion toward medium powers, such as France. In addition to the issue of the dissonance, they have a perception of France as too frequently "anti-American" and capable of torpedoing Euro-Atlantic cohesion.

Through history by turns friend and foe, Russia has always been at the core of the French foreign policy. Now Russia is considered as being a strategic partner that is vital to its vision of not just a multilateral world, where decisions are shared, but a multipolar world, where power is shared[4]. Coincidence or not, 2010 is both the 'Year of Russia' in France and the 'Year of France' in Russia. Seen definitely as a difficult partner, France refused to allow Georgia to join NATO's Membership Action Plan (MAP) – a move that the Baltic States would have preferred –, but also provided offensive armament to Russia which could be used against them. The deal marks the first time since 1945 that Russia has bought a warship from a foreign power, made more significant by the fact that the supplier is a member of NATO. France also gave the impression of sitting on the fence: on behalf of the EU, French President Nicolas Sarkozy mediated a peace deal and, at the same time, he authorized the sale of an offensive armament to one of the two belligerents. Because of its 2008 war with Russia, Georgia has the most cause to feel uneasy about Russia's acquisition of an amphibious assault ship, all the more so since Russian admiral Vladimir Vysotsky said in November 2009 that if Russia had a Mistral-class assault ship, it would have taken 40 minutes to put troops onto Georgian shores from the Russian military base in Novorossisk, instead of 26 hours as happened during the 2008 conflict.

In our article, we shall try to analyze the ins and outs of this issue. We shall describe, at first, the technological and strategical aspects of the Mistral, considered as the

[4] Thomas Gomart, "France's Russia Policy: Balancing Interests and Values", *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 30, n°2, spring 2007, p. 147.

jewel of French naval know-how. We shall examine afterwards Franco-Russian relations. Indeed, grasping the issue of the sale of the Mistral without understanding the nature *per se* of the relations between Moscow and Paris would be impossible. Subsequently, we shall discuss the consequences of the sale among the partners of France. In spite of French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner's statement according to which '*we refuse to be prisoners of the past*' by considering Russia a hostile power[5], a significant number of countries, within NATO and among the candidates, who deem the opposite, have expressed their concerns. Last but not least, we shall analyze the French and the Russian perspectives. Why do these two countries, seemingly at all costs, want to conclude this deal whereas there is obviously a myriad of drawbacks for the two countries?

The Mistral, a 'Swiss army knife' ship for a modern Russian navy

Often compared to a "Swiss army knife", the BPC (*bâtiment de protection et de commandement*) *Mistral* has as its primary feature being extremely versatile in her functions and can be used for a variety of roles (helicopters, land forces, hospitals, refugees, etc.). Allowing, through her power projection missions, the deployment of landing craft and helicopters, she is optimized to stay close to crisis areas as part of amphibious operations, missions in times of crisis, airmobile operations or transport operations. Though wholly interoperable for NATO operations, she is not an offensive ship. Her design is largely comparable to a commercial ship – she is lightly armed and she has not all the features found in purpose-built warships. With a displacement of 21,500

[5] Nathalie Guibert, Natalie Nougayrède and Piotr Smolar, "Les vents contraires du Mistral", ["Mistral's Unfavorable Winds"], *Le Monde*, 26 January 2010.

tons at full load, the BPC is, after the *Charles de Gaulle*[6], *the largest vessel of the French Navy. Her huge flight deck (5,200 m2) allows the simultaneous dispatchment of six helicopters. The one in service in the French navy accommodates helicopters: 16 NH-90 (for transporting troops and equipment) and Tigers (for support of ground troops)*[7]*. She is however not only a helicopter carrier but well and truly an amphibious ship and a command post, joint and combined.*

Justified by "*the future needs of Russia who will have to carry out, in the next 20 to 30 years, the stable presence of her fleet in her close maritime zone as well as in the worldwide*

[6] The *Charles de Gaulle*, flagship of the French Navy, is the only serving French aircraft carrier.

[7] Besides, the helicopters "super heavy" as the American "Super Stallion" (35 tons) have even a dedicated spot.

ocean"[8], the purchase of the French mistral raises a number of questions. Indeed, why Russia needs such ship and above all why cannot it be built in Russia? A string of strategic reasons has so far been put forward. For instance, Deputy Defense Minister Vladimir Popovkin stated that one reason why Moscow wants to buy Mistral helicopter-carrying warships from France is because Russia has an unresolved territorial dispute with Japan[9]. At all events, if the Mistral contract succeeds, the ship should be moored in Sochi in order to have a capacity of projecting Russian power in the Caucasian region and on the Black Sea; it is very unlikely that she will sail in the Baltic Sea[10].

Russian naval forces are currently expanding with a significant number of industrial programs. Priority is given to the fleet of submarines and especially to the class SSBN "Borei" (Project 955)[11]. According to Vice-Admiral Vladimir Masorin, commander of the Russian Navy, "*over the next ten years, Russia will completely revamp its strategic naval forces*"[12]. Consequently, the purchase of the Mistral is made

[8] Ilia Kramnik, "Mistral: réflexions avant achat" ["Mistral: Thoughts before Purchase"], *RIA Novosti*, 1 March 2010.

[9] *Agence France-presse*, "General: Russia Needs French Ship for Pacific", 8 June 2010.

[10] There are four Russian fleets, equivalent to military districts in the ground army and air force: the Northern Fleet (HQ at Severomorsk), Baltic (HQ Kaliningrad), Pacific (HQ at Vladivostok) and Black Sea (HQ at Severomorsk). They all have the operational control of ships and units (including those of naval aviation, naval infantry and coastal defense) of their areas.

[11] Three SSBN "Project 955" Borei have already been placed on hold for delivery till 2011. Eight would be considered in total by 2015. The construction of "Severodvinsk" type "Project 885" (the building seeded a class that originally provided 6 units) is slowed down for some while that the submarine "Belgorod", which would replace "Kursk" was canceled in 2006. The surface fleet is modernized slowly with the arrival of new ships, multi-role medium or small tonnage as the Gepard, or Neutrashimy Steregushyi. Former Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov announced in 2006 that Russia would launch the construction of dozens of surface vessels including frigates, corvettes and auxiliary vessels. This confirms that the plan of arming 2007-15 which envisages the construction of 31 new ships by 2015. If the Mistral comes, it will join this huge panel.

[12] *Nezavissimaya Gazeta*, (military supplement), January 2008.

in a strategic context in which the Russian navy is modernizing; for instance, in 2009, the Russian army was able to lead a dozen operational patrols with nuclear submarine ballistic missiles (SSBN), suggesting that Russia is able to maintain round-the-clock an operational unit under the sea and, as a result, is ready to carry out a nuclear strike, for the first time since the collapse of the USSR. Nonetheless, the purchase of the French Mistral would, to a certain extent, demonstrate the weakness of the Russian naval industrial base. Moreover, Russia is aware of its industrial backwardness. It is not a secret that it buys armaments from foreigners, such as drones (UAVs) from Israelis, and that it recognizes that military industrial nationalism has limits. If the country wants to continue to be a regional geopolitical power, it has to open the armaments market to foreign companies. Mistral would be the first step in this regard.

Buying the French Mistral, Russia could kill two birds with one stone: getting modern armament which matches its naval strategy, and having the benefit of a (western) technology which could be very profitable for its own industry. Indeed, Russia is to buy four ships: one or two built in France and having the license for building two or three on its own soil[13]. Nonetheless, the stumbling block in the negotiations between the French and Russians is precisely the issue of the transfer of technology: the former want to

[13] Note that the context of the Russian naval industry is currently in turmoil. Thus, it was reported that the CEO of the *United Industrial Corporation* (OPK), Sergey Pugachev – he is also senator for the Siberian province of Tuva – was planning to sell to the Russian state his shareholdings in the shipbuilding sector. This unexpected announcement emerged after Fitch Ratings lowered its outlook for Mezhprombank (bank of Putin), in which Pugachev has an 81 % stake. OPK is ready to sell Severnaya Verf, Baltiysky Zavod and the Iceberg Central Design Office. Situated in Saint Petersburg, these assets are specialized respectively in the construction of surface naval vessels, civil ships and platforms for energy companies, as well as in the design of nuclear-powered icebreakers. It is known that at least two of the Mistral type projection and command vessels which the Russian navy wants to acquire from France are to be built at Severnaya Verf.

sell the ship stripped of military technology where as the latter demand an unabridged version of the ship. A source close to the matter stated that these "*direct negotiations between Paris and Moscow are on unarmed shells. Indeed, Moscow has always wanted to have the Mistral-class ships fully armed, and equipped with advanced electronics*"[14]. General Nikolai Makarov, the Chief of the Russian General Staff, stated: "*If we make a final decision on the Mistral, we will only acquire it fully equipped, with all its command and communications systems and its armaments. The only exception will be the helicopters: these will be our own. Everything else must to the full extent be made according to their* [French license] *standards*"[15].

Sarkozy-Putin: the incarnation of the 'new' Franco-Russian relationship

The fickleness with which Nicolas Sarkozy has dealt with the "Russian issue" during his political career reflects, to a certain extent, his opportunistic behavior. His political position has indeed dramatically changed: as Minister of Interior (May 2005–March 2007), he never missed an occasion to be extremely critical of Russia. In December 2006, at the occasion of a breakfast "Russia" organized at Place Beauvau[16] by Sarkozy, he invited to his table the fiercest opponents of the Kremlin in Paris. *"Sarkozy talks a very anti-Putin discourse"* stated one participant. *He said that if he entered the Élysée*(17) *he will invite Garry Kasparov* [chess champion cum opposition leader]. *And he speaks warmly of his friend "Misha Saakashvili" At that time, he had very*

[14] Private interview between the co-author (Kalika) and an industrial official during the 2010 Show of Eurosatory.
[15] *Interfax*, 25 March 2010.
[16] Metonym for the French Ministry of Interior.
[17] Metonym for the residence of the President.

strong beliefs" summed up his strategic adviser, Pierre Lellouche[18]. Admittedly, at that time, Sarkozy, as a candidate in the presidential election, thought that a tough stand against Putin would be politically attractive. He was highly critical of the war in Chechnya, gaining the support of intellectuals such as André Glucksmann well-known for his opposition to Putin's policies. Sarkozy's Atlantist perspective began to concern Russian officials who did not hide the preference of the Kremlin for the "real" gaullist Dominique de Villepin, Chirac's protégé. When he was elected, Putin waited several days before congratulating Sarkozy. Thumbing his nose at Putin, Sarkozy invited Saakashvili as the first head of state to be hosted at the Élysée.

Nonetheless, Sarkozy's approach to Russia changed radically[19]. Following the example of all the Presidents of the 5th Republic[20], Sarkozy, "*Sarko le Russe*" according to journalist Vincent Jauvert[21], sought to establish a personal relationship with the Kremlin: *"Immediately*, said a Russian official, *Sarkozy's team conveyed an understanding that he wanted to maintain the same cooperation as under Chirac*"[22]. This was facilitated by the new president's diplomatic team, members of which evinced a pro-Russian orientation. For instance, the President's diplomatic advisor and Sherpa Jean-David Levitte (nicknamed within the Quai d'Orsay the "diplomator" for his exceptional diplomatic talents)[23], maintained a close and warm relationship with

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[18] Phrase recorded by one of the co-authors (Kalika).

[19] He was the first Western official to congratulate Russia for having organized democratic elections in December 2007 (sic!).

[20] The 5th Republic, put in place by De Gaulle in 1958, is a parliamentary regime with a strong presidential predominance. In the field of foreign policy and defence, the French President has some enormous powers (so-called "*Domaine reservé*").

[21] Vincent Jauvert, "Sarko le Russe" ["Sarko, the Russian"], *Le Nouvel Observateur*, n° 2297, 13 November 2008.

[22] Personal discussion between the co-author (Kalika) and a Russian government source.

[23] His father was Russian.

Prikhodko, Putin's Sherpa (and now Medvedev's). Additionally, Matignon (the prime minister's office) is led by supporters of a close relationship with Moscow, foremost among them the Prime Minister François Fillon himself (he was the first Western leader to publicly justify the refusal of Georgian and Ukrainan MAP applications[24]). In short, everything was in place for a new engagement between France and Russia. It was therefore in the context of a warm political rapprochement that the issue of the Mistral came up. The head of the Russian naval high command, Admiral Vysotsky provoked surprise when he raised the subject with representatives of the companies DCNS and Thales at the Euronaval trade fair in autumn 2008. Since then, it has been with his deputy, Admiral Borisov, that the French defence ministry's general arms delegation (*Délégation générale pour l'Armement*) and, in addition, with the naval shipbuilder DCNS, have been in contact.

Though the success of the contract depends on unpredictable factors: if the Russian navy is the main lobby for the Mistral, some people, in the presidential administration, are clearly against. Nothing is granted, especially if one considers the usual fickleness of Russia. The deal was quasi definite until the summer of 2010, when the Russians stated in August that an international call for tender would be launched to all market participants[25]. This turn of events may have a number of reasons. It could be the result of a power struggle between those in favor of the

[24] "François Fillon annonce que la France est opposée à l'entrée de la Géorgie et de l'Ukraine dans l'OTAN" ["François Fillon States that France is Against the Membership of Georgia and Ukraine to NATO"], *Le Monde*, 1 April 2008.

[25] "La Russie lance un appel d'offres international pour deux navires de guerre de type Mistral" ["Russia Launches an International Call of Tender for Two Class Mistral Warships"], *Le Monde*, 20 August 2010. Note that only few states have the know-how to realize this kind of ship: the United States, France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, South Korea, Italy and credibly Spain. But only the United States and France make an operational usage with a validated experience especially against piracy.

French option and those against[26], among them, deputy prime minister Igor Sechin. Responsible for industry, he oversees OSK, the public holding company which includes the leading Russian shipyards –, he is not known as a convinced partisan of the purchase of the French Mistral. Sechin, who represents the views of the most conservative elements in the Russian military-industrial complex, would prefer OSK (associated to a South-Korean company) to build the helicopter carriers itself rather than resort to Western purchases. The most likely reason is that Russia wants to pressure France on the issue of the electronic operating systems of the Mistral.

During the beginning of September 2010, Russian Minister of Defence, Anatoli Serdioukov and the Minister of the Foreign Affairs, Sergei Lavrov, made a trip to Paris to reinforce cooperation. According to an adviser of Serdioukov, he confirmed that the Mistral was going to continue to be the object of negotiation. France and Russia ought to be reaching a concrete agreement following the Euronaval Show in Paris in October 2010. Even if the French do not want to count their chickens before they have hatched – it is always difficult to trust the Kremlin, especially when the military and major financial commitment are in play – they are confident to seal the deal before the end of the year.

[26] According to Russian business daily *Kommersant*, it was the holding company of Russian shipyards OSK, who obtained from the Ministry of Defence to launch a tender. The tender means, if *Kommersant* is right, that the Defense Ministry rejected the idea of buying unopposed French ship Mistral (approximate price in France – € 340–420 million) and will consider proposals for its analogs, including shipyards, as South Korean (Promise to build a ship for $ 500–700 million according to a journalist of *Vedomosti*). See *Agence France-Presse*, "Putin Lieutenant Put In Charge Of Mistral Deal: Report", 2 July 2010.

The critical reactions of France's allies

The potential sale has raised hackles among French allies. Considered as a predator and an openly revisionist power by a significant number of countries – both within and outside NATO –, Russia has lately shown an increasing hostility towards NATO, achieving its peak when it published its new doctrine according to which *inter alia* the Atlantic Alliance was considered as the main danger for the country[27]. In that context, France behaves as a malcontent. As a result, some US Congressmen have raised concerns with France over the possible purchase. They introduced in December 2009 calls to the US President and the Secretaries of State and Defense to urge France, other NATO member states, and the EU not to sell offensive military arms to Russia until it has withdrawn its troops from Georgia and revoked its recognition of Georgia's breakaway regions; withdrawn its military forces from the Transnistrian region of Moldova; halted sales of materials usable in the construction of weapons of mass destruction to state sponsors of terrorism; and made progress in respecting the rule of law and human rights[28].

Former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich believed the sale of the *Mistral* to Russia

> *is a very sobering development with potentially destabilizing effects for both the region and within the NATO alliance itself (…) Russian ownership of a Mistral class warship would place our allies and friends, including Georgia, under increased threat; a fact seemingly*

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[27] Marie Jégo, "La nouvelle doctrine russe de défense place l'OTAN en tête des menaces", ["The New Russian Doctrine of Defence Ranks NATO at the Top of Threats"], *Le Monde*, 10 February 2002.

[28] HRES 982 IH, 111th Congress, 1st Session, *Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that France and other member states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union should decline to sell major weapons systems or offensive military equipment to the Russian Federation. In the House of Representatives*, 16 December 2009 [http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c111:H.RES.982:]

of little significance to the French, despite Russia's continued failure to comply with the Russian-Georgian cease fire agreement, an accord the French helped negotiate[29].

Among the countries who have expressed their concerns over the purchase by Russia of the French Mistral, the Baltic States have not hesitated to highlight the fact that the appearance of Russian Mistral-class vessels in the Baltic Sea would change the "balance of power" in the region and lead to countermeasures. According to the Estonian diplomat Harri Tiido, Baltic nations believed the sale of the Mistrals would undermine their security. "*Definitely, it would not add to the security of the region. And I think the nations around the Baltic Sea in that case might have to see what they have to do to change their defense planning*"[30]. During an informal EU defence ministers, Latvia and Lithuania highlighted the fact that the sale might be contrary to the spirit of the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Sales[31]. They argued that it would contravene criteria prohibiting sales that might be used in external aggression. At all events, "*EU member states should consult among themselves on issues that might compromise the security of other member states before clinching strategic and military deals*". The sale of such ships by a member of the EU and NATO showed that it was time for the two organizations "*to formulate a more clear and firm policy on rules for military export con-*

[29] Quoted in *Historic French-Russian Arms Deal Causes Alarm, Debate, Implications of France's Impending Warship Sale to Russia*, United States Naval Institute, 10 February 2010. [http://www.usni.org/news-and-features/historic-french-russian-arms-deal-causes-alarm-debate.asp].

[30] Ahto Lobjakas, "French-Russian warship deal making waves among NATO allies", *RFE/RL*, 10 February 2010.

[31] The EU Common Rules aim to harmonize EU member states arms export policies in line with agreed minimum standards by setting out agreed criteria for states to apply when considering applications for arms sales and creating consultation mechanism. Nonetheless, as the interpretation of the criteria is completely in the hands of member states, the French decision is not likely to be adjudicated.

trol. There are no clear rules now"[32]. Additionally, France contradicts the common position 2008/944/CFSP defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment: the country is moving forward on plans to sell a massive warship to Russia whereas the European document specifies clearly that European states have to consider several criteria before exporting their arms[33]. The sale of the Mistral seems to contravene the criteria 4 ("*Preservation of regional peace, security and stability*"), 5 ("*National security of the Member States and of territories whose external relations are the responsibility of a Member State, as well as that of friendly and allied countries*") and 6 ("*Behavior of the buyer country with regard to the international community, as regards in particular its attitude to terrorism, the nature of its alliances and respect for international law*").

The French secretary of State for European affairs Pierre Lellouche made a whistle-stop tour of the Baltic States in February 2010 in order to allay their fears[34]. In spite of his arguments that the ship will be sold stripped of military technology and Russia should not be considered as a threat – the Baltic capitals were not relieved. At a pinch, if one can accept the French arguments about the nature and equipment of the ship (the ship which is to be sold is not offensive and has no military equipment), the French perspective, regarding the necessity for Western countries to consider Russia as a strategic partner, is viewed in Baltic capitals as

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[32] Andrew Rettman, "Latvia and Lithuania call for tighter EU rules on arms sales", *euobserver.com*, 25 February 2010. [http://euobserver.com/13/29559].

[33] Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP of 8 December 2008 defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment. [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:335:0099:01:EN:HTML].

[34] Piotr Smolar, "Paris tente de rassurer ses alliés inquiets de la vente du Mistral aux Russes", ["Paris Tries to Reassure Its Allies Concerned Over the Sale of the Mistral to Russians"], *Le Monde*, 28 February 2010.

naïve[35]. And yet, one may argue that this sale, to a certain extent, takes the shape of a confidence-building measure. Lithuania's defense minister Rasa Jukneviciene said that a decision by a NATO member (France) to sell Russia a top-of-the-range warship demonstrates that the alliance was not a threat to Moscow: "*The decision to export advanced offensive military equipment to Russia demonstrates a particular trust between France and Russia. I advise Russia to also trust NATO and not to view the North Atlantic alliance as a threat to its national security*"[36]. As a matter of fact, the main problem of the sale of the *Mistral* is above all the risk of opening Pandora's Box: if the French sell a ship – without regard to her potential danger to some NATO members – the risk is that, in the near future, another country citing the sale of the Mistral as a "test case" will feel free to sell to Russia more offensive armaments, with a similar disregard for the security of Russia's neighbors.

The French and Russian perspectives

For significant commentators on European security, France seems to be at the crossroads of a paradox. On the one hand, France recently rejoined NATO's military command structure after an absence of 43 years. Additionally, acting as EU president and championing European security, it negotiated the August 2008 war's cease-fire (the terms of which Russia has only partially honored),[37]. On the other hand, providing warships to Russia, France jeopardizes Western solidarity. But is it really a contradiction? Indeed, being in

[35] Though the French were responsible for the police of the sky of the three Baltic States from January to April 2010.

[36] Quoted in "Lithuania: Defense minister calls on Russia to trust NATO", *RIA Novosti*, 9 March 2010. (http://en.rian.ru/russia/20100209/157826088.html).

[37] The French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner said that only French intervention prevented Russia from capturing Tbilisi.

favor of a strong participation in European security does leads to the necessity to treat Russia as a 'normal' partner. If Russia is not a foe, nothing should forbid the sale of a ship which will not significantly change the strategic balance in Europe. For France, there is also a strong economic dimension in the deal with Russia. Firstly, at *Saint Nazaire* (the former *Chantiers de l'Atlantique*, now partly state-owned), the sale of just one Mistral-class ship would save "*approximately one thousand jobs for two years*". One more ship of this class is due for delivery to the French navy by June 2011, whereupon the shipyard has no further orders[38]. Secondly, fearing that Germany's activism towards Russia will leave it behind, France has firmly started to cultivate its own commercial relationships. Beside the Mistral – France has a comparative advantage over Germany in the arms trade –, there are joint ventures in train manufacturing and a share of the Nord Stream pipeline to the French company GDF Suez.

As regards Russia, experts point out that it is seeking to buy the Mistral in order to address some of its naval weaknesses exposed by the Georgian campaign. This purchase takes place in the framework of a substantial modernization of its army, its military-industrial complex being largely obsolete. Nonetheless, in purely economic terms one can question the choice of the French option compared with other options which may have a competitive edge over the Mistral, like the Spanish *Buque de Proyeccion Estrategica* (BPE), which are cheaper and bigger. However, Moscow has always viewed France as a crucial "strategic" partner in Europe – when France rejoined the integrated structures of NATO, Russia was pleased, perceiving it as an excellent means for hindering the development of the Atlantic Alliance.

[38] Nathalie Guibert, Natalie Nougayrède and Piotr Smolar, "Les vents contraires du Mistral", ["Mistral's Unfavorable Winds"], *Le Monde*, 26 January 2010.

It would be a short step for arguing that France's new-found desire for better relations with Moscow is comparable with the 1892 Franco-Russian Alliance. Nonetheless, the context of the two epochs is quite different. In 1892, the aim of France was to end its diplomatic isolation and to undermine the power of Germany, whereas, in 2010, France, a member of both the EU and NATO, seeks to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds: while pleading for cohesion within the two main political European organizations, it wants to make of Russia a special partner, despite the serious reservations about this by other members of the two organizations.

Two perspectives emerge from the issue of the sale of the French Mistral to Russia. The first one is a more or less *senso stricto* interpretation of the meaning of being a member of an alliance. France is a sovereign country within an alliance and as such it can do whatever it wants as long as it respects its legal commitments. Nothing *a priori* forbids France to sell an armament to a country whatever it may be. The second one is rather a *senso lato* understanding: even though nothing requires a member country of an alliance to take into account the interest of another member of the alliance, solidarity must prevail. After all, the defining feature of any alliance being a commitment for mutual military support against some external actor(s) in some specified set of circumstances, if one of member of the alliance grants some military tools to a potentially hostile third country, it tacitly contravenes its obligations. These two positions reflect what Bruno Tertrais called the concept of alliance as a source of strategic misunderstanding[39]. Increasingly more ambiguous, the notion of an alliance, especially in the case of NATO, is not understood and interpreted similarly by all member countries.

[39] Bruno Tertrais, "The Changing Nature of Military Alliances", *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 27, n°2 (2004), pp. 135–147.

In a penetrating article published in the early 1990s, John Mearsheimer predicted that after the Cold War, Europe would go "back to the future". He claimed that American disengagement from the European continent would inevitably lead to regional competition and, eventually, war[40]. If his prediction has not come true, his thesis on the issue of the strategic rivalry between European states remains extremely relevant. It is indeed in a context of competition of powers that one has to comprehend the issue of the Mistral. There is a struggle of influence between major European countries (chiefly France, Germany and Great Britain) and small states such as Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and even Georgia, can be collateral victims. Playing in the big league, the Baltic States and all the riparian states near Russia are becoming aware that their perception of a homogeneous Europe acting in line with their own interests was very far from the reality.

[40] John Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War", *International Security*, vol. 15, n°1, 1990, pp. 6–54.

Estonia's development cooperation from a civil society perspective

Evelin Andrespok

Ten years ago world leaders confirmed that peace, prosperity and justice have not been attained globally and recognized that there is a need for greater global solidarity. In order to make globalisation a positive force for all nations and people, the Millennium Declaration was signed at the United Nations (UN) with the primary purpose of guaranteeing peace, stability and decent living conditions for everyone. As a member of the global community, Estonia also pledged to work towards reducing global poverty. To realize this commitment, a national strategy for development cooperation and humanitarian aid was developed by ministries, civil society organisations and other interested parties and adopted in 2006. Since then, Estonia's development policy has been guided by the priorities set in the plan.

The year 2010 marks the end of the first implementation period of the strategy, and is an appropriate time for evaluating the progress made during the last five years. This article will offer the civil society perspective on the successes and shortcomings of implementing the plan. The first part will give an overview of where and how Estonia has been doing development work and the second part will discuss the quality of the development activities.

The article is based on the annual report "Commitment to Care, Responsibility for Accountability: Civil So-

ciety's Evaluation of Estonia's Development Cooperation in 2008–2009"[1] written by the Estonian Roundtable for Development Cooperation (AKÜ)[2], which analyses the implementation of the above-mentioned national strategy. The statistical figures are gathered from the strategy's implementation report by the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the report presented to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC). Civil society's recommendations reflect the opinion of the members of AKÜ and are in line with the positions of the European Confederation for Relief and Development, CONCORD.

Legislative framework of Estonia's development cooperation

Estonia has been a donor of development assistance since 1998 when the parliament first dedicated funds from the state budget for development cooperation and humanitarian aid. The first €352 000 were spent on projects in the Czech Republic, Poland, Russia, Ukraine, the UN and the International Committee of the Red Cross[3]. The main motivator for starting development programmes was the ongoing negotiation for joining the European Union (EU), which requires all of its members to dedicate a portion of their wealth for assisting less developed countries. In the following years, legal foundations for development coop-

[1] Published in September 2010. Available at http://www.terveilm.net/?id=269.

[2] An independent not-for-profit coalition of 14 Estonian non-governmental organisations that work in the field of development cooperation or have expressed interest towards the topic. Its main areas of work are Estonian and European development policy, global education and financing for development. AKÜ is a member of the Network of Estonian Non-profit Organisation and the European Confederation for Relief and Development, CONCORD. www.terveilm.net

[3] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia (1999), "Estonia's Humanitarian Aid and Development Cooperation Projects in 1998." http://www.vm.ee/est/kat_425/3220.html.

eration were established by the *Riigikogu* when it adopted the Development Cooperation Principles for 1999–2000, which was updated in 2003[4]. Among other changes, the 2003 decision stated that instead of financing development projects directly through the parliament, the money for development assistance would be allocated through the MFA budget. It also required that the quantity of Estonia's development financing would grow in proportion with the country's economic development and international principles.

In the Estonian Foreign Policy Yearbook 2006, Riina Kuusik wrote that despite having finally joined the EU and NATO and establishing the above-mentioned guiding principles for development work, Estonia still did not have an official long-term strategy for development cooperation and that there was a lack of open and constructive debate on the topic[5]. However, this situation changed in May 2006 when the government after long discussions with various stakeholders adopted the Development Plan of Estonian Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid 2006–2010. The document identified six priority sectors of Estonia's development assistance: supporting human development, guaranteeing peace, democracy and human rights, supporting economic development through market liberalisation efforts, encouraging environmentally sustainable behaviour, improving aid effectiveness by focusing bilateral aid on a few priority partners (Afghanistan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine) and increasing public awareness of and support to development cooperation[6]. The new strategic plan fur-

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[4] Riigikogu (Estonian Parliament) (2003), "Principles of Estonian Development Co-operation" http://www.vm.ee/?q=en/node/8323.

[5] R. Kuusik, (2006), "Estonia's Development Cooperation: Power, Prestige and Practice of a New Donor." *Estonian Foreign Policy Yearbook 2006*. Tallinn: Estonian Foreign Policy Institute, p. 51.

[6] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia (2006), "Development Plan of Estonian Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid 2006–2010." http://web-static.vm.ee/static/failid/344/Development_plan_2006-2010.pdf

ther set out that by 2010 Estonia will spend 0,17% of its gross-national income (GNI) on development assistance as the EU Council of Ministers' decision from 25 May 2005 prescribes[7].

Financing for development

On the whole, the strategic plan has been essential in focusing Estonia's aid and making it more coherent across sectors, but one of its greatest weaknesses is that it does not have the power of law. This has allowed the government to divert from the set goals without any means to hold it responsible for doing so. For example, there is no real obligation for the government to stick to its aid quantity promises, which has meant that aid financing is subject to the fluctuations of domestic politics. Naturally, development assistance alone is not sufficient to eliminate poverty and reach the MDGs, but is has been proven to make notable contributions to these efforts – evidence for this ranges from the tens of millions of extra children in schools in Sub-Saharan Africa to improved health care conditions in many regions of the world[8]. As Estonia's economy is relatively small compared to its European counterparts and it is crucial that each Euro would be spent effectively and towards the achievement of set goals. The following section will examine how Estonia finances its development cooperation activities and where the money is spent.

As mentioned above, Estonia has agreed to spend 0,33% of its GNI on development assistance by 2015. From the €352 000 in 1998, Estonia increased its aid volumes to €15,5 million by 2008 (0,10% of GNI). However, due to

[7] Estonia later reduced this goal to 0,10% by 2010, but the final goal remains 0,33% by 2015 as agreed in the Council.

[8] CONCORD (2009), "Lighten the Load: In a Time of Crisis, European Aid Has Never Been More Important". Brussels: CONCORD AidWatch. p. 2.

the financial crisis of the last years, the aid in real terms was cut to €13,4 million in 2009 (0,11% of GNI). Evidence indicates that 2010 aid figures will not show increases, which gives grounds to believe that fulfilling the 0,33% promise has become unrealistic unless serious changes are made in Estonian aid policy on the highest political level.

The lack of political will to deal with development issues was further proven by the fact that the majority of the cuts to the MFA's budget were from the resources allocated to development cooperation and humanitarian aid[9]. Civil society organisations have been highly critical of such cuts in aid financing. The financial crisis significantly raised commodity prices in the developing countries and decreased their export volumes, making the survival of the most vulnerable more difficult than ever, while these countries had a marginal role in bringing about the crisis[10]. Understandably, each government is first and foremost responsible for guaranteeing the well-being of their own citizens, but the civil society organisations believe that those obligations cannot outweigh the need to honour international commitments. This would be detrimental to Estonia's credibility as a trustworthy global partner.

Looking at the cost distribution in more detail, we see that out of all money spent for official development assistance (ODA), nearly a fifth is used for humanitarian aid (€2,3 million in 2009) and the rest for bi- and multilateral development initiatives. Multilateral aid constitutes 80% of Estonia's development spending, amounting to almost €11 million in 2009. By far the largest channel for Estonian aid money is the EU, which received 70% of all ODA and 87% of all multilateral assistance in 2009. Similar trends appear

[9] Ministry of Finance (2009). "Memorandum on the Second Supplementary State Budget for 2009. " p. 72 http://www.fin.ee/doc.php?99133.

[10] CONCORD (2009). p. 4.

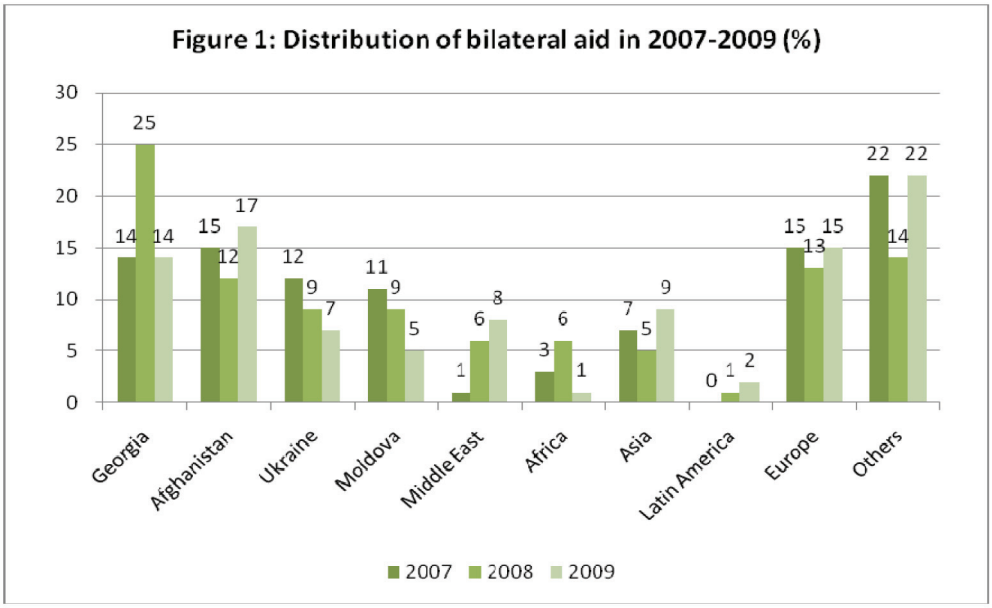
in all newer EU member states[11] that have become aid donors only recently and have limited experiences, resources and contacts for increasing the share of bilateral activities. The older EU member states spend a considerably smaller portion of their development assistance multilaterally and among OECD-DAC members it constitutes approximately a third of all aid spending[12]. Even though the reliance on multilateral partners can be justified by the need to more effectively coordinate development activities among the numerous donors, there still remains a point for Estonia to evaluate the effectiveness of the current balance of bi- and multilateral aid spending.

Bilateral aid is a smaller, yet much more politicised part of Estonia's development cooperation. The strategic plan for Estonia's development cooperation identifies Afghanistan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine as the priority partners for its bilateral development assistance, but analysis of the distribution of aid between recipients over the past three years demonstrates that Estonia's aid is often more influenced by daily politics than the strategy. For example, after the 2008 war between Russia and Georgia, Estonia significantly increased its development assistance to Georgia and gave a notable amount of humanitarian aid (see Figure 1). One can also observe the increases of development activities in Afghanistan in 2009 when both the Estonians and the international community at large started expressing discontent with military actions there. While the general support for participation in international military missions has been quite high, public support for participation in the Afghanistan mission has never been very strong: compared to May 2008, support to the Afghanistan mission decreased by a third (to 30%) and the number of people opposing the

[11] OECD (2009), "2008 DAC Report on Multilateral Aid." p. 31 http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/59/11/42901553.pdf.

[12] *Ibid*., p. 11.

mission increased by a fifth (to 58%) by January 2009[13]. The critical attitudes forced the ministers of defence and foreign affairs to stress the importance of civil cooperation with Afghanistan and Estonia's role in improving the quality of life in one of the poorest countries in the world. During that year, Estonia sent a medical expert to work along with its special mission to Afghanistan in order to improve the health care situation in the Laskhar Gah region. Additionally, several other health care-related projects were implemented in Afghanistan – mostly by NGO Mondo.



Another criticism by several Estonian civil society organisations has been the unwillingness of the country to allocate the largest part of ODA to the least developed regions, primary Sub-Saharan Africa. In 2009, Estonia spent merely 1% of its bilateral aid on African countries. The MFA has

[13] Ministry of Defence (2010), "Public Opinion and National Defence: January 2010. " Tallinn: Turu-uuringute AS. p. 19 http://www.kmin.ee/files/kmin/nodes/9080_2010_01_Kaitseministeerium.pdf.

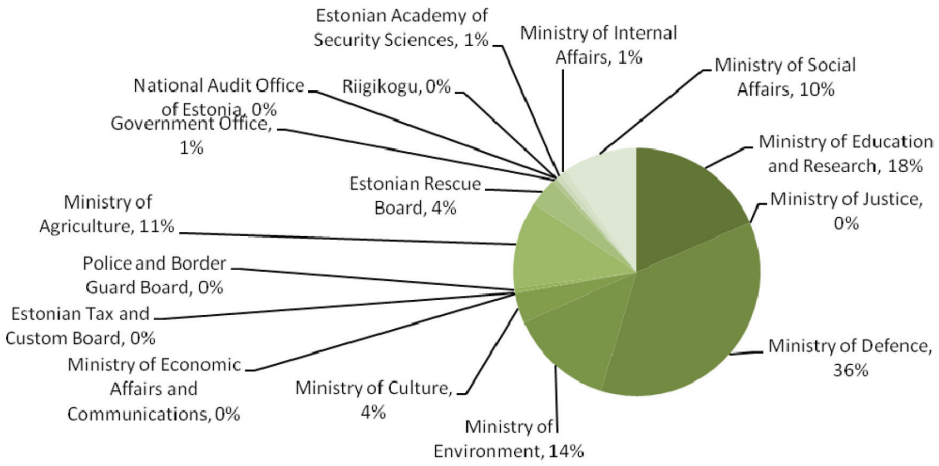
responded to this by pointing out that Estonia supports the poorest countries in Africa through multilateral means as there is not enough expertise and experiences in cooperation with African countries to offer meaningful added value to their development via bilateral means. Five years ago when the strategy for development cooperation was written, it was indeed a fact that both the public and the civil society sector had very limited knowledge of the region. Today, however, there are a number of civil society organisations that have reliable partnerships with organisations from the global South and there is considerable number of entrepreneurial people with personal experiences of living and working in the region. It has been proposed that for the next implementation period of the strategy a flexible mechanism be established that would enable (civil society) actors to carry out development activities in the least developed countries.

The most active contributors to Estonia's development cooperation activities are obviously the Ministry of Finance, who is responsible for making money transfers to the EU and to the World Bank's International Development Association, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who is in charge of managing funds allocated from the national budget for the development cooperation and humanitarian aid. The Ministry of Defence has also been outstandingly active in implementing development projects and somewhat smaller contributions come from the Ministries of Education and Research, Environment, Agriculture and Social Affairs (see Figure 2[14]). Other public institutions' role in financing development activities has been marginal. On the one hand, this distribution is quite logical considering the priority sectors of Estonia's development cooperation like democracy

[14] For clarity, the figure shows the share of contributions after spending by the ministries of finance and foreign affairs (which contribute 72% and 24% of all ODA respectively) is excluded.

and security or environmental sustainability. On the other hand, the activeness of the Ministry of Defence indicates that development cooperation often serves other political objectives than one might expect and is not guided by the primary purpose of eliminating poverty.

Figure 2: Financing of development cooperation in 2009



Based on the information above, the civil society organisations have come to a firm belief that despite many significant improvements over the first implementation period of the strategy, there is a need for fundamental changes in the political attitude towards aid financing. Estonia has made concrete international pledges that ought to be honoured. The most effective way to achieve this is to adopt a legally binding year on year timetable indicating how Estonia will meet the aid target of 0,33% by 2015. This table should specify where the resources will come from and which enforcement mechanisms will be used to guarantee the required growth. Such a table can easily be included in the Estonian development cooperation and humanitarian aid strategy for 2011–2015, which is currently being devel-

oped. In order to reach the promised levels of aid quantity, all ministries have to increase their development activities, which is likely the greatest challenge in this process. The low involvement of many state institutions in development activities has been a problem through-out the years and this can only be changed by making a strong political decision that development cooperation is a relevant horizontal topic in Estonian foreign policy.

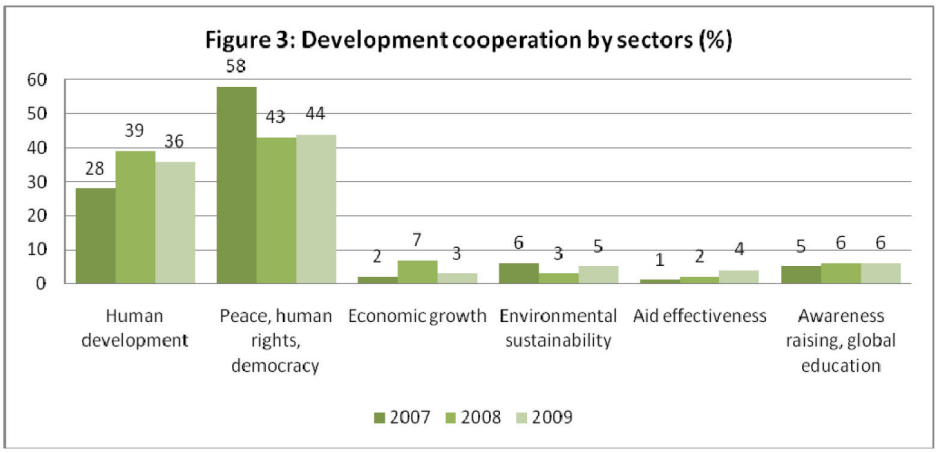
Achievement of sectoral goals

The national strategy set poverty reduction and contribution to the achievement of the MDGs as the highest priority of Estonia's development policy. It further outlined six priority sectors and 11 concrete measures for achieving the desired goals. The following part of the article will examine how successful Estonia has been in reaching the set objectives.

The first priority sector for Estonia's development work is supporting human development, which is expected to be achieved by improving access to education, raising the quality of education, and improving the situation of children and women living in poverty. This sector received more than a third of all development assistance given by Estonia in 2009, which is almost a tenth more than two years earlier (see Figure 3)[15]. Most of the education-related assistance was given to Georgia for advancing their vocational training system, improving computer facilities in schools and buying textbooks, but also for scholarships to young diplomats and government officials and youth workers in exchange pro-

[15] Figure 3 excludes spending on measure 9, which constitutes mostly of payments to the EU and other intergovernmental organisations, and measure 10, which constitutes of administrative costs of the MFA. These measures do not demonstrate Estonia's contributions to individual projects and would unnecessarily distort the results of this analysis. Figure 4 excludes only spending on measure 9.

grammes. Smaller project were implemented in other countries. All together, the support for educational activities has amounted to about a fifth of all development cooperation over the last few years. The support to women and children living in poverty has increased considerably raising from 4% in 2007 to 14% in 2009 (see Figure 4). Most of this growth was achieved by sending a medical expert to Afghanistan and supporting other initiatives of strengthening the health care system in the Helmand province. All together, support to Afghanistan made up two thirds of finances allocated for women and children in the poorest countries; the rest of the resources were distributed between Georgia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and intergovernmental organisations.

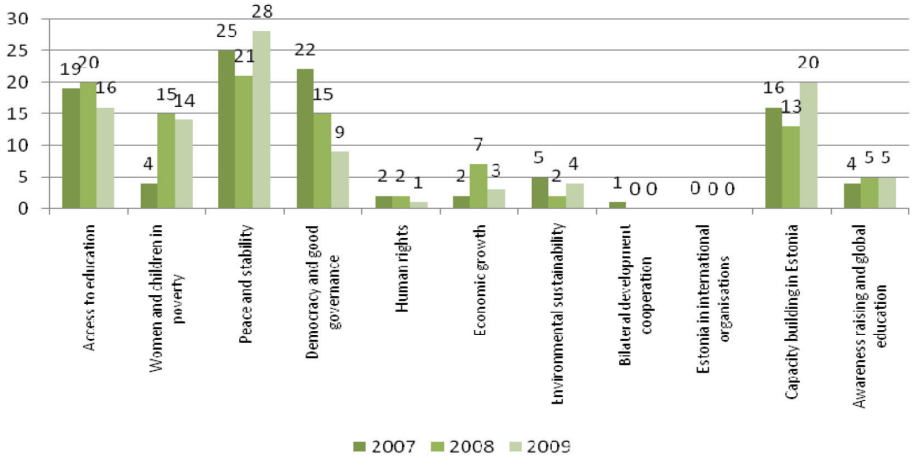


The second priority sector is supporting peace, human rights and democracy in developing countries by sharing expertise and supporting various thematic initiatives in partner countries. During the first implementation period of the strategic plan, this has been the most preferred sector for development actors in Estonia, even though its share declined from 58% in 2007 to 44% in 2009. Activities promoting peace and stability have been allocated approximately a quarter of all ODA over the last three years, but the support

for building democracy and establishing practices of good governance has decreased from 22% in 2007 to only 9% in 2009. Based on the currently available information, it is impossible to conclude what is the reason for this decline or what this money has been used for instead, but considering the relative stability in financing of most other measures, it is likely to indicate a shift to dealing more with the human development issues under the first priority sector.

Under the second sector, the least financed measure is safeguarding human rights (particularly of the indigenous peoples) in developing countries, which has constantly received a marginal 1–2% of all ODA. Most of this expenditure is made up of payments to various UN foundations dedicated to improving the welfare of indigenous peoples. For two years, Estonian civil society organisations have been arguing that as human rights are fundamental prerequisites for sustainable development, this measure should be prioritised higher and receive significantly more financial support. Opening up this measure to bilateral activities by various actors, including the civil society, has been proposed as a potential way to improve the human rights situation in developing countries.

Figure 4: Development cooperation by measures (%)



The third important sector is supporting economic development of partner countries, particularly through the liberalisation of the international trade system. The results are expected to come through preparing, funding and implementing bilateral projects for reforming institutions in developing countries, supporting their accession to the World Trade Organisation and supporting multilateral organisations that work on liberalising global trade policies, curbing of various subsidies and reducing customs restrictions that are currently preventing developing countries to rightfully participate in the global economy. While a recent survey conducted among the opinion leaders and people interested in development issues in Estonia suggests that the mentioned issues are considered to be the most critical in achieving international development[16], Estonia has spent only an average of 4% of all development assistance towards their achievement over the last three years. Even though one might expect the Ministry of Economy and Communications and the Ministry of Finance to be one of the biggest contributors to developing economies of Estonia's strategic partners, the data from the last three years shows that the vast majority of such activities are actually financed by the MFA. Civil society organisations have been arguing that the lessons from Estonia's economic development ought to be shared by those with relevant institutional memory. In addition to the mentioned two institutions, the private sector could also take a greater initiative as in other donor countries, but either the poor communication of such available opportunities, little financial motivation for the entrepreneurs, lack of partners in the recipient countries or other obstacles have prevented that from happening. Private sector-civil society partnerships could be another tool

[16] AKÜ (May 2010). Survey for the project "Baltic State Channelling Information for Development". Tartu: Research Centre Klaster. http://www.terveilm.net/uploads/files/Baltic_FocusGroup_EST_Summary.pdf.

for implementing development projects under this or other measures of the strategy paper.

The fourth priority outlined in the strategy is supporting environmentally sustainable development, which similarly to the economic growth objective received less than 5% of all development assistance. The majority of these funds were given to multilateral organisations and during the last two years only three bilateral projects were implemented. This trend has raised many concerns, because environmental issues have been at the heart of many international discussions in both the EU and the UN during that time period and it has been widely agreed that all countries of the world have a common responsibility for guaranteeing environmentally just living conditions for all peoples.

It is worth nothing that civil society organisations have also been relatively passive in taking the initiative to implement environment-related projects. The main reasons for this have for long been their limited knowledge of and capacity to do this type of work as well as the ambiguity of the process of applying for funding[17]. Yet another explanation for the passivity is that the strategy limits the projects to the areas of water management and forestry, which is not flexible enough to follow the changing priorities and the available human resources of the organisations working on environmental issues. The organisations further point out their lack of connections to the organisations in the developing countries and limited knowledge of the partner countries' actual situation. Therefore, it seems to be reasonable for this sector and the specific measures for its achievement to be re-evaluated and discussed before finalising the changes in the strategy for the next implementation period.

[17] AKÜ (2009), "From Aid Recipient to Ambassador for Democracy: Civil Society's Evaluation of Estonia's development cooperation in 2007. p. 11, 13 http://www.terveilm.net/files/316_analyys2007.pdf.

The fifth sectoral priority focuses on aid effectiveness and is primarily designed for strengthening partnerships with the priority partners, representing Estonia in international organisations working towards achieving global development goals and increasing the capacity of Estonian public and civil society sectors to participate in development activities. This sector has received more financing year by year, reaching 4% by 2009[18]. The main source of growth is the addition of institutional support to civil society organisations that are important partners of the public sector in implementing the strategy. Currently, the Estonian Roundtable for Development Cooperation, the e-Governance Academy and the Estonian NATO Association receive this funding. As the budget support has proven to significantly stabilize the financial situation and security of the receiving organisations as well as allowing for longer-term planning, there is strong sentiment among the most active non-governmental development organisations that such opportunities should be extended to more organisations. Today there are no clear regulations that would outline how institutional support is offered to organisations and establishing these principles is generally seen to extend well beyond development policy into the more broad discussions over encouraging civil society in Estonia.

From a pragmatic as well as political perspective the greatest shortcoming of reaching the aid effectiveness goals is not its small financing compared to other measures, but that over the last five years Estonia has not signed bilateral partnership agreements with its priority partners. This requirement was established in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005[19], which Estonia has committed

[18] This excludes membership fees of international organisations, because it is not possible to identify their concrete impact on improving aid effectiveness.

[19] OECD (2005), "Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness." Endorsed 2 March 2005. ch. II http://www.terveilm.net/files/410_OECD_Pariis_AAA.pdf.

itself to. These agreements should be based on the partner countries' national development strategies, institutions and procedures and be in line with a common internationally streamlined framework of development cooperation[20]. These bilateral agreements would considerably simplify aid planning and coordination in both the donor and recipient countries and make aid more transparent and predictable. While the many Estonian diplomats and civil servants are tirelessly working on establishing strong and sustainable links with the partner countries, there is still an acute need for official bilateral governmental agreements for development cooperation that would include both the sectors of cooperation and the financial plan for that work.

The last but not least sector named in the strategy is awareness raising and global education, which is expected to increase public support, especially among the youth, for development cooperation. Approximately 5% of all development financing has been spent for this purpose over the last few years; most of this financing came from the MFA. The Ministry of Education and research surprisingly did not finance any global education activities during the last two years even though introducing the topics of development cooperation in the school system and enhancing the involvement of research institutions is directly in their field of work. On a positive note, global education has been the most successful area of getting financing from the European Commission, where the amount of available resources is significantly greater than the funds available from the MFA. However, since the EU generally requires co-financing by the applicant, the organisations that have been awarded grants are now faced with the challenge of finding the required 10–25% of the project's costs from domestic sources. Even though there is general consensus that giving co-financing support to organisations is highly cost-effective for

[20] *Ibid.*

the government, there have been very few concrete efforts made to establish a viable system for that.

The accomplishments in the awareness raising sector are demonstrated in the public opinion poll conducted in March 2008[21], which indicated that the amount of people interested in global issues increased from 57% to 67% since 2005. Three out of every four people believed that Estonia should assist less developed countries, but the support for development activities was dependent on the level of income of the respondents. The knowledge of Estonia's development activities did not increase over the mentioned time period – only 7% of the respondents are well informed about their country's activities and 17% do not know anything about it. While most people thought that the reasons for engaging in development cooperation are primarily moral and humanitarian in nature, the opinion leaders and civil society organisations also emphasised the global security aspect and the politicians believed in the benefits for Estonia's international reputation. Most of the general public did not support increasing funding for development, but 51% of the opinion leaders did.

Awareness raising activities are also one of the favourites among the civil society actors, who have become significantly more engaged in this sector and have implemented more projects year by year. Over the last two years, a multi-stakeholder process took place at the initiative of the civil society organisations to compile information about the ongoing global education activities, relevant actors and agree on a set of activities that need to be done for coherently developing the sector in the future. The two-year-long negotiations concluded with the approval of the paper "Development of

[21] MFA (2008), "Public Opinion Regarding Development Cooperation: March 2008." Tallinn: Turu-uuringute AS. http://web-static.vm.ee/static/failid/489/public_opinion_poll2008.ppt.

Global Education in Estonia 2010–1015"[22] in March 2010, which unfortunately does not have legislative power and is currently a statement of good will and voluntary cooperation between interested parties. The MFA has suggested this document will be used as an input to the updated national strategy for development cooperation.

Quality of aid

Decades of global experience in development cooperation has demonstrated that without paying close attention to the way development assistance is delivered, even the largest amounts of money will not lead to complete success. One must look beyond the aid figures to fully evaluate the impact of development cooperation on improving the lives of the poorest of the world.

Overall, it is fair to say that Estonia has considerably improved the quality of its development cooperation over the past years. The greatest success is increased transparency. Besides being considerably more pro-active in information sharing than many other European countries[23], the government has also improved the national legislation. Most recently, a new governmental regulation on the conditions and procedure for the provision of development assistance and humanitarian aid[24] was adopted in January 2010 under the leadership of the MFA and by consulting various stakeholders, including the civil society organisations. The regulation clarifies the concrete ways grants are awarded and evaluated, simplifies the development cooperation process and makes it more unequivocal to the applicants. Adoption of the regulation gives grounds to believe that the previ-

22 Available at http://www.terveilm.net/?id=302.
23 CONCORD (2010), p.16.
24 Available at http://www.vm.ee/sites/default/files/Abi_andmise_kord.pdf.

ously critiqued ambiguity of the application procedures will no longer prevent organisations from participating in development cooperation.

On the negative side, the transparency of Estonia's development cooperation is still limited by the lack of bilateral partnership agreements and a national strategy on multilateral assistance. The bilateral agreements with priority partners, which were discussed above, are critical for sending a clear message to Estonia's partners about the substantive and financial support they can expect from the donor and would outline the roles and responsibilities of all related actors. The multilateral aid strategy should be adopted to explain how the multilateral partners are selected and the ways they are financed. The strategy would enhance the (inter)national aid coordination efforts, simplify the planning of Estonia's development cooperation policy and, most importantly, improve aid effectiveness in the long run[25]. Multilateral aid strategies have already been adopted in Sweden, Finland, Germany, Greece and many other countries; several have also signed concrete agreements with the multilateral aid organisations on ways of supporting them[26].

The urgency of increasing transparency and accountability of development activities was confirmed by the world leaders by endorsing the Accra Agenda for Action at the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2008[27]. The European non-governmental development organisations believe that the first step on the way of achieving these objectives is joining the International Aid Transparency Initiative launched at the meeting in Accra and implementing the good practices of transparency developed under the

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[25] OECD (2009), p. 14.

[26] OECD (2009), pp. 37–41.

[27] OECD (2008), "Accra Agenda for Action." Endorsed on 4 September 2008. par. 24 http://www.terveilm.net/files/410_OECD_Pariis_AAA.pdf.

framework[28]. Civil society organisations believe that Estonia should also sign on to the initiative.

Another major challenge in Estonia's development cooperation is reducing the share of technical assistance (TA) of all development activities, while increasing its effectiveness. Throughout the years, capacity building activities for the civil servants of the partner countries has comprised a vast part of Estonia's bilateral development projects. This type of development work has been heavily criticised in research conducted by both international civil society organisations and intergovernmental organisations, including the OECD. A joint study by Austria and Denmark in 2007[29] and a report by the global anti-poverty agency ActionAid one year earlier[30] list the poor coordination, insufficient evaluation of effectiveness and very limited opportunities for aid recipients to exercise ownership over the planning of TA as the main reasons for questioning its merits as a development tool. Most of Estonia's TA is short-term and not based on the long-term bilateral agreements discussed above, which are considered as critical prerequisites for aid effectiveness[31]. Estonia has based its TA on the interests and development strategies of its partner countries, but there is no concrete mechanism for coordinating this assistance with the partners or other international donors. In addition, Estonia does not have a system for the qualitative analysis of its development cooperation, which makes it difficult to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of this mostly immaterial assistance. Based on the analysis presented in the ActionAid report, it is probable that Estonia's TA is actually over-

28 CONCORD (2010), p. 17.

29 T. Land (2007), "Joint Evaluation Study of Provision of Technical Assistance Personnel: What can we learn from promising experiences?" http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/15/6/39786249.pdf.

30 ActionAid International (2006), Real Aid 2: Making Technical Aid Work. p. 48. http://www.actionaid.org.uk/doc_lib/real_aid2.pdf.

31 Land (2007), p. vii.

priced and without in-depth analysis there is practically no way to find more effective alternatives to it. Last but not least, it is clear that most of the money for TA will never reach the developing countries, but is spent on the salaries of Estonian experts, flight tickets and other goods and services in the donor countries. Such in-effectiveness can be solved by increasing the role of recipient countries in the planning and implementing of development cooperation. Therefore, improving TA and the quality of Estonia's development cooperation is a task that requires both meaningful discussions among the Estonian development actors and signing clear political agreements with partner countries.

Conclusion

Prime Minister Andrus Ansip said at a meeting with the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency in 2009 that "it is not a luxury to help others; it is our moral duty, as very many countries have helped us during our rough times"[32]. In addition, Estonia has made several international pledges for helping the poorest countries in the world. This article summarized the main trends of how Estonia has moved towards honouring those commitments over the last five years. Increased funding for improving the conditions of women and children living in poverty and improvements in aid transparency are great indicators that Estonia's development cooperation is advancing in a positive direction. However, Estonia is still a long way from meeting the 0,33% of GNI aid financing goal set for 2015, which implies that there is very low political will to deal with this topic. There is also a dire need for improving aid effectiveness by starting qualitative evaluation of

[32] A. Ansip (2009), Press release on 3 June 2009. http://www.valitsus.ee/?id=9289.

aid activities, finding better alternatives to TA and signing bilateral agreements with priority partners. For the best results, all domestic stakeholders need to work together in a coherent and constructive framework, because assisting the worlds most vulnerable is a cross-sectoral task and requires innovative multi-faceted solutions.

Vulnerability of interdependent energy relations: energy strategies of small countries

Andres Mäe

Introduction

International regimes are incapable of dealing with vulnerabilities when the dominating partner feels impunity or has the tendency to avoid involvement with international treaties. It applies also to energy relations where all sensitive issues like price volatility or energy consumption decrease where left to be solved by the markets. The powerlessness of international agreements in interdependent energy relations has become evident twice during the last three years when Gazprom cancelled natural gas deliveries to Ukraine causing supply shortages in several European countries. States react to the powerlessness of international regimes with bilateral agreements. However these agreements cannot guarantee uninterrupted energy deliveries. Russian-Ukrainian gas disputes have affected more than one country in Central and Eastern Europe; there have been cuts-off of electrical energy import from Russia to Finland, etc.

The objective of this paper is to find out how small countries react to vulnerability in energy relations, why they try to adjust to these relations instead of looking for alternatives. The example of the Baltic States will be used as a case study.

1. Definition and methodology

1.1 What is vulnerability of energy relations?

Recent studies, focused on the vulnerability of interdependent energy relations, do not offer an explicit definition of vulnerability but a number of indicators, risk variables and specific methodology to measure vulnerability.[1] These indicators and variables are useful for analysing risks of energy supply of a certain country but without a clear definition of vulnerability and due to the ubiquity of energy as such there will be a myriad of risks to be taken into account. Most of these risks, like market failure, price volatility or malfunctioning of infrastructure, are circumstantial or dependent on the interests of stakeholders[2] and should therefore be regarded as manageable risks, not existential ones. Christie defines energy vulnerability as the extent to which adverse exogenous events with respect to a country's energy supply system may detrimentally affect the welfare of the country's population and/or the sovereignty of the state.[3] This definition refutes the argument that energy vulnerability is just a qualitative concept[4] and it is the actor itself who estimates the vulnerability of the relationship. Interruption of energy deliveries is an objective event, which may affect the health of people or the functioning of vital infrastructure and this effect is measurable.

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1 Edgar Gnansounou, "Assessing the Energy Vulnerability: Case of Industrialised Countries", *Energy Policy*, vol. 36, no. 10 (2008), pp. 3737–3739; Eshita Gupta, "Oil Vulnerability Index of Oil-importing Countries", *Energy Policy*, vol. 36, no. 3 (2008), pp. 1196–1200; Jacques Percebois, "Energy Vulnerability and its Management", *International Journal of Energy Sector Management*, vol. 1, no. 1 (2007), pp. 51–62.

2 Felix Ciută, "Conceptual Notes on Energy Security", *Security Dialogue* vol. 41, no. 2 (April 2010), pp. 135–137.

3 Edward Christie, "Energy Vulnerability and EU-Russia Energy Relations", *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, vol. 2, no. 5 (2009), p. 277.

4 Percebois, p. 51.

The main problem of the definition is hidden in the term 'welfare'. One could agree that the welfare of the population should refer to the health of the people and their ability to exercise basic rights[5] but widening it to the whole spectrum of socio-economic welfare creates impassable problems. Socio-economic welfare is an acquired but changing value and energy is one of the main factors influencing it. Socio-economic welfare will increase the list of defendable values even the richest countries are unable to protect in a crisis. Instead, in case of emergency governments tend to restrict the access of necessary supplies, like food or medicine or fuel, providing them to the maximum number of people. Moreover, a nation cannot prevent other countries from increasing their level of welfare without causing a conflict between nations due to the competition for energy, especially for limited reserves of fossil fuels.

One could not exclude the possibility that there exist exogenous events that might affect the sovereignty of the state via a country's energy supply system. Elaborating the issue that the controller of the access of energy obtains a degree of economic power that can be transformed into political leverage requires special research, which goes beyond the limits of this study. In this paper the vulnerability of energy relations is considered as the extent to which the health of the population and the condition of vital infrastructure may be harmed by exogenous events via country's energy relations.

1.2 Opportunity costs as a measurement of vulnerability

In his study, Christie offers expected shortfall as a vulnerability indicator[6], where expected economic loss in case of

[5] Christie, p. 277.
[6] *ibid*, p. 282.

shortage of energy deliveries is the function of probability of such events, energy intensity and import dependence of the economy. Energy intensity might be misleading parameter here because of energy consumption per unit of gross domestic product (GDP) contains no information about the relative economic importance of energy[7]. Countries with lower level of GDP per capita have relatively higher energy intensity than countries with higher level of GDP per capita.

Dependence on energy imports does not stand for vulnerability. A country can be dependent without being vulnerable and be vulnerable without being dependent[8]. There is no need for country A to look for alternatives if the current dependence of country's B natural gas deliveries does not cause concern about the security of supply. Decreasing or alternating import dependence may be not economically viable. The approach of expected shortfall gives the possibility to calculate expected economic loss in case of interruptions of energy supply, which will show the extent of vulnerability of energy system of a certain country. Once those potential costs are known, the question is how to minimize this vulnerability. The concept of opportunity costs is helpful in quantifying the value of alternative policies that seek to reduce vulnerability of energy relations and expected losses caused by the shortfall of energy supplies. The theory of interdependence uses the vulnerability dimension of relations to indicate the availability and costliness of alternatives[9]. Thereby, it is possible to measure vulnerability by the costs made to replace a substantially changed relationship.

From this definition derive two aspects of alternatives – availability and affordability. Availability is the extent to

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7 Gnansounou, p. 3739.

8 Percebois, p. 51.

9 Robert. O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 3rd edition (New York: Longman, 2001), p. 11.

which resources are known about, accessible and feasible to extract. Affordability is the ability to purchase available resources without endangering other economic activities. Accordingly the vulnerability of a country's energy system can be measured by the availability and affordability of alternative. Assume that country A imports all its natural gas from country B and has experienced interruptions of deliveries or unwelcome price hikes. Country A has now two options: (1) look for alternatives or (2) to acquiesce with the unstable situation. The first option means that country A has to substitute natural gas with some other fuel or to look for another or additional supplier of natural gas (or to use all three possibilities simultaneously). For the second option country A has to reconcile itself to the existing relationship if there are no alternatives available or these alternatives are not affordable, which means hard times for the population of country A because of rationing of the natural gas supply.

There are at least two partners in interdependent relationship. A country exporting energy carriers like oil or natural gas might be vulnerable if the exports represent the major part of its fiscal resources[10]. How would the decision of country A to prefer alternatives in terms of natural gas supply affect country B? The theory of interdependence considers a relationship being interdependent if there is mutual interest in maintaining that relationship[11]. From this definition derives that country's B behaviour will depend on the scale of its commercial interest towards the natural gas deliveries to country A. Therefore A's decision to substitute natural gas import from country B or change the degree of import dependence should not remarkably influence B's behaviour if A's relative importance as an importer of natural gas is rather low or even insignificant for country B. For example, an EU member state's dependence on Russian gas

[10] Percebois, p. 60.
[11] Keohane and Nye, p. 8.

might be 100% but if the commercial interest of Gazprom towards gas export to that particular country is rather low[12] then the member state can substitute (not necessarily alternate) imported natural gas or look for another or additional supplier of natural gas to minimize its vulnerability from gas deliveries from a single source without damaging seriously the income of Gazprom and thus the budget of Russian Federation.

1.3 How to measure vulnerability of energy relations?

The principle that the vulnerability of energy relations is considered as the extent to which the health of the population and the condition of vital infrastructure may be harmed by exogenous events via the country's energy relations, should be used as a yardstick for every type of energy (electrical energy, heat energy) and energy carrier (solid, liquid and gaseous fuels) consumed by a certain country. This approach will reveal the consequences of interruption of energy deliveries. Moreover, it will set aside the need to calculate probability of such events if the aim is to find out the most vulnerable part of the energy system and energy relations and not to take account how often the damaging incidents could happen.

The origin of harmful events is also irrelevant. If termination of energy deliveries will threaten the health of the population or break down vital infrastructure of a country, then it does not matter on what bases it was activated: either due to the technical failure, scarcity of resources or because of a political decision.

These preconditions complicate the construction of an abstract model for measuring the vulnerability of all kind of

[12] Pierre Noël, *Beyond Dependence: How to Deal with Russian Gas*, Policy Brief, European Council of Foreign Relations, November 2008, p. 11.

energy relations. However, once the weakest link of energy relations of a certain country has been identified it is possible to calculate the opportunity costs necessary to minimize the vulnerability. In other words to find out whether there are available and affordable alternatives. For this research alternatives are the reserves, substitutable fuels and diversification of sources of import.

2. The example of the Baltic States

The Baltic States are dependant to a certain extent on the import of electrical energy and all fossil fuels – oil products, natural gas and coal, which are consumed for fueling the transport and to produce electrical and heat energy.

2.1 Import of coal

The share of coal in the total primary energy supply (TPES) of the Baltic States is insignificant. Being an imported fuel with high transport costs, coal is substituted by wood or biomass. Between 2000–2009 the average share of coal in TPES of Estonia was around 1%, of Latvia above 1% and of Lithuania above 2%.[13] That could be changed if Latvia will build a new coal-burning thermal power plant (TPP) as previously planned[14]. Even in that case the coal is easily imported from Poland, Russia and Ukraine.

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[13] All statistical data has been found from the websites of Lithuanian Department of Statistics, Latvian Central Statistical Bureau and Statistics Estonia if not referred otherwise; calculations made by author.

[14] *Analyses of Energy Supply Options and Security of Energy Supply in the Baltic States*, IAEA-TECDOC-1541, Vienna, February 2007; pp. 3–4.

2.2 Import of crude oil and oil products

The availability of crude oil and oil products for the Baltic States is similar to that of other countries in the region. The energy crises in the early nineties proved that due to the world market of crude oil it is possible to import oil products elsewhere than Russia. All three Baltic States should have strategic reserves of oil products for 90 days, required by the legislation of the EU (directives 98/30/EC and 68/414/EEC), which will help to decrease the impact of sudden interruption of oil supply.

2.3 Import of natural gas

The gas market is formally opened in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania but in essence there is no real competition between sellers because in all three Baltic countries gas can be purchased only from Russia. The peculiarity of the gas market of the Baltic States is also the fact that Russian gas export monopoly Gazprom has shareholding interests in the sole natural gas supplier in Estonia and Latvia as well as in the main supplier in Lithuania.

Latvia and Estonia share the same supply pipeline from Russia to the Latvian underground gas storage (UGS) in Inčukalns. Both countries are dependent on the gas in UGS during winter when the pipeline from Russia is closed and all consumed natural gas is taken from the UGS, which is serving as a buffer for gas supply of St. Petersburg as well. Lithuania is supplied with natural gas by the Minsk-Vilnius-Kaunas-Kaliningrad pipeline. Gazprom increased the capacity of this line in 2009 by launching a second pipe to it, which will help to increase the gas supplies to Kaliningrad oblast as well as to Lithuania[15]. Due to the dispute between

[15] "Gazprom launches new stretch of Kaliningrad gas line", *Oil and Gas Journal*, 11.09.2009.

Russia and Belarus about gas price and transit fees Lithuania experienced a brief disruption of natural gas supply in February 2004[16] and had to rely on gas supply from the Latvian UGS for a short period of time.

In absolute numbers Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are the smallest gas markets in the EU (see Table 1). The share of natural gas in TPES of Estonia was approximately 15% and in TPES of Latvia and Lithuania around 30% between 2000–2009.

Table 1. Annual natural gas import of the Baltic States, accounted in million cubic meters.

	2000	**2001**	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**
Estonia	826	887	743	847	966	996	1009	1003	962	653
Latvia	1385	1350	1425	1750	2170	1790	1910	1645	1368	1749
Lithuania	2582	2682	2711	2944	2929	3116	3100	3720	3125	2737
Total	**4793**	**4919**	**4879**	**5541**	**6065**	**5902**	**6019**	**6368**	**5455**	**5139**

Sources: Statistics Estonia, Latvian Central Statistical Bureau and Lithuanian Department of Statistics, 2010.

The sharp decline in the gas import in Estonia last year was caused by a temporary closure of the company Nitrofert, which produces fertilizers and uses natural gas as a raw material. A similar situation is in Lithuania, where the biggest single natural gas consumer, fertilizer producer Achema, reduced its gas consumption in 2009 because of the financial crisis.

The largest sphere of natural gas consumption in all three Baltic States is heat and electrical energy production. The share of gas in electricity generation in Latvia is about 20% but in heat generation it is around 90%. The same applies to Lithuania, where the share of natural gas in heat produc-

[16] Tomas Janeliunas, 'Lithuania's Energy Strategy and its Implications on Regional Cooperation' in Andris Spruds, Toms Rostoks (eds), *Energy. Pulling the Baltic Sea Region Together or Apart* (Riga: Latvian Institute of International Affairs, 2009), p. 190.

tion is around 80% and about 20% in electricity production (before the closure of Ignalina nuclear power plant (NPP)).[17]

Estonia produces only 5% of its electrical energy from natural gas but that is going to be changed if a reserve TPP will be built as planned by national grid company Elering. The share of natural gas in heat energy production has been above 45% between 2000–2008. Launching two new cogeneration power plants on renewable fuels reduced the share of natural gas in heat energy production down to 39% in 2009[18].

Natural gas is substitutable fuel. The basic technical solution for securing the operating reliability of gas-based electricity and heating systems in cold seasons is to use reserve fuels. The most suitable for that purpose is light heating oil. Its use is advantageous due to the existence of combined burners consuming both gas and liquid fuel.

2.4 Production of electrical energy

The power systems of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are operating on a synchronous grid with the Unified Power System (UPS) of Russia and Belarus. This integration of energy systems ensures stable supply of electrical energy but import of electricity from UPS is limited by the congestion of the power grid in the Baltic States as well as in Russia and Belarus[19]. The same applies to the 'Estlink1' power cable.

Latvia is importing annually about third of consumed

[17] Sachi Findlater and Pierre Noël, "Gas Supply Security in the Baltic States: a Qualitative Assessment", University of Cambridge, Energy Policy Research Group, *EPRG Working Paper* no. 1008 (March 2010), p. 15.

[18] Nadežda Dementjeva and Andres Siirde, *Energy Planning Model Analysis and their Adaptability for Estonian Energy Sector*, paper for 11th IAEE European Conference, Vilnius, August 25–28, 2010, p. 2.

[19] Andres Mäe, 'Estonia's Energy Security and the European Union', *Estonian Foreign Policy Yearbook 2007* (Tallinn: Estonian Foreign Policy Institute, 2007), p. 93.

electrical energy, mostly from Estonia and Russia (and from Lithuania until the closure of Ignalina NPP). The rest of demand is covered by big hydro power plants (HPP) and TPPs or combined heat and power (CHP) co-generating power plants fuelled by natural gas or biomass.

After the closure of the Ignalina NPP on 31 December 2009 Lithuania imports annually up to 60% of consumed electrical energy from Belarus, Estonia, Russia and Ukraine[20]. The rest of demand is covered by hydro accumulation power plant, TPPs and CHPs fuelled by natural gas or biomass. Lithuania has increased the import of gas for production of electricity[21].

Estonia produces about 90% of electrical energy from oil shale and the rest by several TPPs and CHPs fuelled by natural gas or biomass[22]. Estonia exports 25–30% of produced electrical energy and imports 5–30% of consumed electricity (part of it from Latvian HPPs to cover the peak load). After 2016 the share of oil shale in the production of electrical energy will decrease either due to the closure of old power units in Narva TPPs or because of sensitivity of the price of electricity produced from oil shale to the price of CO_2.

Despite the integrated power systems the electrical energy markets in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are currently functioning under different conditions. Lithuania opened its electricity market after the closure of Ignalina NPP and created a so-called Baltpool trading area. The Latvian electrical energy market is formally opened, but in reality not. The Estonian electricity market will be fully opened for all customers in 2013, for now about 35% of it is opened only for industrial consumers.

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[20] Секмокас: закрытие литовской АЭС создаст условия для энергорынка, РИА Новости, 11.01.2010.

[21] 'Lithuania economy: Post-nuclear power', *The Economist Intelligence Unit*, 30.04.2010.

[22] 'Estonian Energy in Figures', Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications (Tallinn, 2007), p. 21.

Transmission system operators (TSO) of all three countries have taken commitments to create a common electrical energy market in 2012, which will be part of the Nordpool trading area. The EU supports these intentions with the Baltic Energy Market Integration Plan (BEMIP), which will help to connect the Baltic States with Finland (Estlink2), Poland and Sweden.

Despite the fact that after 2016 the domestic power production capacity of all three Baltic States will not be able cover the domestic demand, there are and will be enough energy producers in the Baltic Sea region to cover the needs: there are connections with Belarus, Finland and Russia and there will be new energy connections with other EU states to cover the demand of electrical energy in the Baltic States. Therefore, the security of supply of the Baltic States will be delegated to the open electricity market and these countries should no longer be considered as vulnerable due to the country's electrical energy relations.

2.5 Production of heat energy

The biggest consumers of heat energy in the Baltic States are district-heating systems in big cities as well as in local settlements, like village centers. District-heating systems supply industry, households, the commercial and public sectors as well as agriculture with heat energy. According to Findlater and Noël, approximately 70% of households in Latvia and Lithuania are connected to the district heating systems[23]. District heating covers more than 70% of the heating energy market in Estonia[24].

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[23] Findlater and Noël, p. 15. Heat energy balances of all three Baltic States are shown in Appendix 1.

[24] Andres Mäe, "Estonia's Energy Strategy and its Implications on Regional Cooperation" in Andris Spruds, Toms Rostoks (eds), *Energy. Pulling the Baltic Sea Region Together or Apart* (Riga: Latvian Institute of International Affairs, 2009), p. 255.

Bearing in mind the share of natural gas in production of heat energy in all three Baltic States (discussed in sub-item 2.3), it becomes clear that in case of disruption of natural gas supply during the winter there will be a threat to the health of a substantial part of the population. This concerns inhabitants of apartment buildings supplied by the district-heating systems connected to energy producers without technical equipment for alternative fuels (e.g. local small boiler houses have burners suitable for natural gas only[25]). Any breakdown or leakage of the pipelines extending from Russia could deprive the Baltic States of the Russian gas import. In this case consumers could be provided with gas contained in Inčukalns gas storage and for a short period of time with gas stored in the pipeline system.[26] The use of Inčukalns gas supplies in an emergency situation is questionable if Latvia and Estonia would both be in a crisis at the same time[27].

3. Minimizing vulnerability with alternatives

Reserve fuels (including natural gas), alternative sources of natural gas and alternative fuels substituting (not replacing) the natural gas are the means to minimize the vulnerability of production of heat energy in the Baltic States. Availability and affordability are the main limits of implementation of energy policies containing listed options.

'Estonian Energy in Figures', Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications (Tallinn, 2007), p. 18.

[25] Mäe (2007), p. 107.

[26] The volume of gas contained in the piping is relatively big and, if used rationally, in emergency situation it can continue to supply consumers for about a week.

[27] Mäe (2007), p. 106.

3.1 Reserve fuels

Estonian and Latvian natural gas supplying monopolies have announced the holding of certain amount of gas as a reserve in Inčukalns UGS but the existence of such a reserve is difficult to control. Lithuanian gas companies have a legal obligation to keep a certain amount of gas reserves in Inčukalns UGS, despite the fact that the current capacity of the gas connection with Latvia is limited.

Reallocation of gas consumption from industry to the households, public and commercial consumers is an option to cover partially and temporarily the interruption of gas supply, but none of the Baltic States have a legal basis to use this option. Strategic fuel reserves of all three Baltic States contain mostly the reserves of transport fuels. A certain amount of heavy fuel oil reserves have been established, but only a limited number of energy producers will be able to use it as a substitute fuel due to lack of necessary equipment.

3.2 Alternative fuels

According to the Estonian district heating law, producers of heat energy should be able to switch from natural gas to liquid fuel for three days.[28] This requirement is extended only to the CHPs producing heat energy above 500 GWh annually and with combined burners suitable for gas as well as for liquid fuels.

Latvian energy law recommends the use of alternative fuels in the event of an energy crisis but does not require it; neither does it demand maintaining the minimum amount of storage of alternative fuels[29]. Thereby, Latvia relies in its energy policy on the availability of the Inčukalns UGS and

[28] http://www.riigiteataja.ee/ert/act.jsp?id=12894819.
[29] Findlater and Noël, pp. 8–9.

on the fact that Russian North-West region depends on the gas stored in the UGS as well.

Lithuania has bound all electricity and heat energy producers with an obligation to keep a reserve of alternative fuels corresponding to the consumption level of the coldest month of the previous year,[30] being the only Baltic state establishing such liabilities for energy companies.

Estonia and Lithuania are able to replace natural gas with domestically produced liquid fuels: the Estonian annual shale oil production is ca 400 000 tons (3/4 of it is exported) and Lithuania extracts ca 200 000 tons of oil per annum from a small oil deposit in the Baltic Sea. All three Baltic States have the possibility to increase the use of renewable fuels, especially the use of biomass in producing heat energy due to the existence of forests[31] and strong timber industry. For example, annual lumbering in Estonia is less than 6 million m^3, which is approximately half of the possible lumbering capacity[32].

The use of renewable fuels in producing heat energy is subsidized. Therefore, the production of energy from renewable sources has rapidly increased[33]. That causes new problems, which has already influenced the energy policy of Estonia. Firstly, the energy monopoly Eesti Energia made use of it and collected the major share of subsidies by burning wood residues in TPPs with oil shale, causing a sharp increase in the price of firewood. Legislators responded by limiting the availability of benefits only to co-generators, leaving small and heat-only producers out of the list of subsidiaries.

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30 *ibid*, pp. 13–14.

31 General data on energy wood resources in the Baltic States are shown in appendix 2.

32 *Võimaliku puidukasutuse ja puidu pakkumise hindamise põhimõtted*, Eesti Maaülikool (Tartu, 2009), p. 28.

33 Production of renewable energy in Estonia increased three times in 2009, *BNS*, 26.09. 2010.

Secondly, the price of heat energy produced from renewable sources depends on labor costs. Biomass needs to be collected, dried, stored and transported before consumption. This might help with employment but saddles customers or taxpayers with additional expenditures.

3.3 Alternative sources of natural gas

The pipeline connection between Lithuania and Poland will increase the security of supply but even this connection will be built only with the help of the EU. Commercial natural gas pipelines connecting the Baltic States with the rest of EU will be not economically viable due to small size of the Baltic gas market.

Liquefied natural gas (LNG) is a possible solution for the Baltic States to diversify the gas supply[34]. But even the LNG re-gasification terminal might be expensive for a one country alone. Therefore, a creation of common gas market of the Baltic States or having a common re-gasification terminal will support the competitiveness of the LNG with the natural gas imported from Russia via pipelines[35]. Another option to diversify the gas supply is to import compressed natural gas (CNG). It has certain advantages comparing to LNG[36] and suits better for small gas markets but currently there are no working projects where natural gas is transported in considerable amounts by CNG ships.

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[34] Researchers from the Electricity Policy Research Group (EPRG) of the University of Cambridge have found the fuel reserve policy of Lithuania more expensive than having a LNG terminal in one of the ports of Lithuania (Chyong Chi Kong, Sachi Findlater and Pierre Noël, 'Baltic Gas Supply Security: Costs and Political Choices', slide presentation at Baltic energy conference organized by the Estonian Foreign Policy Institute in Tallinn 11–12 October 2010)

[35] Dalius Tarvydas and Ramūnas Gatautis, "Liquefied natural gas in the world and Lithuanian perspective", *Energetika*, no. 3 (2006), p. 99.

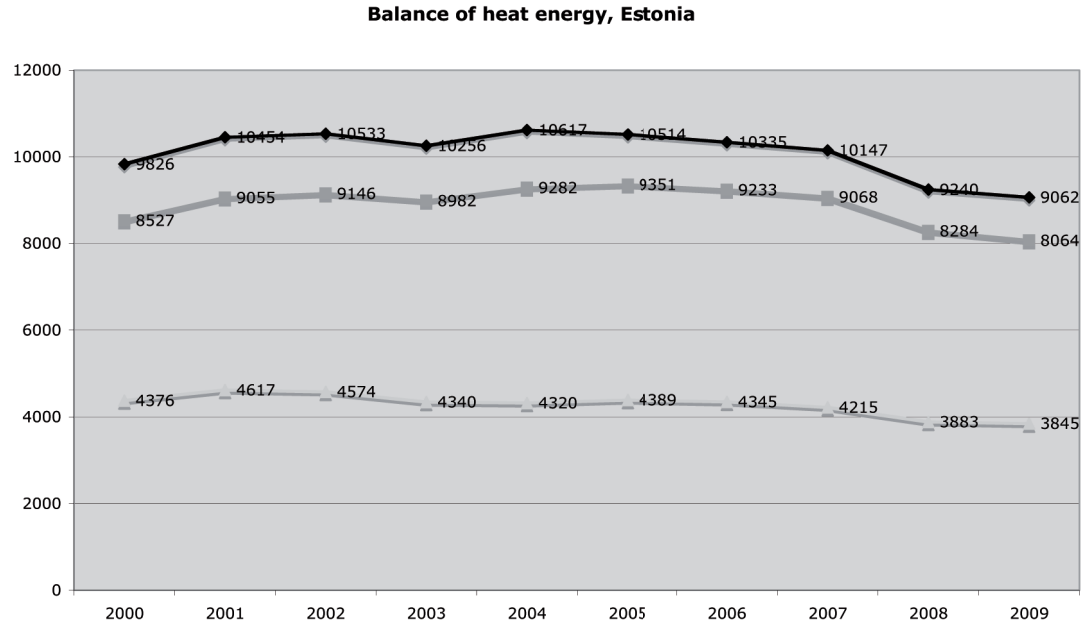
[36] Asim Desphande and Michael J. Economides, "CNG: An Alternative Transport for Natural Gas Instead of LNG", available at http://www.spegcs.org/attachments/studygroups/6/CNG-An_Alternative_Transport_for_Natural_Gas.pdf, pp. 6-8.

4. Conclusion

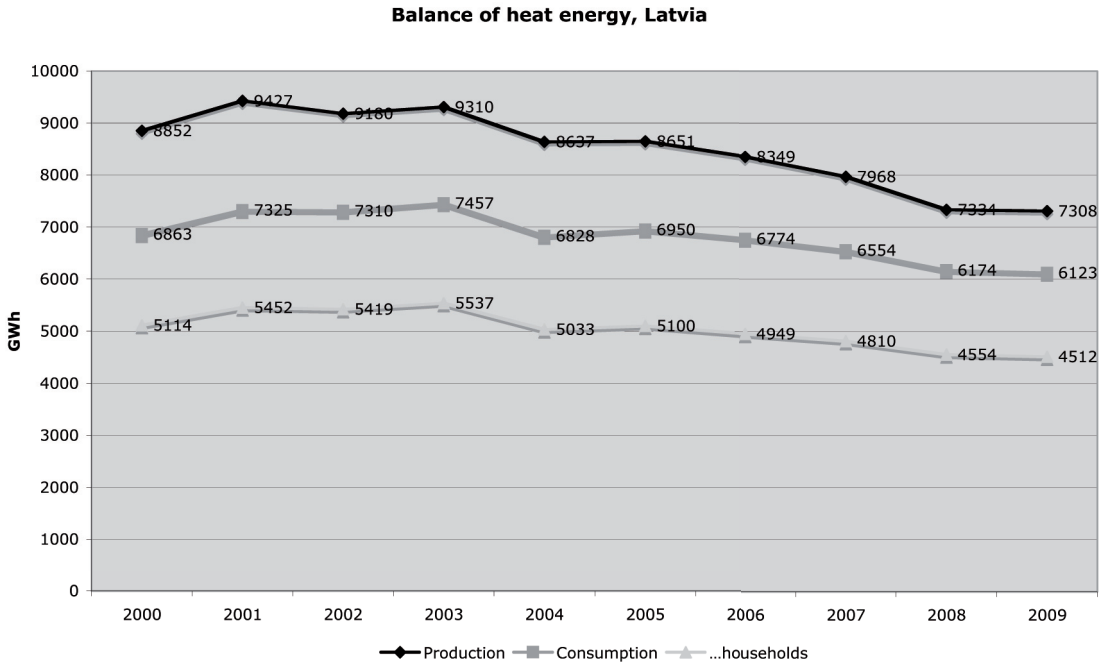
This paper was an attempt to confirm that Christie's definition is suitable for measuring the vulnerability of energy relations if released from the burden of defending the current level of welfare from any harm caused by exogenous events through a country's energy relations. A narrowed definition helped to establish that the most vulnerable part of the energy systems of the Baltic States is heat energy production and the most vulnerable part of energy relations of the Baltic States is the relatively high share of natural gas in the heat generation.

It was also tested that opportunity costs serve well for quantifying the value of alternative policies that seek to reduce vulnerability of energy relations. The costs of fuel reserves, substituting or alternative fuels and diversification of sources are calculable and for the Baltic States all three types of alternatives are available. The example of the Baltic States indicates also that high opportunity costs and states' inability to create market conditions for energy supply without compromising the competitiveness of energy production limits the implementation of energy policies.

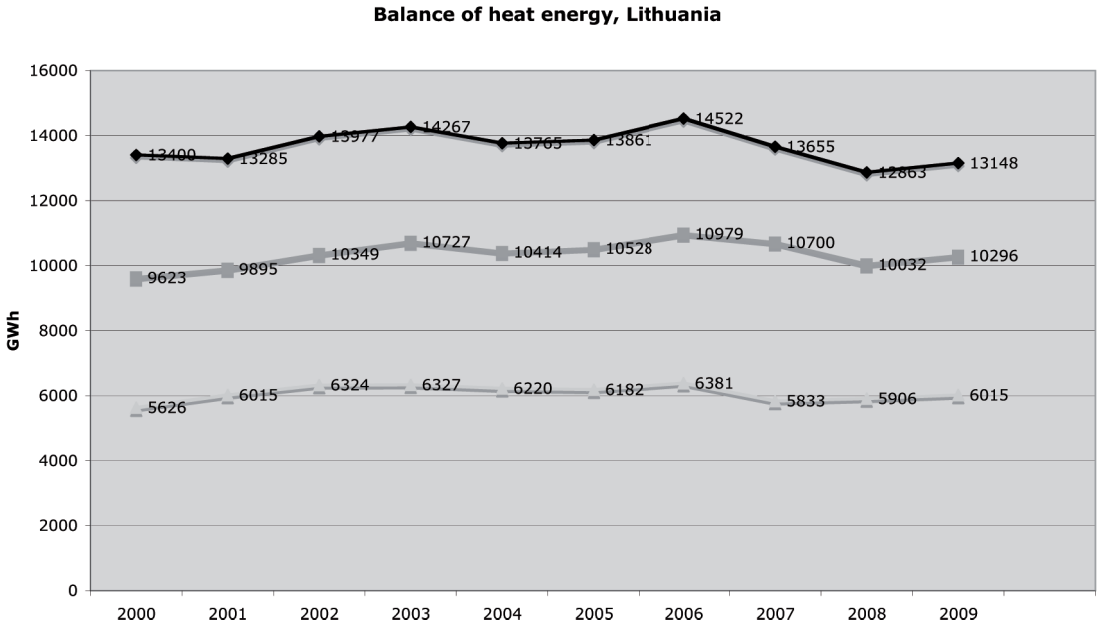
Appendix 1. Heat energy balance in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania (GWh per annum).



Source: Statistics Estonia, 2010.



Source: Latvian Central Statistical Bureau, 2010.



Source: Lithuanian Department of Statistics, 2010.

Appendix 2. Share of forests and existing wood reserves of the Baltic States

	Area of the country, Mha	Forests, Mha	Forest share, %	Wood, Mm3
Estonia	4,52	2,25	51,5	462
Latvia	6,46	2,88	45,0	546
Lithuania	6,53	2,00	30,3	348

Source: Peeter Muiste, Tauri Kakko, 'Energy wood harvesting in Estonia', Estonian Agricultural University, Tartu, 2009.
Note: Mha – million of hectares, Mm3 – million of cubic meters.

Estonian foreign policy and the dilemmas of arms control

Frederic Labarre

Introduction

This chapter examines Estonia's national security and foreign policy challenges in the context of the current trends in arms control and reduction. For the purpose of this essay, arms control is understood as both conventional and nuclear, and are together understood as interdependent. As we will see, Estonia is on the horns of several dilemmas. For one, can it support more actively other powers' efforts at arms control and disarmament without affecting the security she bases on old-fashioned deterrence? Two other dilemmas participate to this one. First, if she finds that she cannot support calls for arms reduction, then won't that affect her international standing and reputation within NATO and vis-à-vis the United States? Perhaps more importantly, what if deterrence fails? Deterrence may fail "naturally", when one adversary decides that the threat of retaliation of the other is not credible, or it may fail "amicably" when it ceases to define the relation between adversaries. For example, the current efforts at rapprochement between NATO and the United States and Russia exemplify this. The policies currently being implemented between these three actors seem

to suggest that the causes for intervention through article 5 could be redefined.[1]

While we wait for NATO's new security concept, failure of deterrence is a real danger for Estonia. Whether as a Soviet Republic or an independent member of NATO, Estonia's geographic position always put it between the anvil and the hammer. As Pertti Joenniemi argued, it is in the "area in-between" where it is part of the new security space, but is still grappling with the "lessons" of the past.[2] While this is understood, it remains that, in the end, a nuclear strike on her territory guarantees annihilation both political and national. A conventional force is scarcely less serious. Although it may not necessarily threaten political survival, given her demographics Estonia may never recover as a nation from a high casualty rate in the military and civilian communities. Clearly, the pathos of regional security must be overcome to avoid the risk of this outcome.

Although current threat assessments suggest that the probability of a military strike of any kind involving Estonia is very remote, the magnitude of the consequences give pause to think. Estonia is indeed flanked by Allies to the West and South, and covered to her North by a fellow EU member, but Russia remains a potent political and security challenger and is identified as such in the Estonian National Security Concept.

> Russia defines its interests departing from restoration of its status as a major global power, and occasionally does not refrain from contesting other countries. In addition to political and economic means, Russia is also prepared to use military force to achieve its goals. Russia also uses its energy resources as political and economic means in different areas of international relations.[3]

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[1] Ian Anthony, *The Future of Nuclear Weapons in NATO*, (Stockholm: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung for the Nordic Countries/SIPRI, 4 February 2008), 42.

[2] Pertti Jeonniemi, "Arms Control as a Spatial Practice: Challenges in the Baltic Region", in Heinz Gärtner, Adrian Hyde-Price and Erich Reiter, eds., *Europe's New Security Challenges,* (Boulder, CO: Lynne-Rienner, 2001), 318.

[3] Estonian National Security Concept (NSC), Tallinn, 12 May 2010, 7/21. www.kmin.ee

This author believes that the source of Estonian and Russian tension must be taken in its own context, which has been discussed elsewhere on many occasions, and would require a separate essay to revisit in depth. This author does not believe that the charge of hostility attributed to Russia to the same level as other Baltic analysts. Suffice it to say that at this juncture, we may nevertheless use the Estonian assessment as a postulate against which to proceed with our analysis, since we are talking about Estonian foreign policy. Yet, "[arms] control does just what it says, and no more... to the extent that the political causes of the original antagonism are based on, or exacerbated by, the military build-up on both sides, arms control measures could contribute to dealing with the underlying tensions..."[4] The last part of this essay provides suggestions to defuse regional tensions and arms reduction.

The primary aim of this essay is to address the dual criticism levelled at conservatives who fear the failure of deterrence but have no answer to the risk of escalation, and the criticism levelled at liberals who fear faulty crisis management, but have no answer to the safe initiation and conclusion of disarmament.[5] More to the point, however, this author disagrees with the contention that Estonia lacks the tools to resolve the dilemmas with which she is faced, if her policy- and decision-makers have the courage to act with reason rather than emotion.

This essay proceeds first with a discussion of the Estonian position relative to deterrence and arms control. It then considers policies and its Allies (NATO as an organization and the United States as a nuclear power and custodian of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe) and of Russia. The combination of the NATO-US-Russia policies determines

[4] Paul Rogers and Malcolm Dando, *A Violent Peace – Global Security After the Cold War*, (London: Brassey's, 1992), 22.
[5] Ibid., 22.

the overall context of arms control both nuclear and conventional, and its implications for Estonian foreign and security policy. In effect, it is impossible to discuss nuclear arms control without discussing deterrence, and it is impossible to discuss deterrence without touching on conventional arms control and even missile defence. Finally, the chapter concludes with a set of sample policies (as opposed to mere positions) that Estonia can adopt to resolve the dilemmas alluded to above.

Estonian foreign and security policy and the basic national interest

The failure of deterrence, whether conventional or nuclear, means assured destruction for Estonia. For the purpose of this discussion, it is not the prospect of an attack that we seek to deter, but the consequences. Therefore it would seem that arms control and reduction would be in Estonia's interest since the possible elimination of the weapons logically means the probability of suffering their effects. And so, the longer Estonia sticks to the principle of deterrence, the longer she will be exposed to the potentiality of its breakdown.

Yet in terms of arms control, Estonia's *National Security Concept* (NSC) is clear and refers to the moribund Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty. The linkage is clear; Estonia will join once Russia will reintegrate the Treaty.

> Estonia underscores the importance of arms control in ensuring international security and building confidence.
>
> Estonia deems it important to limit conventional arms in Europe, and desires to be party to international agreements which serve to enhance security in Estonia as well as the international community. We expect other countries to adhere to the same principles.[6]

[6] Estonian National Security Concept, Tallinn, 12 May 2010, 13/21.

Estonia reiterates her commitment to check proliferation by stressing her participation in the control regimes of strategic goods. Otherwise, the NSC is silent on the need for *nuclear disarmament either strategic or tactical*. The NSC mentions the issue of deterrence six times, and always as NATO's responsibility, and as something that should be maintained. Generating indicators to measure Estonia's degree of initiative in dealing with these issues can be approximated through a brief search on the term "nuclear" on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and Ministry of Defence (MOD) websites. Against the six results that emerge from the MOD website, 147 instances spring up from the MFA website. Of all the combined references, nearly 45 reflect concerns directly to related to Estonian security. The hundred or so others refer to nuclear power generation, radiation and transit safety, and press releases announcing meetings relative to these topics. This number also accounts for significant repetition of results forwarded by the search engines of both ministries' websites.[7] All references germane to Estonian security come from the MFA – a normal occurrence as nuclear deterrence, regardless of the weapons' range and yield, are political tools because of the quality of the consequences they bring. Nuclear deterrence is part of the modern grammar of international relations. But deterrence can be understood as a feature emanating either from a conventional or nuclear posture, or the combination of nuclear and conventional capabilities.[8] Both the issue of nuclear and conventional arms control becomes not a matter of defence, but of overall security, and this is more within the jurisdiction of diplomats than defence scientists and planners.

Foreign Minister Urmas Paet stated in the context of Iranian proliferation that nuclear disarmament carried great

[7] Search conducted in the English language on the MFA and MOD websites 14 June 2010, see www.vm.ee, and www.kmin.ee

[8] Paul Ingram, "Nuclear Options for NATO", *Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference 2010 Papers no. 4*, (London: British American Security Information Council (BASIC), April 2010), 2.

risks, and so the NSC position on nuclear deterrence is clear. But focusing the narrative of deterrence on nuclear forces puts Estonian policy at the mercy of nuclear powers' decisions. It also accentuates the need for a cogent conventional form of deterrence for the case where Estonia could not rely on the deterrent effect of NATO's arsenal.

The insistence that Estonian security is based primarily on NATO membership is understandable, but as arms control regime cut deeper in arsenals, Estonia cannot count on the nuclear character of the deterrent to dissuade even a conventional aggression. In terms of nuclear deterrent, all that is left, and becomes extremely attractive for deterrence enthusiasts, are theatre nuclear weapons. In 2008, Russia listed 2000 non-strategic weapons, against the United States' 500.[9] Not surprisingly, Russia has stressed that there would be no unilateral reductions anymore[10], meaning that those weapons, which fall outside arms limitations and disarmament treaties *do* have a role. Alexander Pikayev, writing from the Moscow-based Institute of World Economy and International Relations at the Academy of Sciences, stated that theatre nuclear weapons were attractive as a "means of neutralising Western superiority, both quantitative and operational."[11]

At the soft side of the spectrum of security, Estonia's attachment to a good international reputation as a focus of security is understandable.[12] This apparently intangible notion is in fact critical, in view of how, for example, the

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[9] Alexander Pikayev, *Tactical Nuclear Weapons*, International Commission on Nuclear Proliferation and Disarmament, 2009, 5. http://www.icnnd.org/research/Pikayev_Tactical_Nuclear_Weapons.pdf. See also Robert Norris and Hans Kristensen, "Russian Nuclear Forces, 2010", *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists,* January-February 2010, 74 and 76.

[10] Nikolai Sokov, *Reducing and Regulating Non-Strategic Nuclear Weapons in Europe: The Russian Dimension*, presentation at the John Martin Center for Non-Proliferation Studies, Monterey Institute of International Studies, 11 December 2009. Slide 5/18.

[11] Pikayev, *Tactical Nuclear Weapons*, 15.

[12] Estonian NSC, 8/21.

European Union has treated Georgia's behaviour during the August 2008 conflict with Russia. That case stands as a cautionary tale to Estonian policy-makers. In effect, Georgia's security aspirations as a member of NATO find themselves delayed by their policy choices in that conflict. Estonia is more careful not to put itself in a position where the security guarantees it depends on would be denied because of perceptions of unreliability by its Allies.

Finally, Estonia lists as a vital interest the development of democracy and the rule of law in Russia.[13] Enough has been written already on the linkage between democratization and arms procurement to avoid revisiting this topic here.[14] But it is worth mentioning that this important objective of Estonian foreign policy can be indirectly supported by effective and comprehensive nuclear and conventional arms control regimes. The U.S.-Russian decision to limit strategic arms and the other NATO Allies' suggestions to extend limitations to tactical weapons offers conditions whereby defence spending in Russia can be curtailed and such savings can be applied to urgent social programmes there. Critics of this idea will point out correctly that the continued development of high-technology conventional weapons would be the first to benefit from such savings. But this is true mostly in the defence sector. By acknowledging the premise of this article, that all arms control measures are linked to one another as a latent regional security regime, the context becomes political.[15] If conventional arms become regulated once again, then the savings to the Russian Federation may translate into more social spending. So far, NATO/US-Russia animosity has consistently played into the hands of conservative elements of the Russian political elite.

[13] Ibid., 12/21.
[14] Hedley Bull, "The Objectives of Arms Control" in Richard Falk and Saul Mendlovitz, eds. *The Strategy of World Order, Vol. 4: Disarmament and Economic Development*, (New York: World Law Fund, 1967), 103.
[15] Pikayev, *Tactical Nuclear Weapons*, 14.

Estonia is not powerless in the face of such challenges. But so far, the NSC has only listed positions, that is, preferences, as opposed to operational policies, which are decisions aimed at activating other processes and actors. Therefore, Estonia's own foreign and security pronouncements have to be interpreted in the light of these developments, and, as Estonia is a NATO member, we must account for that fact when we examine Russia's reactions to those positions.

Allies and adversaries in perspective: The evolution of arms control regimes

It is not possible to discuss nuclear arms control and disarmament developments in isolation from other policy decisions affecting the nuclear and conventional postures of the actors' interested in Estonia and her neighbourhood. Russia believes that Estonia and the other Baltic States are NATO's sharp edge aimed at her, and simultaneously to Estonia's dependence on NATO's article 5 guarantees, stands the United States' credibility both as a nuclear power and as chief executor of that guarantee. Estonia's *National Security Concept* (NSC), adopted by the *Riigikogu* on 12 May 2010, is a testimonial of the last ten years of strategic development both in defence deployment and arms control, and a reaction to the latest efforts at reducing nuclear weapons.

First and foremost, the Estonian NSC is the product of the recent U.S.-Russia new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) agreement signed in Prague on 8 April 2010. It can also be a reflection of the United States' *Nuclear Posture Review* (NPR) unveiled two days prior by Secretary of Defence Robert Gates. The NPR reflects the United States commitment to reduce the role of American nuclear weapons so that their numbers offers symmetrical deterrence

(i.e., that the U.S. nuclear arsenal deter other mass destruction threats, as opposed to conventional threats as well). Conventional deterrence is left to the Allies' combined non-nuclear arsenals. Reducing the number of warheads (as opposed to launchers) from the 2200 limit set out in the Bush-Putin *Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty* (SORT) of 2002 to 1550 is a commitment in that direction.

These developments are incomprehensible outside the changed strategic context and the U.S. decision to withdraw from the ABM Treaty in December 2001, and the decision to deploy anti-ballistic missile batteries in 2007. On the Russian side, the withdrawal from the *Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty* (CFE Treaty) in April 2007 can be explained by the American decision to deploy land-based Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) systems in Europe, at the insistence, it must be said, of a number of Eastern European powers newly joined to NATO. Since the CFE Treaty's *Adapted Protocols* of 1999 had not been ratified by any signatories except Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Armenia, one must doubt that the reason of her withdrawal from the CFE Treaty was not only to "spur ratification." After all, eight years had elapsed between the entry into force of the 1999 modifications, and the Russian decision to withdraw is chronologically much closer to the American decision to install ABM batteries in Europe. These facts can be deduced in reading the Estonian NSC. It is an admission that the decisions taken in Washington and Moscow deeply impact the Estonian sense of security.

The New START is a case in point. It is so sweeping in its reduction ambitions and so precise in its purpose that two connected factors emerge by which Russia is not bound. The first development is that short range weapons acquire greater significance and become, for Estonia at least, strategic in scope.[16] Because of this, it would seem

[16] Thomas Karas, *The START III Bargaining Space*, Sandia Report 98–3717, (Albuquerque, NM: Sandia National Laboratories, 1998), 10–12.

prudent for Russia *not* to reintegrate the CFE Treaty. The American NPR states specifically that short range nuclear weapons (theatre nuclear weapons, or TNWs), exist to guarantee NATO Allies "extended" deterrence. But as Ian Anthony points out in his SIPRI report, this extended deterrence is limited by military-technical impediments. As the theatre nuclear capability of the United States is now limited to the B-61 gravity bomb slung under the wings of American F-15s and F-16s, Belgian and Dutch F-16s and German and Italian Tornadoes physically removed from the Baltic theatre of air operations, the celerity with which this capability can be deployed in the context of crisis is doubtful.[17] As if to underscore the importance of NATO's (that is, the collective positions of its members), smaller allies, the NPR states that the decision to retain the capability to forward deploy tactical nuclear weapons does not "presume what NATO will decide about future deterrence requirements..."[18] As the United States and Russia grow warmer in their agreement about each other's respective strategic nuclear arsenals, there is a risk of fragmentation of policies detrimental to Estonia. For example Russia might therefore be tempted, in the absence of ratification of the CFE Treaty by other parties, to use a tactical nuclear deterrent to replace the strategic capability which is signed away by the New START.

On the other hand, this situation is also ripe for an effective and stable defensive transition, enabling ABM development and deployment concurrent to this new tactical/strategic balance.[19] Initially, systems developed by the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization (BMDO) had been

[17] Anthony, *The Future of Nuclear Weapons...* 26–27.

[18] Department of Defense, *Nuclear Posture Review 2010*, Washington, DC, 6 April 2010, 35.

[19] For more on that argument, see Frederic Labarre, "Is Missile Defence Moral?" *International Journal of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs* (now Canadian International Council), 60:2, Spring 2005.

promised to Eastern Europe, but the Obama administration replaced them with *Patriot* batteries.[20] The operation and maintenance of these batteries will be handled by American servicemen for two years, after which it will be relinquished to Polish interests. The *Patriot* batteries are not able to reliably defend against short range missile attacks, as the experience of the first Gulf War has shown.[21] This deployment is a compromise to Russia and Eastern European partners (which include Estonia) that nevertheless has an impact. Because of their relative inability to down tactical missiles, *Patriot* batteries do not deter against the deployment of short range nuclear weapons, unless these weapons are plane-borne. But mostly, there is an indication that the revision of BMD deployment to Poland was necessary for Russia and the US to enter into the New START negotiations.[22] Indeed, there is evidence that the United States is seeking to bring symmetry to the deterrence factor. The dyads would be that reduced strategic nuclear armaments and conventional systems should deter one another respectively. Recently, Russia seems to have caught on to this notion in her new security doctrine, putting the emphasis of her strategic arsenal for existential threats.[23] Furthermore, the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist* concurs with other sources about the availability of the remaining (and dwindling) tactical arsenal to pick up the role of deterrent against large scale conventional forces, but the type of weapon available gives further credence to the wisdom of deploying a *Patriot* system as op-

[20] Andrew Futter suggests that this option provides greater depth to European defence. See Andrew Futter, "Sensitive Rationalization or Overlooked Expansion? Demystifying the Obama Plan for Missile Defense in Europe", *Getting to Zero Paper*, no. 15, BASIC, 1 March 2010, 5.

[21] Theodor Postol, "Lessons of the Gulf War Experience with Patriot", *International Security*, 16:3, (Winter 1991–1992), 119–171.

[22] Andrew Futter, *Sensitive Rationalization or Overlooked Expansion?* 3.

[23] Nikolai Sokov, "The New, 2010 Russian military doctrine: The nuclear angle", John Martin Center for Non-Proliferation Studies, 5 February 2010, accessed 14 June 2010, http://cns.miis.edu/stories/100205_russian_nuclear_doctrine.htm

posed to the full-fledged BMD, since Russia is running out of tactical missiles. Quoting *Pravda* of 31 October 2007, the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist* said that "ground-force tactical nuclear warheads had been eliminated; air-defense tactical warheads reduced by 60 percent (10 percent more than Yeltsin pledged); air force tactical warheads reduced by 50 percent; and naval tactical warheads reduced by 30 percent."[24] As rational and responsible custodians of weapons of awesome destructive potential, it is normal that there be an attempt to step away from conditions which would call for their employment.

As a result, two solutions are available to Russia to resolve this perceived imbalance; tactical nuclear weapons and conventional forces. The primacy of a conventional force becomes all the more important for Russia in view of the *Patriot* deployment; another powerful reason for Russia not to reintegrate the CFE Treaty. The Estonian position of insisting on old-fashioned deterrence creates incentive for conventional escalation rather than de-escalation as suggested in her NSC.[25] In addition to the prospect of qualitative and quantitative conventional escalation, the result could be the development of an un-regulated escalation of importance (but not necessarily of numbers) of tactical nuclear weapons (TNW), and an added incentive to pursue the modernization of the Russian conventional forces. Yet despite this, Russian diplomacy has extended an olive branch of its own by repeatedly proposing to the Euro-Atlantic partners a separate security treaty since 2008.[26] Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov even quipped "we

[24] Robert Norris and Hans Kristensen, "Russian Nuclear Forces 2010", *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist*, January-February 2010, 79.
[25] David V. Edwards, *Arms Control in International Politics*, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969), 36–37.
[26] Ulrich Kühn, "Medvedev's Proposals for a New European Security Order: A Starting Point or the End of the Story?", *Connections,* Spring 2010, 4. Kühn disputes the validity and value of the Russian proposals.

can hardly call normal the situation when the Euro-Atlantic military and political situation is far behind modern economic, technological, trade, investment and other processes... and is increasingly running counter to the call of the times"[27] suggesting that there is no intention on the part of Russia to revise the status quo. Mutual reduction of strategic arms means a lessening of security guarantees for Estonia, because the reductions translate into narrower choices for the employment of nuclear weapons. It is not only the pronouncements of either Russia or the United States in their respective doctrines or reviews, but a material fact as well; as nuclear weapons become rarer, they become more precious to either custodian. Therefore Estonia cannot continue constructing its security on the promise of retaliation by proxy (either through NATO or the US), *unless the threat to Estonia is an opening move to revise the status quo*.

As far as Estonia is concerned, and in light of the well-publicised fear she has of Russia, she would be at mortal risk in more ways than one. First, Russian conventional forces could spur her not to ratify the CFE Treaty, as she suggested she might do in the NSC, but to increase the size and capability of her conventional arsenal, as announced in the Estonian MOD's 2009–2018 plan.[28] Second, the decision to look at tactical nuclear weapons reductions completely eludes her, and the plans associated with their maintenance and deployment still represent a significant risk, because extended deterrence would be used in all manners of nuclear deterrence. Even worse, however, is the prospect that un-regulated conventional arsenals may not be sufficient

[27] "Lavrov presents Russia's European Security Concept in Munich", RIA Novosti, 6 February 2010, accessed online 14 June 2010, http://en.rian.ru/russia/20100206/157792680.html

[28] Estonian Ministry of Defence, *Estonian Long Term Defence Development Plan 2009–2018*, Tallinn: Public Affairs Department of the Ministry of Defence, October 2009, 9.

to generate a credible deterrent. In such case, conventional arsenals would be supplemented by short-range nuclear weapons, but this equation would strongly favour the Russian position, because of unity of command and control over both types of weaponry.

It would seem therefore that addressing head-on the parallel problems of short-range nuclear arms control and the re-establishment of the CFE Treaty would be of crucial importance to Estonian diplomacy. First because there is a link between the two regimes, and second, because Estonia has a leading role to play in conventional disarmament. This role answers the universal need to manage conflicts incrementally, and the complex of arms control development robs Estonia the possibility of doing just that. The question becomes how to leverage Estonian diplomatic power in this context, and policy options are presented in the next section.

Policy options for a small power

Kai-Helin Kaldas' essay *The Evolution of Estonian Security Options during the 1990s* stresses how foreign policy considerations are consumed by questions over Estonian security and yet, does not trigger the autonomous activity one would expect of a small power worried about its international survival.[29] Certainly, Estonian diplomatic activity is constrained by lack of human and financial resources, and, to a certain extent, knowledge.[30] But even in the nuclear realm, it is not true that even the most objective

[29] Kai-Helin Kaldas, *The Evolution of Estonian Security Policy Options in the 1990s*, Athena Papers Series no. 4, (Garmisch-Partenkirchen: Partnership for Peace Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes, October 2005), 2. A short version of this paper can be found in Andres Kasekamp, ed., *Estonian Foreign Policy Yearbook 2006*, (Tallinn: Estonian Foreign Policy Institute, 2006), 95–119.
[30] Ibid., 57.

conditions are a brake to action, as Urbelis and Paulauskas have claimed in a recent article of the *Baltic Security and Defence Review*.[31]

The paucity of opinion and debate on nuclear deterrence furthers Kaldas' claim; Estonia's voice is weak at best, and so scarcely heard. Policy options for small states begin with the self-assurance to seize the chance to speak and be heard. This section offers policy options and planning aimed at evading the dilemma of arms control and its attendant risks, and at pursuing vital Estonian interests in terms of security, reputation and good-neighbourly relations.

Table 1 Summary of the impact of the current status of deterrence and arms control.

TOPIC	US/NATO	ESTONIA	RUSSIA
Strategic reductions	–	–	+
Mutual deterrence	+/–	+	+/–
Extended deterrence	–	0	+
Conventional capability	+	0	+
Tactical nuclear weapons	–	0	+
Outlook on CFE	–	–	–
Outlook on BMD	+	+	+/–

* Plus and minus symbols indicate the degree of attraction and support for each topic. Zero denotes inability to effect change to redress a deterrence balance either nuclear or conventional.

[31] See Vaidotas Urbelis and Kestutis Paulauskas, "NATO's Deterrence Policy – Time for a Change?", *Baltic Security and Defence Review*, 10, 2008.

Table 2 Contingencies for Estonia for each topic

CONTINGENCY	OUTCOME
Bilateral strategic reductions (US/NATO – Russia)	– deterrence, + Tactical nuclear weapons, + conventional forces
Tactical nuclear weapons	+BMD, +conventional forces (TNWs replace strategic weapons' role)
+ TNW, +conventional forces	– security
However: + CFE	– deterrence, yet + security
+BMD	– TNW
Also: +CFE, +Strategic reductions, – tactical nuclear weapons	+ international prestige, + stability with Russia, + preservation of Alliance solidarity

* Plus and minus symbols indicate a measure of quantity.

An outline of the plan would see Estonia as an active and confident partner within the multinational fora, having joined the CFE Treaty, and elaborating policies that cater to her own physical security within NATO. The purpose of enhancing activity in these fora would be to determine the agenda and control processes of arms control and limitation where it can. The goal would be to eliminate the policy discrepancies between the NSC and the other Allies', ensuring Alliance cohesion, reduce armament levels in the region, strengthen relations and increase confidence between actors. This would ultimately enhance its reputation regionally, within NATO and the EU, as a valuable and capable regional player. The policies, which will be justified below, would be a) to join the CFE Treaty, b) to argue for the disconnection of the issue of Russian re-integration within the CFE Treaty as contingent

on its withdrawal from Moldova and Georgia, c) engage the grass roots movements in Europe to support continued strategic and tactical arms limitations, d) further push for conventional disarmament within the CFE Treaty framework, e) condition Russian inclusion in the World Trade Organization with her withdrawal from Moldova and Georgia, f) strengthen the defensive transition by supporting NATO's initiative of sharing in the benefits of missile defence with Russia.

Small states tend to seek security in multilateral organizations and the protection of international law. In other words, access provides leverage. Estonia is member of NATO, the OSCE and the European Union. She can use its agencies in a technical manner so as to support its security policy. Estonia's policy options must be buttressed by the objective of seizing the administrative fora that allow some form of control over the issues. She has the privilege of those fora for both conventional and nuclear arms control purposes. If she chooses to join the CFE Treaty, Estonia can rightfully be a member of the Joint Consultative Group designed to monitor its implementation. Meanwhile, Estonia is a *de jure* member of NATO's Nuclear Planning Group.

As was stated in the second part the reputation of Estonia's international persona is not an unknown quantity; it is a tangible value, the damage of which can indeed have repercussions on Alliance guarantees. This is why Estonia's arms control dilemma can be resolved in a way to buttress her international reputation and signal to Russia – as a member of NATO – that there is no discrepancy between it and other members' regional security perceptions. This lessens the prospect of a split within the Alliance because it does not latently oppose the United States' disarmament efforts with Russia. Furthermore, if Estonia were to champion the establishment of a regime limiting theatre nuclear weapons, she would ensure herself a place in the good graces of European large powers who also seek such reductions. Nuclear arsenal reductions

require an active and corresponding reduction in conventional armaments because they do not address the problem of non-nuclear escalation.[32] The problem of the CFE Treaty – to which Estonia is not a party – must be resolved. Joenniemi has persuasively argued that Russia, until 2001 at least, had been steadily moving towards a cooperative understanding of regional security, and had in fact adhered to the CFE Treaty whereas the Baltic States had not. In this sense, he is wrong to suggest that "Russia's attitude is quite decisive for keeping the old agenda alive."[33] The Estonian position is a modern, realist one. Before one reads too much credit into such a description, the resolution of the dilemmas of arms control may propel Estonian policy-making into the constructive, post-modern realm. Making the steps to achieve this quality would indeed make Russian attitudes central to the improvement of security in the region. But until those steps are taken, the burden of good-neighbourly relations rests firmly on Baltic shoulders. Alleviating Estonia's share of that burden may involve the policy initiatives described below.

Gaining and using access

The prohibition for Estonia's joining the CFE Treaty is artificially imposed by the fact that Russia maintains forces in Georgia and Moldova. Otherwise, there is no restriction to Estonia's accession; article XVIII of the Adapted CFE Treaty allows new signatories whose national territories are inscribed within the defined geographic areas of the Treaty without specific conditions.[34] As Harri Tiido said as Deputy Under-Secretary of the Estonian Foreign Ministry in 2002:

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[32] David C. Gompert, Michael Mandelbaum et al, eds., *Nuclear Weapons and World Politics*, (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1977), 195.

[33] Joenniemi, "Arms Control as a Spatial Practice...", 322.

[34] Agreement on Adaptation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, 19 November 1999, CFE DOC/1/99, Art. XVIII, para. 1–4. 17–18.

> Estonia intends to accede to the Treaty in the nearest future. I would also like to say that Estonia intends to join the adapted CFE Treaty once the Treaty is open for accession. We hope for an early entry into force of the CFE Treaty. In that respect, Estonia supports the call of NATO Prague Summit for a swift fulfillment of the outstanding Istanbul commitments on Georgia and Moldova, which will create conditions for State Parties to the Treaty to move forward on the ratification of the Adapted CFE Treaty. We strongly believe that no nation can feel fully sovereign with an undesired foreign military presence on its soil.[35]

The statements of Estonian representatives only emphasise a linkage that is detrimental to Estonia (and general Baltic security) because the legality of conventional forces for CFE signatories represent a Sword of Damocles on Baltic security in the long term, regardless of whether Estonia is a party to the Treaty or not. Furthermore, the CFE Treaty was adapted to reflect the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. The Treaty exists in its adapted form *specifically* for countries like Estonia.[36] As it stands, Estonia nor the other two Baltic States are mentioned in the preamble to the Treaty. Further to Kaldas' observation that small state speak with a low voice, Estonia shies away from its rightful seat at the table by not participating in the CFE Treaty. To have its voice heard, it must first gain access. In this case, this access allows her also to control the agenda as a member of the Joint Consultative Group by holding the Chairmanship usually twice a year for a total of eight weeks at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Vienna.[37] The Joint Consultative Group exists to resolve

[35] Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Statement by Mr. Harri Tiido, Deputy Under-Secretary of the Foreign Ministry at that 10th Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council*, Porto, Portugal, 6–7 December 2002, http://www.vm.ee/?q=en/node/3619

[36] See http://www.osce.org/item/13517.html About the Joint Consultative Group, accessed 16 June 2010.

[37] Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe, Protocol on the Joint Consultative Group, art. 1–6.

ambiguities and conflicts of interpretation, to enhance the viability of the Treaty and resolve technical questions as to its implementation.[38] This means that a dispute remains *technical*, that is, manageable within the legal format provided by the CFE Treaty, the Adapted Agreement, and its corresponding Protocols, rather than *political*, where the full measure of the asymmetry of power could be felt by Estonia. In other words, within this multilateral forum, Russia's power is no greater than Estonia's, (but neither is the United States'). It is not enough, however, to simply gain access. One must use that access for the implementation of a precise set of policies, which we will discuss below.

In the nuclear realm, Estonia is a member of the NATO Nuclear Planning Group. De facto, her voice is lesser than any of the nuclear powers also seated at the NPG meetings. On the other hand, she has a legitimate voice, and although she may not chair meetings (a privilege reserved for the NATO Secretary General) she may nevertheless address the Group with her security concerns, especially the concerns associated with the risks of nuclear use on her territory. As a potential victim, she has a voice equal to all the others. As a policy-maker within that Group, her power is limited. But that power can be increased by gaining the moral high-ground. The point is that access to the Group is guaranteed to her by her membership in NATO. Again, access is nothing without purpose. Estonia can of course, with due deference to NATO solidarity, support the decisions of nuclear powers, uphold NATO's nuclear deterrence function, but as the United States' NPR reminds us, the decisions of sovereign nuclear powers on the extension of deterrence are contingent upon the decision of the other Allies.[39]

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[38] See http://www.osce.org/item/13517.html About the Joint Consultative Group, accessed 16 June 2010.

[39] Chris Lindborg, *Considering NATO's Tactical Nuclear Weapons...*, 2–3. Quoting the NPR.

For what policies?

a) Joining the CFE Treaty

As was explained above, there is no objective impediment to Estonia's adoption of the CFE Treaty. The advantage of joining is not that it has the prospect of seeing Russia withdraw from Georgia and Moldova, on the contrary. The more linkages exist, the lower the Estonian chances of having an impact on regional security. The advantage of joining the CFE Treaty is that it carries the prospect of seeing a change in attitude relative to regional disarmament and limitations in an area of vital interest to both Russia and Estonia. Indeed, as long as Russia feels that Estonia and the Baltic States exist as a launch pad for invasion, she will be reluctant to entertain a change of policy. As long as Estonian sovereignty is at risk from the mere forces in being from either side, there can be no confidence-building.

b) Disconnect Russian re-integration of the CFE Treaty from its withdrawal from Moldova and Georgia

The only advantage of maintaining the linkage between withdrawal and reintegration has to do with Alliance solidarity. The maintenance of a united front is certainly within the sphere of Estonia's national interests as described in the NSC, but the reassurances sought as to the validity of Article 5, and nuclear deterrence at the moment of NATO's transformation and general nuclear disarmament suggests that Estonia does not shy away from positions that do not totally conform with the Alliance mainstream.[40]

Furthermore, the wisdom of maintaining that approach is open to dispute since the European Union has clearly laid the blame of the Russia-Georgia conflict of August 2008 on

[40] Notes from a workshop held at the Baltic Defence College on NATO's new Strategic Concept, 15–16 October 2009. See also Paul Ingram, *NATO's Nuclear Options...*, 3–4.

Georgia. The good will of Russian policy makers has greater chances of generating a return into the CFE Treaty fold if claims of double standards (where one organization's condemnation is not mirrored by the policies of another) can be avoided. More generally, however, this has to do with old-fashioned realism. What can Georgia and Moldova trade for Estonia's support in this matter? Indeed, if there must be a linkage, it would be better that it be with an issue whose lack of resolution does not impact Estonian security directly. The premise of offering Georgia and Moldova support is laudable, but the CFE Treaty cannot remain moribund without jeopardizing Estonian regional and national interests in the long run. Prudence demands that Estonia look after herself first.

c) Engaging the grass roots movements to support continued strategic and tactical arms limitations

The role of Estonia within the NATO NPG would not change much from what it already is. However, Estonia can leverage Europe's vibrant civil society in calling for further strategic arms cuts and in extending the non-proliferation regime to tactical nuclear weapons. Admittedly, Estonia's influence in the NPG is limited to the statements it can make as to NATO's overall nuclear posture, and her position on the stationing of nuclear-capable airplanes on her territory.[41] Concurring with arms control means active support of the United States' NPR vision. To complement this harmony with European players, Estonia can further call, through non-governmental organizations and think tanks, for the reduction of tactical nuclear weapons in continental Europe. The rationale is to internationalize and bring media attention to a category of weapons that eludes regulation, a category of weapons whose quality represents an even greater danger

[41] Estonian Ministry of Defence, *Estonian Long Term Defence Development Plan 2009–2018*, 8. The Amäri air base is scheduled to host the Baltic Air Policing unit in the medium term.

than conventional forces in being. First by reviving the sort of deterrence that can still collapse with grievous consequences. Second by the smuggling risk they represent. The size and shape of these weapons make them easier to conceal and manipulate. In view of the Estonian interest in maintaining close tabs on the transit of radioactive goods in the region, it would seem prudent to lead the way in calling for arms control of TNWs. The rationale for going the non-governmental route is to generate civil society legitimacy against ingrained interests both in NATO and in Russia who would prefer to see these weapons remain in their traditional roles, or worse, adopt new deterrence or defence roles. A healthy regional debate emanating from the expert advice of the non-governmental world would at once free precious resources of the Estonian bureaucracy and help the central governments generate the policies for further weapons cutbacks through the public support that the international community would give to such an initiative. At the same time, Estonia would help the cause of a number of European powers adamant that these weapons are no longer needed.

d) Further push for conventional disarmament within the CFE Treaty framework

Even if the policy described in c) above is successful, Estonian security will not be helped if the TNW cutbacks are offset by a qualitative or quantitative conventional escalation. Although deterrence can still function in the conventional realm, the concern remains with deterrence breakdown. The case of Georgia and Russia is instructive. Georgia tried very hard to match Russia's local superiority before launching its attack on Tskhinvali, in August 2008. Yet, this equation of forces did not deter Russia from entering Georgian territory. If Russian intentions had been to alter the status quo in the Caucasus, Georgia would not have lasted very long. Other examples are also telling; the First Gulf War and the Kosovo air war are

two cases of authoritarian regimes which failed to be deterred by the evident array of forces against them, and by the resolve of the international community. It is in that light that Estonia must consider carefully the prospect of armament.

The idea is to move nuclear and conventional disarmament in parallel so that no one type of weaponry can be sufficient to threaten Estonian independence. The interim point of this set of policies is to portray Estonia as a progressive and constructive agent in regional affairs, and to publicize this image so that if deterrence *does* breakdown, or if international relations worsen, that international public opinion be on the Estonian side, and that aggression be met with unequivocal and universal opprobrium. This image can be promoted through the JCG for the CFE Treaty, while active cooperation with NGOs on TNW matters completes and harmonizes Estonian and Euro-Atlantic positions.

e) Strengthening the defensive transition by sharing in the benefits of missile defence with Russia

General disarmament – especially in the nuclear realm – opens the door to a defensive transition. NATO has stated, through its Secretary General, that it is not averse at sharing the BMD shield with Russia against rogue states.

> We need a missile defence system that includes not just all countries of NATO, but Russia too. One security roof, that we build together, that we support together, and that we operate together. One security roof that protects us all.
>
> The more that missile defence can be seen as a security roof in which we all have a share, the more people from Vancouver to Vladivostok would know that they were part of one community. One community, sharing real security, against a real threat, using real technologies.[42]

[42] "Building a Euro-Atlantic Security Architecture", Speech by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen at the Brussels Forum 2010, 27 March 2010, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_62395.htm?selectedLocale=en, accessed 22 June 2010.

Anti-ballistic missile batteries are systems that are truly defensive provided that it does not exist in support of a potential first strike capability, a strike that could render the potential of adversarial retaliation impossible. Therefore nuclear disarmament goes hand in hand with deployment of defences against tactical nuclear weapons. This policy does not jeopardize the positions of countries that have accepted *Patriot* batteries on their soil, keeping the policy package harmonious. Estonia does not need to argue for the need for a defensive transition as it is believed that the mere reduction in offensive weaponry will amount to this state of affairs.

Conclusion

This is a tall order for a small country. But it is a challenge that can be met. So far, position-taking had been confused with policy-making in Estonian analytical and official circles. Estonia can never be assured of her neighbours' policies, whether they pertain to the promise of solidarity in case of attack or whether her erstwhile adversaries are true to their word. But she can be sure that no harm will come to her from non-existent weapons, or drastically reduced arsenals. A unique laboratory to test the concept of "whole of government" approach in a non-conflict setting, would require the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to sign a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Defence where the former would take ownership of policy implementation. Although it may look to some as if the MOD would be playing second fiddle to the MFA, the intent has more to do with the avoidance of mixed signals than bureaucratic domination. For example, if the Ministry of Foreign Affairs adopts a particular approach within the CFE Treaty framework, the parallelism with nuclear

disarmament must be ensured by the Ministry of Defence representation within NATO's NPG. Policy formulation and implementation can be more coherent and reflect better the precepts of the Estonian NSC. In addition, it avoids inter-departmental friction when topics cross over between ministerial jurisdiction.

By pushing for continued disarmament, Estonia becomes the next generation of small yet powerful peace proponents, because it is difficult to dethrone someone from the moral high ground. As the pursuance of disarmament is in no way detrimental to deployed anti-tactical weapons batteries, relations with Poland are safe. And as continued disarmament is an aim of the great nuclear powers anyway, Estonia maintains solidarity with her most reliable ally, while at the same time consolidating her position on the moral high ground by building stability with Russia. Then, her security from conventional duress can be increased by building on the privileged seat at the table of the OSCE and lead the way towards lower conventional ceilings, thereby appeasing Russia, undercutting the conservatives, and shielding her Allies from the difficult promise of extended deterrence, as well as saving herself the trouble (and the risk) of developing a costly conventional force for herself.

Many would deem the plan outlined above as unrealistic, or unachievable. That the majority of critics would think so would be regrettable, because the ultimate aim of policy is to secure the nation, not criticize Allied policy or oppose an adversary's position. Size is not an impediment to excellence. How many times have I heard Estonian officials lament that their country is small? Yet, examples to follow are not hard to find; continental Denmark is small, Holland is small, Switzerland is small, yet each has found the levers necessary to activate greater powers' reasoning. This can be Estonia's lot as well. More of the policy-mak-

ing elite must present Estonia as master of her own regional and Euro-Atlantic destiny, as champion of the sort of disarmament that brings not only security, but Alliance cohesion, and praise. Who knows, maybe there is a Nobel Peace Prize in the offing for the Minister who thinks of it first.

A bicycle getting rusty: Some thoughts on Baltic cooperation

Jeroen Bult

Concordia res parvae crescunt,
discordia maximae dilabantur
Gajus Sallustius Crispus (Roman historian).

Introduction

'Slow, reserved Estonians', 'Latvians with six-toed feet' and 'chaotic, impulsive Lithuanians': a scientist surely should not attach too much importance to clichés of this kind. Yet, these stereotypes indicate that Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are guided by different traditions, interests and *Weltanschauungen*, which have often hampered the coordination of foreign policy.

This tendency could already be discerned in the 1990s. The three republics got entangled in a series of (maritime) border disputes and trade wars, chose their own ideological paths while rebuilding their economies and, maybe even worst of all, harked back to ideas from the 1920s and 1930s about their place in the region. Estonia rediscovered its 'Nordic roots', Latvia presented itself as the bridge between West and East ('Amber Gateway'), while Lithuania flirted with the idea of being a Central European country. Apparently, not only a retroactive, 'Hunt-

ingtonian' rebellion against the former colonizer in the East was considered to be a cornerstone of the process of nation building – distancing oneself from the smaller neighbouring republics became pivotal for the construction of national identity as well. In 1993, Vytautas Landsbergis rightly predicted that the solidarity of 1989–1991 would gradually disappear, and that a younger generation of politicians would feel less inspired by the mood of the 'Singing Revolutions.'[1]

The European Union and NATO almost took it for granted that a regional 'Baltic' identity would emerge; couldn't Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania just follow the example of the Benelux and the Visegrad countries? Apart from the facts that Benelux as an institution has been a dead letter for forty years now – the cooperation between Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg lost momentum after the economic recovery in the 1950s and the 'defeat' of French President De Gaulle's political aspirations in the European Community in the late 1960s – and the Netherlands and Belgium are poles apart as to their perception of (the future of) European integration, such externally-imposed politico-geographic entities hardly leave room for differentiation.[2] Maybe one can even draw a parallel between the 'Protestant', 'pro-Atlantic' Netherlands and Estonia, and 'Roman Catholic', 'continental' Belgium and Lithuania.

However, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania could not disregard Brussels' preference for closer 'Baltic' cooperation; deliberately ignoring and obstructing each other would surely be interpreted as unsuitability for EU and NATO membership. This indirect pressure resulted in the signing of the BAFTA (Baltic Free-Trade Association) Agreement in September 1993 and of two agreements on the field of

[1] 'V. Landsbergis teigia, kad Baltijos šalių ryšius susilpnino jų naujosios vyriausybės', in: *Lietuvos rytas*, 21 August 1993.
[2] Jeroen Bult, 'Baltimaade sõbrad või huvid?', in: *Postimees*, 19 December 2006.

customs cooperation and a common visa zone (March 1992 and June 1995). The greatest success, undoubtedly, was the formation of the BALTBAT and BALTRON units, the creation of the BALTNET surveillance network and the foundation of BALTDEFCOL in the second half of the 1990s. The Baltic Assembly (BA) and the Baltic Council Ministers (BCM) tried to provide trilateral cooperation with a more structural, institutional framework.

It is a paradox that at the same time, the EU stirred up national reflexes and aspirations by gradually switching to a more *individual* approach of EU enlargement. The introduction of the so-called Europe Agreements that Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and the EU signed in June 1995 referred to the essence of the continuation of regional cooperation und unity, but in practice the European Commission and the European Council would judge the countries by their own achievements. During the Madrid Summit of December 1995, the Council called on the Commission to submit an assessment of the membership applications of the candidate states, thus formally confirming this change of course. Estonia, that had made considerable progress with restructuring its economy, welcomed Brussels adjusted policy, but Latvia and Lithuania were far less pleased. Or were they simply blinded by the predominating wish to accede to the EU (and NATO) as soon as possible and was the Madrid decision nothing more than a reiteration of a procedure that had been followed for decades? After all, the application of E(E)C/EU membership and the ensuing negotiations have *always* been individual matters; countries have only *joined* the ranks as a group (Denmark, Great Britain and Ireland in 1973, Portugal and Spain in 1986, and Austria, Finland and Sweden in 1995).

The European Commission's decision (15 July 1997) to nominate Estonia for accession talks only (together with the Cyprus, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia)

caused an outbreak of consternation in Riga in Vilnius. According to Latvian Prime Minister Šķēle, the conclusions of "incompetent bureaucrats" would "undermine Baltic unity." He expressed the hope that the EU member states would "reconsider the political consequences of a final decision." His Lithuanian counterpart Vagnorius called the decision "not objective and based on geopolitical criteria." Vagnorius even alluded to the existence of a secret EU document that proved that the conclusions of the Commission, especially the ones concerning the Lithuanian agricultural sector, were based on information of 1994–1995 that was out of date. Other Lithuanian policy-makers described Brussels' judgement as unfair and declared that their country did indeed meet the political and economic criteria – 'impulsive Lithuanians'? [3] Estonia's lack of solidarity also brought about irritation in Latvia and Lithuania – 'cold Estonians'? In December 1999, they would be invited for accession negotiations too, but at that time, the complacent *Põhjamaa* ('Nordic country') contemplations that had erupted in Estonia[4] had seriously affected their relationship with the northern neighbour. This didn't keep Lithuania from strengthening *its* ties with Poland and Central Europe, however.

Evaporating solidarity, a rediscovery of the national identity and national past, and a '*rat race*' to Brussels: by the end of the first decade of (restored) independence the overall picture was looking rather poor. Has this situation changed over the past ten years? Have Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, now that they have become members of the EU

[3] 'Eestis on Euroopat rohkem', in: *Postimees*, 22 July 1997; 'Iš Strasbūro ir Vilniaus Lietuva matoma skirtingai', in: *Lietuvos rytas*, 17 July 1997; 'Šalies politikai supyko, kad Lietuva buvo atstumta', in: idem; 'Europos Komisijos pažymys nustebino, bet nesupykdė. Lietuva pasiryžusi įrodyti, kad Europos Sąjungai yra pasirengusi ne blogiau už Estiją', in: *Lietuvos rytas*, 21 July 1997.

[4] 'Jõulumaa ehk vaimse geograafia enesemääramine', in: Toomas Hendrik Ilves, *Eesti jõudmine. Kõned ja kirjutised aastaist 1986–2006* (Tallinn:Varrak, 2006), pp. 30–36; 'Kas Eesti kuulub Põhjamaade hulka?', in: *Luup*, Nr. 23 (80), 16 November 1998, p. 22.

and NATO and their *Westbindung* has been accomplished, finally found each other? Or have the underlying national reflexes prevailed?

Caught between two extremes

One crucial external factor would influence Estonian-Latvian-Lithuanian relations in the 2000s like no other would: the resurrection of Russia. The self-confidence that Russia has displayed since the start of the Putin Presidency, inspired by its fast economic growth and energy bonanza, and Russia's embrace of the Soviet perception of twentieth-century history ('Great Patriotic War', 'Liberation from Fascism') made the three small republics aware of the necessity to join forces. One could also argue that now that the border disputes had been resolved (Estonia-Latvia) and 'frozen' (Latvia-Lithuania), the accession talks with Brussels had been completed in 2002 and the trade disputes had gradually lost importance due to EU accession in 2004, there was in fact 'more time left' to look to the East. This would not mean, however, that mutual cooperation would improve in every possible way – on the contrary, economic rivalry was still thriving and would even intensify (harbours, cargo transit, airports, ICT, corporate income tax). So, a psychological dimension – that was new and familiar at the same time – was *added* to the trilateral relationship. Of course, in the 1990s Russia had been omnipresent in the national consciousness of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as well (withdrawal of the former Red Army, demarcation of the borders, Russian allegations on the 'discrimination' of the Russian-speaking minorities, the emotional debates on the legal continuity of the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian states since 1940), yet at the same time the country was weakened by economic chaos and political turbulence.

Vladimir Putin intended to close this humiliating chapter as soon as possible.

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have interpreted Russia's economical and military-technological revival as a direct and indirect threat to their national security. The agreement on the construction of the *North European Gas Pipeline/ Nord Stream* across the bed of the Baltic sea (September 2005), the Russian-Ukrainian 'Gas Wars' (January 2006 and January 2009), the first Russian-Georgian crisis (October 2006), the suspension of the Treaty on Armed Convention Forces in Europe (CFE, July 2007), (the perceived hand of the Kremlin in) the cyber attacks on Estonia (Spring 2007) and Lithuania (Summer 2008), and, *last but not least*, the Russian invasion of Georgia (August 2008) evoked anxiety in Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius. The visit that Estonian President Ilves, Lithuanian President Adamkus and Latvian Prime Minister Godmanis paid to Tbilisi, together with Presidents Yushchenko and Kaczyński, shortly after the outbreak of the Russian-Georgian War, was not just an expression of support for Georgia; it was an expression of solicitude about Russia's post-imperialist whims as well.

The raw wind fom the East has inspired Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to propagate an unanimous and unambiguous European Russia policy, a common energy policy, a well-integrated European energy market, further diversification of European energy resources, and a vigorous European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and Eastern Partnership. They have repeatedly reminded their NATO allies that the Alliance should not dilute (the original meaning of) Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. At the same time, the republics have tried to show that they are reliable partners themselves; BALTBAT 2, consisting of 750 troops, was founded in 2006. The Defence Ministers renewed the 1995 Defence Cooperation Agreement in May 2008, and are meeting frequently, like high-ranked civil servants and military officers.

Common airspace control must have been one of the topics they touched upon. The voluntary defence forces, *Kaitseliit*, *Zemessarze* and *KASP*, started common exercises.

The toughening international political climate and the thin cohesion of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy have left the three small countries in the northeast periphery of Europe no other choice but offering each other support as much as possible indeed. However, translating this logical conclusion into every-day *practice* has often proved to be remarkably difficult. The will to cooperate is evident, yet political and economic rivalry, suspicion have occasionally resulted in hesitation and uncertainty. Praiseworthy initiatives and intentions have frequently been thwarted by national reflexes, internal political disputes, decision-making problems and sheer nonchalance and envy. In other words, we can descry both a form of continuity and a form of discontinuity with the situation of the 1990s – on the one hand, Baltic cooperation is still caught between the two extremes of national impulses and external pressure, yet on the other that external incentive does not come from the West/Brussels any longer, but from the East/Moscow.

The energy test

Ironically, the one single issue that Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania consider of vital importance to their national and to regional security offers an illuminating example of this pattern of ambivalence: energy. Let us now have a closer look at two aspects of the energy agenda that have had an impact on their mutual relationship.

'Ignalina 3'

On 27 February 2006, the Prime Ministers of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania sealed the construction of a new, common nuclear power reactor in the Lithuanian town of Visaginas. It should be built next to the second reactor of the Chernobyl-type *Ignalinos atominė elektrinė* (IAE) that was still functioning by that time, but that was to be closed down by 31 December 2009, a demand of the European Commission. Populist Lithuanian politicians like Rolandas Paksas have tried to exploit anti-closure sentiments, but the Commission was relentless. Gradually, Lithuania's policy-makers came to realize that an alternative scenario had to be worked out; late 2005, Prime Minister Brazauskas touched upon the construction of a 'Baltic' power plant during a meeting with representatives of *Eesti Energia*. The total costs have been estimated at four to five billion euro.[5]

Half a year later, things would take a different course. Brazauskas' successor Kirkilas invited Poland to join the project as well. Polish participation is of vital importance to Lithuania, as it wants to be connected to the electricity grid of continental Europe – an *elektros tiltas* (bridge) to Poland will release it from its isolated position. Although Estonia and Latvia had been sceptic about a possible role for Poland, that country became officially involved in March 2007, and one and a half year later the four national energy companies formed a special project development company, *Visagino atominė elektrinė* (VAE). Kirkilas immediately pointed out that Lithuania wants to take a proportionally big share – 34 percent – in the legal successor of VAE, to which the management of the reactor will eventually be relegated.[6] Estonia, Latvia and Poland were unpleasantly surprised. The latter,

[5] 'ES durys pravertos', in: *Veidas*, Nr. 42 (345), 21–27 October 1999, pp. 36–37; 'Eesti asub Leeduga uut tuumajaama ehitama', in: *Postimees*, 2 December 2005.

[6] 'Eesti saab tuumajaamast 22%', in: *Äripäev*, 5 March 2007; 'Konflikt Ignalina ümber süveneb', in: *Postimees*, 6 March 2007.

in its turn, alluded to the construction of *two* reactors in Visaginas, so that it can be supplied with 1,000 to 1,200 megawatt of electricity. Estonian Minister of Economic Affairs Juhan Parts stressed that interested, private investors should be allowed to participate as well – indeed it remains to be seen, whether such a grand-scale, high-tech project can survive without any private capital – while Lithuania hasn't concealed its preference for a greater role for the national energy companies.[7] The paralysing legal political-legal decision-making process regarding Lithuania's new, coordinating national energy concern, *Lietuvos elektros organizacija* (*Leo LT*), a merger of one private and two public companies, entailed irritation among its partners. "We want clarity and results. We do not get answers to our questions, but we cannot wait forever. We will have look for new solutions. […] It seems that everything has come to a standstill in Lithuania, but the clock is still ticking", Estonian President Ilves said.[8]

The Estonian Head of State was also referring to the discussion about the prolongation of the production of the *second* IAE reactor that had flared up again in Lithuania. Prime Minister Kirkilas even organized a national referendum on this very issue in October 2008 (because of the low turn-out, the result was declared invalid). The European Commission refused to give in, and insisted that Lithuania would live up to its commitments, as stipulated in Article 1 of the Fourth Addendum of the 2002 Accession Treaty. Apparently, it didn't find Lithuania's argument that a gap in the national electricity supply would arise after the closure on 31 December 2009, as a consequence of which Lithuania would become more dependent on imports from Russia convincing. President Ilves

[7] 'Minister Juhan Parts arutab Leedu kolleegiga Ignalina tuumajaama tulevikku', *Äripäev*-online, 29 May 2007 (www.ap3.ee); 'Parts arutas Leedu kolleegiga Ignalina tuumajaama projekti', in: *Postimees*, 31 May 2007.

[8] 'Ilves: Me ei kavatse tuumajaama lõputult oodata', *Baltic News Service*, 1 November 2007 (www.bns.ee); 'Ilves: Meil on liiga vähe ellu jäänud mehi', in: *Eesti Päevaleht* (*Möte* section), 22 February 2008.

was not impressed either: "We already knew that two years ago." It soon became clear that Estonia and Latvia would not back Lithuania in its attempts to keep 'Ignalina 2' open.[9]

The Commission also raised objections to the *LEO LT* construction: amalgamating public and private companies without a public tender was contrary to European rules.[10] Lithuanian Parliament, the Constitutional Court and President (and former European Commissioner) Grybauskaitė expressed similar criticism – Grybauskaitė insisted on elaborating a new legal structure – while the *LEO LT* management had already been replaced three times and Kirkilas preferred a greater role for the Lithuanian State in the company. Even Lithuanian daily *Lietuvos rytas* complained that *LEO LT* "had become a victim of political intrigues" and "was about to become totally worthless." It went on that since 2006, hardly any progress had been made, also because a consensus with the foreign partners was evidently failing – potential private partners would never invest in a project that was managed so poorly.[11] The dissolving pf *LEO LT* was officially confirmed by the Lithuanian Energy Ministry and *NDX energija*, the private shareholder, on 4 December 2009.

The harsh comment of *Lietuvos rytas* must have been appreciated in Estonia. There, certain (influential) politicians, such as Jürgen Ligi, the Chairman of the Finance Committee of Estonian Parliament, and scientists had publicly contemplated the construction a separate *Estonian* nuclear power plant. In February 2008, *Eesti Energia* and the Ministry of Economy Affairs announced that they would assess this idea

[9] Ibidem; Correspondence with the Ministry of Economic Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, 10 September 2008; 'Eesti ei toeta Ignalina tuumajaama tegevuse pikendamist', *Baltic News Service*, 6 March 2008.
[10] See: 'Ignalina Company under EU Investigation', in: *The Baltic Times*, Nr. 614 (Vol. 10), 17–23 July 2008, p. 5.
[11] 'Laiko ženklai', in: *Lietuvos rytas*, 31 July 2009.

"that could materialize by the year 2015."[12] Andres Tropp, Head of the Nuclear Energy division of *Eesti Energia*, raised a another potential problem: the total number of megawatts had to amount to at least 3,400 in case Poland would indeed participate. He pointed out that Lake Drūkšiai, where the Ignalina complex is located, contains far too less cooling water for that.[13] Estonia also focused on intensifying energy ties with Finland; the two countries want to link up their electricity grids and to deepen cooperation of the fields of science and technology.[14] During a party conference of his Liberal *Reformierakond* in November 2008 and during meetings with his Latvian, Lithuanian and Polish counterparts, Prime Minister Ansip gave utterance to his discontent with the lack of progress with 'Ignalina 3.' He hinted that Estonia would aim at building its own nuclear plant, if possible in cooperation with Finland.[15] The Ansip Government made up its mind on 23 January 2009 – that day, it sanctioned two policy documents on the future of national energy supply that, amongst other things, confirmed that Estonia would indeed construct a plant. It should be operative by 2023. Formally, Estonia would not abandon the Baltic nuclear project, but the message was clear. Latvian experts advised to follow the Estonian example; according to them, nuclear power production by 2025 or 2030 should not be an unrealistic scenario.[16]

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[12] *Aktuaalne kaamera*, ETV, 20 February 2008; 'Eestisse võib 15 aasta pärast tulla tuumajaam', in: *Äripäev*, 27 February 2008.

[13] 'Ignalina tuumajamaa võimsusest ei pruugi kõigile huvilistele jätkuda', in: *Eesti Päevaleht*, 1 September 2008.

[14] See: Eesti Vabariigi Valitsus, 'Eesti ja Soome peaministrid näevad riikide ühisarengus olulist potentsiaali', 25 June 2008 (www.valitsus.ee).

[15] 'Ansip: Eesti tuumajaam võiks valmida koostöös Soomega', *Postimees*-online, 21 November 2008 (www.postimees.ee); 'Balti riigid tüürivad Põhjala elektriturule', in: *Äripäev*, 24 November 2008; 'Eesti ja Poola loodavad Ignalina tuumaprojekti kiiremat edasiminekut', *Postimees*-online, 16 April 2009. The Polish Government also alluded to the construction of two national nuclear plants.

[16] 'Valitsus andis tuumajaama rajamise suunale heakskiidu', *Baltic News Service*, 26 February 2009; 'Eestisse tuleb 2023. aastaks tuumajaam', in: *Äripäev*, 27 February-1 March 2009; 'Läti kaalub tuumajaama rajamist', *Äripäev*-online, 17 August 2009.

Nordbalt

The national energy companies of Sweden and Lithuania, *Svenska Kraftnät* and *Lietuvos energija* (of which *LEO LT* would eventually become the main shareholder), had started negotiations about the construction of an electricity cable across the bed of the Baltic Sea, *SwedLit*. After the *EstLink I* cable from Finland to Estonia (2006) and the planned Polish-Lithuanian 'bridge', this would be the third project aimed at helping Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to break out of their 'energy isolation.'[17]

Rather unexpectedly, Latvia presented itself as an alternative destination for the cable in late 2007. Prime Minister Godmanis and his successor Dombrovskis asserted that a route via the Gulf of Riga would be a more convenient and cheaper option (100 million euro), and that experts should take the final decision.[18] Lithuanian Prime Minister Kirkilas commented that he did not believe that Latvia would hamper the project – that would be renamed *NordBalt* in June 2009 – and that the Latvian electricity network was "unsuited" for a direct connection to the Swedish grid.[19] Godmanis suggested that *Sweden* should take "a rational decision", but the Swedish Government would point out that it was up to Latvia and Lithuania themselves to tackle the problem.[20]

Dombrovskis and Lithuanian Prime Minister Kubilius

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[17] *Svenska Kraftnät* and *Lietuvos energija* commissioned a feasibility study in February 2007. After the presentation of the – positive – results, one year later, they intensified cooperation.

[18] 'Nesutarimai su Latvija', in: *Lietuvos rytas*, 24 July 2008; 'Latvijos premjeras dėl elektros tilto su Švedija siūlo spręsti ekspertams', *Verslo žinios*-online, 20 March 2009 (www.vz.lt); 'Milijonai pažadėti, reikia rengtis uždirbti', in: *Verslo žinios*, 23 March 2009.

[19] 'Elektros tiltai: lenktynės su laiku ir kaimynais', in: *Verslo žinios*, 15 April 2008; 'Kirkilas: Läti ei hakka Leedu energiaprojekte takistama', *Baltic News Service*, 20 May 2008; 'Leedu veenab Lätit osalema Rootsi elektrisilla projektis', *Baltic News Service*, 5 June 2008.

[20] 'Žodžiais sutinka, bet parašų nėra', in: *Verslo žinios*, 13 October 2008.

succeeded in resolving this odd affair during a meeting with their Estonian colleague Ansip on 27 April 2009. The three leaders reaffirmed their intention to create a common, transparent, barriers-free regional energy market in 2013 – of which *NordBalt* should be an integral part. The energy companies of Sweden, Latvia and Lithuania would make preparations for the construction of the cable, on basis of equality. It will end in Lithuania (probably in Klaipeda), while the electricity network of Western Latvia will be modernized.[21] The European *Economy Economy Recovery Programme* of the EU will support the project with 175 million euro. The final obstacles, such as the precise financial contributions of *Svenska Kraftnät*, *InterLinks* (the subsidiary of *Lietuvos energija* that is dealing with *SwedLit*/*NordBalt*) and *Latvenergo* and the mutual adjustment of the national frequencies, were removed on 9 July 2009, when a memorandum of understanding was signed. It still remains to be seen, whether the Latvian-Lithuanian dispute has delayed the actual construction process.

One could even mention a third energy-related issue: the storage of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) in the region. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have presented plans for the construction of LNG terminals – although the Latvian ones are of a relatively general character (only Estonia and Lithuania have indicated where their terminals will be built: in the vicinity of Paldiski and Klaipeda). This national approach is all the more striking, if one bears in mind that the construction costs will be high, the size of the regional market is small, Poland intends to build a terminal as well (near the town of Swinoujscie), the position of Finland is still unclear, and, probably most important of all, the long-term contracts that are common practice on the LNG market are rather expensive. However, it is still too early to tell, as to how

[21] 'Tiltas į Švediją – iš Lietuvos', in: *Verslo žinios*, 28 April 2009.

this very issue will influence Estonian-Latvian-Lithuanian relations.

It appears that Russia has tried to exploit the slow progress. Russian Prime Minister Putin announced in May 2008 that his country would construct twenty-six new atomic power plants in the years to come. One of these, the *Baltishkaya* plant, will be built in Neman in the Kaliningrad exclave, fifteen kilometers from the border with Lithuania. The official decision was taken on 13 August 2008 and the construction works started in February 2010. The two reactors should be operative between 2016 and 2018 and should generate 2,300 to 2,400 megawatt in total – far too much for the exclave only. Although Lithuania has expressed its concern about the possible environmental consequences of the *Baltishkaya* project (the use of cooling water from the Nemunas river), some observers have wondered, as to whether Lithuania will be able to resist the temptation to import – cheap – electricity from Kaliningrad. After all, Lithuania and Kaliningrad are both part of the regional, former Soviet electricity network and since the switching off of 'Ignalina 2', Lithuania has already become more dependent on electricity imports from the Smolensk power plant in Western Russia. If '*Baltishkaya*' is more than a just smoke screen aimed at sowing confusion among foreign entrepreneurs who might be interested in investing in 'Ignalina 3'[22] and Russia will indeed succeed in accomplishing the plant before the opening of the reactor in Visaginas and in attracting foreign capital, that will undoubtedly affect the profitability of the latter project.[23] A Lithuanian newspaper wrote in 2008 that Russia wanted to embark on negotiations with Sweden and Germany, on their pos-

[22] Interview with Einari Kisel, Deputy Secretary General of Energy of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communication of Estonia, Tallinn, 2 November 2010.

[23] 'Ieško investuotojo, nors apsieitų ir be jo', in: *Verslo žinios*, 19 February 2010; 'Rusija skuba, Lietuva nelenktyniaus', in: *Verslo žinios*, 26 February 2010.

sible connection to the Kaliningrad plant.[24] Belarus, Lithuania's other neighbour, has alluded to the construction of a nuclear power plant as well, which should be online at around 2015. According to plan, it should go up near Lake Drūkšiai, at the opposite site of 'Ignalina 3.' It remains to be seen whether this project will indeed materialize – the plan could also be construed as a sign of growing tensions between Belarus and Russia – but Belarus has hinted that the import of electricity might be 'beneficial' to Lithuania.

A bike getting rusty

"Baltic cooperation is like a bike that one only uses, if one really needs it. The historical and cultural differences are an undeniable fact, and that is why this cooperation will remain a practical thing", the foreign policy advisor of Lithuanian Prime Minister Kirkilas said in 2008.[25]

That bike threatens to get rusty. As to their mutual cooperation, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania seem to be wavering constantly. Pinching the 'trophies' of 2004 entailed the easy-going feeling that now that NATO and the EU will offer political and military protection, mutual/trilateral cooperation can be consigned to a second place. In February 2005, Latvian President Vīķe-Freiberga formulated it this way: "We no longer feel the need to operate as a Baltic block, something that was necessary indeed back in 1939, when the Soviet Union threatened us and demanded the opening of military bases on our territories."[26] Latvia's 'Iron Lady' looked back after her retirement in 2007: "I made serious efforts to give shape to Baltic unity, but it was in vain."[27]

[24] 'Atominė Karaliaučiuje virsta realybe', in: *Respublika*, 11 June 2008.
[25] Interview with Mindaugas Jurkynas, Vilnius, 4 February 2008.
[26] 'Vīķe-Freiberga ühtsust pole vaja üle hinnata', *Baltic News Service*, 4 February 2005.
[27] '"Dėl Baltijos šalių vienybės kartais dėdavau labai daug pastangų, deja, bergždžių" – tvirtina prezidentė V. Vykė-Freiberga', in: *Veidas*, Nr. 18 (913), 3–9 May 2010, p. 14.

Only in the joined commemoration of controversial and historic events, such as the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact in 1939 and the formation of the *Balti kett/Baltijas ceļš/Baltijos kelias* in 1989 an echo of the solidarity and affection of the Singing Revolution can be heard.

Now that Russia has scrambled to its feet again, the three republics are caught between two sentiments: the feeling that the immense neighbouring power poses a threat to national security, which condemns them to cooperation on the one hand, and the awareness of the diverging (geo-)political, historical-cultural and economical experiences, traditions and interests on the other. Being small players on the European and international stages, they are forced to cooperate, yet they will never become natural allies and will always judge (international-political) events in their own manner, to put it in the words of Lithuanian political scientist Česlovas Laurinavičius.[28] Insufficient coordination and synergy, and possibly a lack of professional experience with setting up grand-scale projects are adventitious factors, as the case study on energy cooperation in this article also indicates.

Of course, frictions between small neighbouring countries are occurring elsewhere too; disagreement about the dredging of the Dutch Westerschelde (the water route that connects Antwerp and its harbour to the North Sea) has caused serious diplomatic tensions between the Netherlands and Belgium over the past few years. One even gets the impression that Estonian-Latvian-Lithuanian relations embody the EU-in-a-nutshell: the awareness of the necessity of cooperation in a globalizing world is there, yet the will to persevere is often lacking. Nor are 'Baltic' relations as problematic as they used to be in the 1918–1940 era. By that time, the Vilnius and Memel Questions were considered to be pure Lithuanian-Polish and Lithuanian-German matters,

[28] 'Pasmerktos partnerystei', in: *Veidas*, Nr. 19 (628), 12–18 May 2005, p. 19.

yet nowadays not a single Estonian or Latvian politician will claim that pauperised Kaliningrad and post-stalinist Belarus are issues that are solely concerning Lithuania. Apart from that, economic interaction (financial services, trade, investments) in the region has increased considerably.

However, on the bilateral field, the overall picture is looking more complicated. Progress could be discerned in Estonian-Latvian relations in the 2000s, which the opening of a common Embassy in Cairo illustrates for instance, but Estonia remains apprehensive of continuing economic problems – rumours about a devaluation of the lat have never died down – and political instability in Latvia. Will these affect the Estonian economy one way or another and will these offer chances to Russia? Or as a Western diplomat in Riga put it: "Why would Russia invade Latvia? It can *buy* Latvia." The unexpected electoral victory of Prime Minister Dombrovskis in October 2010 might be a relief to the policy-makers in Tallinn. Latvian-Lithuanian relations are still overshadowed by the unsolved maritime border dispute of the mid 1990s and the frequent frictions on the field of energy – therefore, one could speak of a business-like lovelessness. Estonian-Lithuanian relations are cordial – at least friendlier than they were ten years ago, when the *Põhjamaa* debate cast a dark shadow over the bilateral relationship – but are characterized by indifference and dispassionateness. Estonia and Lithuania are seeing each other as 'abroad.'

The old, familiar national reflexes and self-perceptions that have thawed out after 1991 will not volatilise on the short term, also if one takes into account hat Estonia has joined the euro zone on 1 January 2011 and has become a member of the distinguished OECD. This might revitalize the Estonian notion of being more advanced and 'Nordic' than its southern neighbours. Not long after Estonia's euro zone qualification, Prime Minister Ansip stated that his country now meets all criteria for becoming a *Põhjamaade*

tiiger, a 'Nordic tiger.' In the case of Latvia, one could argue that of all three republics, it still has the most fragile national identity – large Russian-speaking minorities, regional differences (Roman Catholic Latgale), an uneven spread of the population (Riga 'versus' the emptied countryside) – and that it has displayed most uncertainty regarding its relation with Russia: a dislike of Russia's interpretation of twentieth-century history and a strong dependence on transit of Russian cargo. Lithuania will remain focused on relations with Poland and Central Europe. As such, this positive Lithuanian engagement is a relatively new phenomenon; in the 1920s and 30s, Polish-Lithuanian relations were very tense.

As long as these national quests to the place in the region will continue, the foundation on which the Baltic cooperation is resting will remain a porous one. The national impulses and conceptions will only recede into the background in case of a (perceived) crisis situation, such as the Russian-Georgian War. It can be assumed, however, that Moscow has come to the same conclusion.

Multiculturalism in Europe reconsidered

Martin Kala

Europe is once again in the throes of a wave of changes. Populist, xenophobic and nationalist movements are gaining strength. In the West, they have declared multiculturalism – more precisely, the Islamic faith – to be their target. (Although, multiculturalism can also exist in forms that belong to the far Right, such as the French concepts of ethnopluralism, the idea that all cultures have the right to autonomy as long as each remains in its own territory.[1]) In Eastern Europe, on the other hand, they aspire to reproduce the harsh signature of 20th century fascist movements. The renationalization of politics after the anxious times of the economic crisis, the EU's enlargement pains and xenophobia have given reason for speculation that the European Union is nearing its end.

The rest of the world believes that the final act of this fascinating project will not be either a dramatic or sudden one but rather a slow and gradual dwindling of importance.[2] The permanent representative of the Russian Federation to the European Union, Vladimir Chizhov, has called it a crisis

[1] Jens–Martin Eriksen and Frederik Stjernfelt, "Culturalism: Culture as political ideology." 09. 01. 2009, *Eurozine*, pp. 1 – 8.

[2] US political scientist Charles Kupchan's pronouncement of the death of the EU has caused a stir in Europe. Kupchan, Charles. "The European Union is dying." *The Washington Post*, 02. 09. 2010. See also: Bastasin, Carlo. "Not dead yet." *Il Sole-24 Ore*, 03. 09. 2010.

of objectives. "What it all began with – the common market, common currency, Schengen, enlargement, European security and defence policy – these are all qualitative changes. But what now? Presumably the question will become inevitable at some point," said Chizhov in Brussels.[3] Over the decades, the European integration process has encountered serious difficulties, sometimes travelling down winding paths, sometimes evolving while in progress. But in connection with the latest landmark achievements in the European integration process – a more extensive enlargement to Eastern Europe and the Treaty of Lisbon – the EU reached a certain plateau and now touts the results it has achieved. The EU is coasting or capitalizing on its successes, but what it lacks is a new grand plan. If the current phase stretches out too long, presumably some will begin to doubt in the EU's future.

The primary reasons have to do with the economy. The recent financial crisis dealt a sharp blow and the major government debts and the general malaise of European banks augur new problems in future. As regards the European Union's influence and role at the world level, its GDP with respect to burgeoning Asian economies will inevitably start shrinking even despite EU enlargement. Living in a multipolar world and amid globalization in the economy, these developments are perfectly natural. But the problems caused by the said economic concerns pale in comparison to more serious symptoms such as the renationalization of politics in the European Union. Countries that once gave up a little bit of their sovereignty in the name of a collective ideal, in order to have greater opportunities in the future, now retain a white-knuckled grip on that same sovereignty and put national interests first.

In parallel to budding nationalism, a decline in European-style multiculturalism can be clearly discerned: fed by

[3] "Vene diplomaat: Euroopa Liit on sihtide kriisis" (Russian diplomat: European Union is in a crisis of objectives), *Baltic News Service*, 30. 09. 2010.

economic problems, immigration is becoming an easy target for right-wing extremist rhetoric.[4] The vaunted diversity of previous decades is now far from an appealing subject in Europe. For many Europeans, the major accomplishments of the past no longer seem very important. Politicians have naturally understood this and have started defending their national interests in Brussels more strongly. This primarily means focusing on the average voter in domestic politics, i.e. on the interests of the public and not on the interests of a minority or minorities. European society is characterized by fragmentation and inequality. Its social model is not doing well, but it no longer applies to only the disgruntled states in Southern Europe with their low development indexes, high unemployment and large influxes of immigrants but also to Scandinavian countries and the onetime economic tigers of Eastern Europe.

This time around, the change of direction comes from Sweden. For decades, our northern neighbours led the way in defining the mixed model of society in which social egalitarianism mingled with the idea of free trade, which later evolved into the European ideal. The elections in September 2010, however, marked a paradoxical and surprising turn: instead of political groups representing a social model, the Swedes backed right-wing parties. The reason for the voters' alienation was the waning of the "sense of belonging". People no longer feel that they are part of a united community and the result is gradual growth in national, regional and individual egotisms in every corner of the continent.[5]

A new age of politics has dawned in Europe. A decade ago, extremist politics was confined to the fringes, taking to the streets and smashing things. It has now arrived as a parliamentary force and is beginning to change how other

[4] Read further: Enzo Bettiza, "The Fear Factor." *La Stampa*, 21. 09. 2010. Translated by Eric Rosencrantz for *Presseurop.eu*.
[5] Press review: "Far right enters the Parliament," *Presseurop.eu*, 20. 09. 2010.

parties behave and speak. The world's biggest democratic region, the 46 nation-states grouped in the Council of Europe, is now giving birth to a centrifugal politics with identity replacing class alignment.[6]

The late English historian Tony Judt once noted that the growth in inequality is the force driving social conflict.[7] It is precisely due to inequalities between most European states, regions, peoples and incomes that Europeans have sunk into doubt and are experiencing fairly dramatic changes of mind. Voters in different corners of Europe are trying to puzzle out what the European Union has to give them in today's conditions and are asking their representatives whether it is all worth it. If such trends continue into the future, the most unprecedented and (at one time) inconceivable accomplishment of the 20th century will likely be placed in jeopardy: a community which was established in the name of peace and which wields its power coherently and collectively. If everything goes according to predictions and the EU loses its raison d'être in the eyes of its members, the result will likely be many individual statelets, which would serve no purpose in today's geopolitical climate.

Rise of right-wing sentiment and right-wing extremism

In 2010 the first alarm was triggered by the fairly radical rightward trend in pan-European election results. Sweden, which claims the title of cradle of social democracy cradle and world's most successful welfare state, was rocked by a double political tremor when the right extremist Swedish

[6] A thorough study on the developments of identity extremisms in the EU: Balent, Magali. "L'union européenne face aux défis de l'extrémisme identitaire." (Resumé in English, "The European Union challenged by identity extremism") Policy Paper "Question d'Europe n°177", Fondation Robert Schumann, 12. 07. 2010, pp. 1–10.

[7] Tony Judt, "La social-démocratie comme dernier rempart," *Courrier International*, 23.09.2010.

Democratic Party got into the Riksdag for the first time and the social democrats lost the election to the right-wing parties. Sweden's right-wing governing coalition made history but lost its majority in the parliament; on the other hand, social democrats garnered just 30.9 percent of the votes, which was their worst result since 1914. The party said it planned to form a special committee after the elections to look into the causes of the defeat and plan for the future. The Social Democratic Executive Committee will hold an extraordinary congress before its next annual congres.[8]

During the era of budget cuts, political power in Scandinavia seems fairly moderate and sincere compared to the rest of Europe. Women have a quite influential role in the society and in politics – they have enjoyed such a role for quite some time already. Even Scandinavian capitalism has a more human face, and although social inequality still exists here, it is more milder and less destructive than it is in, say, Southern or Eastern Europe. Immigrants are treated better in Scandinavia and they are accorded greater respect than they are elsewhere.

What is paradoxical is that even though Europeans acknowledge the same values and virtues that make the Scandinavian model distinctive, they also say that it is not for them. Many feel the Nordic model is suited to peoples living in a cold climate, countries that are home to a homogenous people small in number, who presumably consent to pay high taxes without grumbling. The leader of the first right-wing party ever to win elections in Sweden a second straight time, the current prime minister Frederik Reinfeld, put the finishing touch on the end to left-wing hegemony, exposing the fact that not even the modern Scandinavian model of government is immune to dramatic changes.[9] Undoubtedly it would be dangerous to idealize one model over

[8] "Social Democrats to hold extraordinary congress." *TT/The Local*, 25. 09. 2010.
[9] Dominique Moïsi, "Europe's Northern Lights," *European Voice*, 24. 09. 2010.

others. Northern Europe has its own political problems: for instance, the noteworthy xenophobic right-wing fringe in Denmark or the provincial mentality that makes an appearance in Norway from time to time. Perhaps these elections are an indicator of a general rethink on the part of the public – in favour of a more closed, stricter state?

It is no secret that European voters have sometimes drifted in a right-wing direction. A leading article in *Le Monde* after the Swedish elections called on Europe's left-wingers to "rush to the assistance of Sweden."[10] What is at fault is not only an inability of left-wing ideology to communicate or update its views. The 21st century world's zeitgeist has become transformed. More and more, it seems to me a time of change is at hand, a time of which many have warned us in the last decade – Dominique Moïsi, Chris Patten, Joschka Fisher, our own Toomas Hendrik Ilves and Siim Kallas and many more – suggesting that we embrace globalization with open arms and supported even greater integration in Europe in order to better digest external changes, adapt to the new rules living in a multipolar world and a globalizing economy. The first indicator that Europeans are becoming *en garde* is the trends regarding choices made on the political party landscape.

Both the right-of-centre and right-wing extremists are today on the ascendant in most European member states. One needs only to analyze the election results on the national and European level to see that support for right-wing ideas has jumped dramatically. In the larger member states – France, Germany, Italy – right-of-centre coalition parties have held the reins of power for many years. The situation in the United Kingdom is somewhat more complicated – there the Conservatives joined a coalition with the Liberal Democrats. Even though Social Democrats were victorious

[10] Editor's column: "Les leçons du vote suédois pour toute l'Europe," *Le Monde*, 21. 09. 2010.

in three of seven general elections held in 2010 (Czech Republic, Slovakia and Sweden), they have not yet managed to form a single government. The trend of the 1990s was to vote for parties that were positioned further left on the spectrum, and even though they are still more popular in a handful of countries in Europe, right-of-centre parties and their political partners garner more votes than the forces on the left and their own allies.

The success enjoyed by the political right can be attributed to strong, adept leaders. Nicolas Sarkozy, Angela Merkel and David Cameron all played a key role in national elections and achieved victory for right-wing parties in elections in France in 2007, Germany in 2009 and the UK in 2010. The same can be said about the Spanish socialists, who reaped rewards from Zapatero's individual charisma and held on to power in Madrid. One reason also undoubtedly lies in the fact that the right-of-centre has shifted closer to true centre, due to which the people no longer fear that they will begin dismantling the welfare state as soon as they assume power.

Europe's second new political trend, however, lies in the breakthrough accomplished by right-wing extremist forces. After elections, Swedes will now have to live with a party with a nice name – Swedish Democrats – but which represents anti-immigration and anti-Muslim views, and calls for authoritarian solutions to Sweden's growing social crisis. But let's look across the border to Denmark to see what happens when a government accepts support from the far right – in that case, the Dansk Folkpartei (Danish People's Party). Now that country's third-largest party, with nearly 14% of the vote in 2007, the Dansk Folkpartei has propped up governments since 2001, steadily increasing its share of the vote, by stealing votes from the left by pasting social democratic welfare policies into its manifestos.[11] The

[11] Denis MacShane, "Rise of the Right." *Newsweek*, 24. 09. 2010.

price has been a tightening of immigration policies and low tolerance of refugees. Some parties, like Jobbik, which also calls itself "The Movement for a Better Hungary," are anti-Semitic, and seek to downplay the Holocaust by comparing the crimes of European communism with the industrialized extermination of Jews in Nazi death camps.[12]

European right-wing extremism proved that it had capable, consistent political power back in the early 1980s. Even though mainstream parties in most member states have ruled out cooperation with extremists, that trend is dissipating. The latest example is the Netherlands, where the liberals, upon winning the elections, saw no problem in forming a government with the conservatives and the right-wing extremists; the cunning plan was foiled only by unconditional opposition from a part of the conservatives. After the general elections in early June 2010, no one party had a majority in parliament and the Dutch conservative liberals and Christian Democrats reached an agreement to form a minority government only in October[13]). In Hungary as well, the ruling conservatives have issued right-wing populist statements.

The broader problem, perhaps, lies in the fact that the right-wing parties have started adopting topics that have thus far been the domain of the extremists – let us return to the solutions to the French Roma question, which was said to be occasioned by the fact that Sarkozy is seeking votes from the extreme right for the 2012 presidential elections.[14]

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[12] Denis MacShane, "Europe's New Politics of Fear." *Newsweek*, 16. 04. 2010.

[13] The Amsterdam daily *De Volkskrant* notes the immense influence that the far-right anti-immigrant Wilders's Party for Freedom has on the coalition. "He does not have a cabinet seat, but he is there in spirit," it says. As well as supporting his partners' demand for an increase in Holland's €1bn rebate from the EU, Wilders is demanding a ban on *burqas*, fines for undocumented aliens and stripping immigrants guilty of serious offences of their Dutch nationality. Door Martin Sommer, "Niks-aan-de-hand-kabinet buigt aantoonbaar diep voor Wilders," *De Volkskrant*, 01.10.2010.

[14] For more, see "European far-right defends Sarkozy's Roma policy," *EurActiv*, 03. 09. 2010.

Germany's Social Democrats, a traditional party of the centre left, also pander to the same fears by accusing Chancellor Angela Merkel of failing to speed up compulsory integration for immigrants. Even Britain's new coalition government, which is not racist or extreme, has pushed through a strict limit on foreigners being allowed to work in Britain. It all comes down to tactics: adopting an opponent's policies is as old as politics itself. Tony Blair's longevity as the UK's prime minister was partly based on leaving intact many of the values and the reforms of the Thatcherite revolution. This was enough to bring many middle-class voters into the New Labour camp.[15]

Across Europe, there is a resurgence of ethnonationalism that is feeding the ranks of populist and anti-immigrant parties that are gaining respectability and reaching for power. Austrian nationalists triumphed in 2008 when the Freedom Party of Joerg Haider and the Alliance for the Future of Austria together took 29 percent of the vote. The Swiss People's Party of Christoph Blocher, largest in Bern, was behind the successful referendum to change the constitution to outlaw minarets and prohibit the wearing of burqas.[16] Right-wing extremists have reached parliament or have markedly increased their share of seats in the legislature in Hungary, the Netherlands and, now, Sweden. The Belgian right-wing extremist party called Vlaams Belang[17] was in parliament previously, and even though they lost seats in the last elections, they posted a fairly strong result. The latest election results across Europe show high percentages for

[15] John Wyles, "Mainstream struggles to deal with far-right gains." *The European Voice*, 30. 09. 2010.

[16] For further reading: Rudolf Walther, "Swiss self–defeatism." *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik* 1/2010. Original in German, translation by Simon Garnett to *Eurozine*.

[17] Vlaams Belang or the Flemish Interest, is a political party in the Flemish community of Belgium that advocates the independence of Flanders and strict limits on immigration, whereby immigrants would be obliged to adopt Flemish culture and language.

right-wing extremists: 11.9 percent in France (Le Front National), 8.3 percent in Italy (Lega Nord), 15.5 percent in the Netherlands (Geert Wilders's Partij Voor de Vrijheid), 28.9 percent in Switzerland (Schweizerische Volkspartei), 16.7 percent in Hungary (Jobbik) and 22.9 percent in Norway (Fremskrittspartiet i.e. Norwegian Progress Party). There are also significant parties of the extreme right in Belgium, Latvia, Slovakia, and Slovenia. Most of these parties have either seen significant gains since 2000, or did not even exist a decade ago. But the British politicians elected to European Parliament in European elections in 2009 did not enter the House of Commons back home.

It can be said that after the fall of communism, nothing else has shaken the foundations of European politics to quite the same degree as right-wing extremists entering the respective national parliaments.[18] This is a extraordinary moment, as not only are populists now in the parliament, but this support from voters has reduced considerably traditional parties' mandate to govern and is undermining the confidence of the other political forces and impacting what traditional European parties should be telling their voters.

Right-wing extremists are gaining support in countries that otherwise have disparate backgrounds, but their rhetoric can be summed up in the same way. It is called nationalism, and the primary goal is to protect the dominance of the state's interests and the homogeneity of the population. As a counterweight, the right-wing extremists express very critical attitudes toward the European Union; they hypocritically censure developments in Europe while asserting that they, too, stand for building a better Europe and intend to respond to voters' expectations as reflected by public opinion polls.

In a crusade to reconquer Europe, the left could have used many factors and events to their advantage, such as, of

[18] Denis MacShane, "Rise of the Right." *Newsweek*, 24. 09. 2010.

course, the economic crisis, which is quite salient even now in spite of certain positive developments. In the heat of the crisis, it is true that the European social democrats did condemn the neoliberal policies of the right, but they were unable to offer anything better in its place and their prospects of winning new elections in the near future – Sweden being a clear example – are far from palpable.[19] What is interesting is that even though the economic crisis is considered the fault and outcome of unregulated markets and, more broadly, right-wing policy, the people have not taken them to task for it; instead they accuse immigrants or hold out hope for the rise of some new right-wing party.

The European media has proposed that the left wing's problem stems from the fact that they are not capable of understanding "the local civilizational change toward individualism and consumerism." For instance, just recently, Europe's social democrats refused to discuss problems related to mass immigration and illegal immigrants," writes *Le Monde*.[20] The immigrants that are needed to maintain an ageing welfare society require a great effort in integration policy, which has thus far not been seen. But someone needs to pay for it one way or another, whether or not parties want to talk about it or not. Is welfare society capable of continuing to exist in the event that less attention is paid to, say, traditional social fields, health care and pensions, in order to focus on a new task – integrating immigrants?

From the 1970s on, suburbs have been built on the outskirts of Europe's capitals, and they are brimming over with people from former colonies who have been excluded so-

[19] With its representatives confined to the opposition benches nearly everywhere in Europe, the left is increasingly unable to propose a real alternative in a world where ideology is progressively disappearing, argues Jacek Stawiski in "How the Left lost it," *Polska The Times*, 22. 09. 2010. Translation by *Presseurop.eu*.

[20] Marion Van Renterghem, "Les mutations de l'extrême droite en Europe – La nouvelle droite populiste européenne prospère sur la dénonciation de l'islam," 18. 03. 2010.

cially, geographically and culturally. For instance, Paris has been associated to an increasing extent with isolated urban enclaves where class stratification is clearly evident. Former working-class quarters have become powder keg *banlieues*, which no longer accommodate enthusiastic industrious workers but rather hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants, social outcasts and families living in poverty. In this extremely poor situation, the working-class ghettos with their dangerous atmosphere are the proving ground for a new subculture that is influenced by survival instincts, the main concerns of which are the language problem and the inability to integrate into French society. It is in precisely the segregated ethnic neighbourhoods where rage against the state reached a boiling point in 2005: cars and buildings were burned and policemen were beaten. In addition, ever more refugees are arriving on the shores of Southern Europe and elsewhere. Something must be done: money must be found to assist them and new budget line items somehow explained to taxpayers in a calm manner.

The EU leadership gap creates another easy target of opportunity for the extreme right, which is adept at exploiting the resentments stirred by economic decline. Back in the salad days of immigration, foreign labour – now wont to be accused of stealing away jobs – was seen as making a real contribution to the economy. Since the early 1990s a zealous endeavour has been mounted to abolish Europe's borders, but boundaries are today a target because they allow undesirable neighbours to enjoy free movement within the system as well. Populists are on the warpath and regional communities – Scots, Catalans, the Flemish – seek to separate from the problem areas of the United Kingdom, Spain and Belgium, respectively.

Crumbling multiculturalism

One problem leads to another: We attempt to integrate immigrants, but often they are not able to adapt to the local community – even the ones who might already be considered locals. Perhaps the problem lies in the fact that entire villages were imported from the third world to Europe as cheap labour, which had the unfortunate effect of preserving their backwards microcosm, something that Western countries had long left behind. In the 1960s, many people working in the shadow economy moved to the capitals; they have failed to amalgamate with local life or feel themselves at home, as they continue to live in their own insular communities.[21] In France, ethnic structure dictates the fairly comprehensive assimilation of various cultural groups into one nation, while the English trend puts greater value on local identity, differences and communitization. Secondly, new demographic studies in numerous places in Europe – Italy, the Netherlands, and Germany – have attested to the fact that the second and third generation of immigrants are not assimilating into European society. Opinion surveys conducted in the UK and Germany report a growing tendency among young Muslims to reject mainstream norms, argues Jörg Lau in "Muslims and the Decadent West."[22] German Turks travel to Anatolia to find brides; and Britons from South Asia, who brought caste society with them to English towns, go back home to fetch their spouses. This shows that integration is not guaranteed by the passing of the torch to a new generation and that isolation from community life does not guarantee the success of integration.

Indeed, in early October 2010, German chancellor Angela

[21] On this subject: Dominique Moïsi, "The Geopolitics of Emotion: How Cultures of Fear, Humiliation, and Hope Are Reshaping the World." Doubleday 2009, p. 192.
[22] Jörg Lau, "Kein Wille zur Macht. Dekadenz [No will to power. Decadence]" First published in German in *Merkur* 8–9 (2007). Translation by Christopher Gilley to *Eurozine*, pp. 1–9.

Merkel told the young conservatives of her Christian Democratic Union that Germany's attempt to create a multicultural society where people "live side by side happily" has "failed, utterly failed." Backing up her rueful admission are surveys showing 30 percent of Germans believe the country is overrun by foreigners. An equal number believe the foreigners come to feed off German welfare. Merkel had in mind the Turks who came as *gastarbeiters*, guest workers, in the 1960s. Some 2.5 million now live in Germany. Arabs and East Europeans have come more recently. One survey puts the Muslim population at 5 million. And just a few months earlier, a German SPD party member Thilo Sarrazin, who sat on the Bundesbank board, published "Germany Abolishes Itself," which sold 300,000 copies in seven weeks. Sarrazin argued that Germany's Muslim population is intellectually inferior and unable or unwilling to learn the language or culture, and mass immigration is destroying the nation. No rightist, but a stalwart of the socialist party, Sarrazin was forced out at the Bundesbank. "Multikulti is dead," railed Horst Seehofer of Merkel's sister party, the Christian Social Union of Bavaria. He wants no more immigration from "alien cultures." Turks and other Muslims are not learning the language, he contends, not assimilating, not becoming Germans.[23] Like all of Europe, Germany grows nervous.

Yet, diversity has only benefited Europe. Throughout history, the relationship with foreigners in Europe has played a key role in the search for a European national identity and common society. The explorations and voyages, commercial expeditions as well as colonial conquests of the 17th and 18th century that discovered new cultures and countries, 19th century imperialism and 20th century decolonialization and the World Wars raised a number of serious questions for Europe as to how "the Others" could fit in with life on this

[23] Patrick J. Buchanan, "The End of Multiculturalism," *American Conservative Magazine* 19 October 2010.

continent. French philosopher Paul Ricœur has talked of an "empty space" in society reserved for Others, and this space has been filled with people from other cultures discovered by the Great Nations of Europe. What is noteworthy today is that the decline of European multiculturalism is taking place hand in hand with budding nationalism.

The hottest political topics of the autumn in 2010 – the decision to expel Roma of Bulgarian and Romanian origin from France and a publication of an anti-Islamic book by Thilo Sarrazin – both contained the right-wing message that Europe is no longer capable of managing the immigrant problem, as immigrants are largely unable or unwilling to integrate into Western society and the people see them as conspicuously thankless for whatever benefits they have received from their new homeland. The presence of immigrants is seen increasingly as a risk to security, which will certainly not aid their image in the eyes of the locals. The 9/11 attacks have some part to play in this, as they easily discredited the existing understanding of multiculturalism. The aforesaid events signal that Europe's integration efforts and the mantra of multiculturalism have started losing their effectiveness due to overuse.

Although the war of words between Sarkozy and the European Union in September 2010 concerned the Roma, and not Muslims, it is a telling example of how the weight of the immigrant and foreign culture issues has shifted to the realm of domestic policy. The Thilo Sarrazin book affair is made piquant by the fact that the author is a social democrat and a long-time proponent of left of centre ideologies. "If such a book had been written by the head of a right-wing extremist national democrat party, the news value would have been equivalent to that of a typical fender bender."[24]

The events leading up to the Roma conflict began when

[24] Hardo Pajula, "Teraapilise riigi patoloogilised kõrvalnähud" [A therapeutic state's pathological symptoms] *Postimees*, 25.09.2010.

President Nicolas Sarkozy proposed, in a speech delivered in Grenoble, that French of "foreign origin" – immigrants or descendants of French citizens – should forfeit their citizenship if they are involved in some wrongdoing. Upon hearing of this proposal, some of the Muslim youth of "foreign origin" hit the streets again, as a consequence of which one young man was shot and killed by the police in an attempted casino robbery. Several Romas resisting the Sarkozy-initiated plan to dismantle illegal, mainly Roma-controlled camps with an eye to expelling the communities to Bulgaria and Romania – also lost their lives in a second incident. In the light of cars set ablaze by restive youths – unfortunately a hallmark of his administration – Sarkozy said in Grenoble that France was reaping the harvest of half a century of insufficiently regulation of immigration policy, as a result of which integration had failed as well. There was a good bit of truth to his words.

Eastern Europeans are no strangers to such tense situations. A few years ago, the so-called *plombier polonais*[25] scandal made Westerners watchful – it seemed like barbarian hordes were on the doorstep, posing a threat to Western well-being, threatening to take away jobs from locals and shake the core of the services market to an unimaginable level; after all, barbarians are more famished, more flexible, receptive to everything. It was not expected in this case that the masses (which never ended up arriving) would not fulfil their tax obligations or pay rent but rather live in tents, while begging on the streets. In any case, only a handful of Eastern Europeans arrived, and most behaved in exemplary fashion and tended rather to contribute to the local economy.

In this light, both stories – the expulsion of the Roma and the fear of immigrants that grips Europeans – raised interest-

[25] The Polish plumber campaign sowed a rift between Western and Eastern Europe. Old Europe feared that the new members would start providing cheaper service and thus restricted exercise of a key fundamental right that had been enshrined solely in writing for the last 50 years. Such services were insultingly likened to social dumping.

ing questions and situations at a critical moment. The Roma expulsion plan was roundly condemned in EU member states. European justice commissioner Viviane Reding referred to a memorandum leaked from the French Ministry of the Interior and said that the dismantling of illegal Roma camps was similar to how certain peoples were treated in the World War II era. France was reprimanded by the Council of Europe and the European Parliament with a resolution, as well as by the UN through its committee on ending racial discrimination, and even the Vatican looked askance. All called for the expulsions to cease and said France should make more of an effort to integrate, provide accommodations and education for the Roma, as they are also EU citizens and they, too, have the right to freedom of movement within the EU.

That is not only idealistic; it is also the unalloyed truth. However, it is a separate matter how this should be served to a Frenchman who has spent his whole life in France paying his taxes and doing his civic duty, and who then discovers one day that that a Roma camp can be sighted from the corner of is well-tended yard, growing with each passing day.[26] What should he now feel and expect from those he elected to represent him? Furthermore, there are also broader questions: why should a local taxpayer pay the costs of foreign nationals for going to school, participating in clubs and language groups to get them to grow closer to our living standards and views, if this is not of interest to them? Where to find the money to lodge and provide economic and entrepreneurial support to citizens from other member states who do not pay taxes here or who lack a fixed address in this country? In the case of the Roma, the question has come up of why one EU member state should do what its country of origin has left undone? And, if they are not interested in adapting to local life and rules, should they indeed not be sent back to their native land in a hu-

[26] Dejevski, Mary. "Sarkozy is right about the Roma." *The Independent*, 03. 09. 2010.

mane fashion? At the same time it would be hypocritical to tell voters that it would be extremely easy, painless and inexpensive to integrate immigrants who have such very different living standards or viewpoints on life. As long as there is no consensus in society and public opinion collides with platitudes from politicians, election results will continue to trend toward one extreme only.

Even though the postmodernist Europe's political elite, which is primarily left-wing, admonishes people unceasingly to be tolerant and defends the development of Islamic faith, sometimes deliberately shortchanging Judaeo-Christian ethics in the process, each year brings more Europeans who feel that Europe's famous multiculturalism has gone too far. The feeling of discomfort incited by silent figures of women enveloped in black and the ever-louder calls of the *muezzins* across the streets of cities have for years been one of the sources that sustain European populist right wing parties.[27] Europeans are especially vexed by the unwillingness on the part of the younger generation of immigrants to integrate with the their new homeland and its customs. It is here that the curious and pathological self-loathing of the West lies: on one hand, there is an attempt to open the door to foreign values, but trust and unity keep on diminishing. It sometimes seems that we have fallen victim to independent, alien forces that are trampling right over us.

Europe to Eurabia?

Currently momentous discussions are taking place, focusing on what is to be done about rapidly spreading Islam. Back in August 2001, no one would have argued that in ten years' time one of the key issues in European domestic

[27] Hardo Pajula, "Teraapilise riigi patoloogilised kõrvalnähud" [A therapeutic state's pathological symptoms] *Postimees*, 25.09.2010.

politics would involve what does or does not irritate the Muslim community. Anyone prophesying such a situation would have been considered a fear monger. But ever since the Danish cartoon protests and the train bombings in London and Madrid, it has become clear to the public that the Muslim community – growing in both number and self-awareness – is now one of the most formative factors with regard to the continent's future.[28]

Primarily at fault for the current fears is rhetoric about insufficient protection and preservation of European cultural heritage, which leaves the impression that Europe is not capable of defending itself against Islam. For instance, one extremist anti-Islamic group, the English Defence League, a role model for right-wing extremists in Europe, staged a major demonstration in Amsterdam in support of Dutch politician Geert Wilders. "New winds will start blowing in the Netherlands," promised Wilders, the head of the right-wing populist Liberty party, who envisions a country where Muslim women will be banned from wearing garments that conceal them from head to toe and where the number of new immigrants to the country decreases.[29] Wilders's party has taken a stronger anti-Islamic position in recent years, including calling for the construction of mosques to cease. (Wilders is currently facing charges for inciting hatred and discrimination against Muslims in a case seen as a test of free speech in the traditionally tolerant Netherlands. He is also charged over his outspoken comments in the media, such as comparing Islam to fascism and the Koran to Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*.[30]) After the mosque referendum held in Switzer-

[28] For further reading on the Danish cartoon controversy: Isolde Charim, "Culture as battlefield." Published originally in German, translation by Simon Garnett. *Eurozine*, 13. 04. 2006.

[29] Mariette Le Roux, "Netherlands to ban the burqa, says anti-Islam MPs." *The Associated Press*, 30.09.2010.

[30] Toby Sterling, "Dutch politician on trial on hate speech charges." *The Associated Press*, 04.10.2010.

land last year, the party announced that the Dutch also want to vote on minarets.[31] The Israeli government, meanwhile, adopted a controversial piece of legislation that requires all new citizens to swear an oath to the "democratic Jewish state." The amendment primarily pertains to Palestinians who are married to Israelis and who are seeking citizenship for uniting their families. "The scent of fascism can be sensed on the peripheries of Israeli society," commented Minister of Social Affairs Isaac Herzog.[32] The events that shake Europe from time to time – the French *burqa* boycott, the prohibitions on wearing veils in Italy and Belgium, Nicolas Sarkozy's Roma expulsion campaign and the Swiss referendum that banned the construction of minarets in the vicinity of the snowy Alpine peaks – these clearly point to active public discussion and emotions that grip people when they come face to face with things that are foreign and unaccustomed.

Fears, stereotypes and prejudices can be found in Estonia as well. At the beginning of October, several cities introduced advertising posters that started with the words "but what if": "...your son wants to marry a man?", "...your next door neighbour is a gay couple?", "...your sister falls in love with a female friend?", "...your friend's fiancée is a Muslim?" The ten different posters focused on homophobia and racism, and the apparent objective of the campaign was to get people thinking and guide them toward greater tolerance.

But the approach adopted by these posters brought out the paradoxical nature of the issue, as instead of making people more tolerant, it could end up quietly dividing society. As it stands, Estonia is not on the radar in terms of

[31] In the context of the rise of populist Geert Wilders, *De Groene Amsterdammer* wonders about the image of the Netherlands abroad and claims, that "Wilders has made their country normal." "Bergstaatje aan de Noordzee – Het imago van Nederland Alpenpopulisme." *De Groene Amsterdammer* 12, 24.03.2010. Resumé in English by *Presseurop.eu*.

[32] Harriet Sherwood, "Israel proposes Jewish state loyalty oath for new citizens." *The Guardian*,10.10.2010.

major skinhead movements, we have no populist parties that have called for bombing ships full of immigrants. We are still dealing with our own post-Soviet integration problems, not Islamic immigration concerns; those issues are yet to come for Estonians. I think that we could be fairly relativist here. In the case of gay relationships, these situations and problems do exist in society, and the situation with Russians and Estonians getting along is also complicated. But why would the campaign devote attention to Muslims? I am afraid that the Ministry of Social Affairs is creating a straw man: by conceiving of distant future situations, it in fact runs the risk of instilling into Estonians more polarized attitudes toward Muslims. The problem is nearly non-existent, and thus money just goes down the drain. Is it because no one wants to touch hot potato topics or is the Estonian social affairs ministry still rehashing the position that different ethnicities get along just fine in Estonia, or that one shouldn't fix what isn't broke. As one acquaintance put it, it would be interesting to assess the outcome of the campaign if, under the banner of a woman wearing a veil, the slogan would simply read: "But what if your son's girlfriend is Russian?" If we'd connect one fear to another, the campaign would certainly start inciting people to hatred. Another problem is that the cliché of the Muslim girlfriend" as a *burqa*-wrapped entity would be found insulting by most Muslim women, who consider this Saudi form odious. It is foolish to make the extreme scenario the standard for tolerance, as it is counterproductive to fight clichés with clichés.

Visual signs such as those inseminate and intensify people's fears. Opposition to Islam is increasing everywhere in Europe in parallel with the fact that Islam has become more *visible* on the streets of Europe.[33] The external, visual change

[33] On European Islam and Islam in Europe: Olivier Roy, "Islam in Europe: Clash of religions or convergence of religiosities?" *Conditions of European Solidarity*, vol. II: *Religion in the New Europe*, (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2006).

makes Europeans nervous. The fact that it is also actually changing– in a more European, secular direction – does not appear to bother Europeans. The visibility of the Islamic faith is growing in several ways: in parallel with the rapid growth of the Muslim population (by more than a million people a year according to some sources) their religious aspirations are rising as well. They want to have and to attend officially sanctioned mosques of a better quality, and although it may not be its aim, this will inevitably have an effect on the nature of Europe. Europe only has about six thousand mosques, mainly accommodated in small structures – stores, basements, garages and sometimes even in rental apartments. The need for new mosques is a justified one. But new imposing mosque projects in Cologne, Marseille, Arhus, Warsaw and Rotterdam are leading to much rancour and dispute, and there is constant controversy around existing structures in Stockholm, Milan, Córdoba and London. Even though Europe's Muslims and their supporters justify the construction of mosques as their right as a minority to religious freedom, most (though not all) of the controversial mosque projects in Europe are just as motivated by politics as they are by religion.

I think it is a challenge. Some people see a mosque as a monument to terrorists and naturally become upset. Others on the contrary see a compelling opportunity to vindicate the very values that terrorists fervently try to undermine. Critics see the construction of mosques as part of a strategy to Islamicize Europe. And indeed, if we look at the oft-repeated words of some Muslim heads of state, there appears to be a good reason for growing fears. Quoting Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan: "The mosques are our barracks, the domes our helmets, the minarets our bayonets and the faithful our soldiers..."[34] Erdogan has also

[34] Erdogan's pro-Islamist sympathies earned him a conviction in 1998 for inciting religious hatred. He had publicly read this Islamic poem and was sentenced to 10 months in jail.

exhorted German Muslims, saying that "assimilation is a crime against humanity". There are no easy answers for assuaging the tensions, and the road to the old attitudes is smooth and broad. Fear does have big round eyes. I see – and I am not even astonished– how the international press returns time and again to awful theories about Euro-Islam.

It has started to seem to me that as a popular theme, the image of ominous Eurabia has become a genre in its own right. It is forecasted that by 2050, Europe will have become little more than an Islamic colony, that the Boulevard Saint-Germain in Paris is lined with kebab dens and shisha cafes and schoolchildren are required to memorize passages from the Koran from Oslo to Naples. (I have read various predictions that the Islamicization of Europe will take place already at the end of this century. In the last 40 years, the number of Muslims in Europe has grown about 30-fold, and according to predictions, in 2015–2020 Islam will be the religion of 150 million people in an even bigger European Union.) The problem in the case of this vision of a menacing future lies in three details: Europeans' low population growth supports extensive immigration from Islamic countries; and the brash, assertive Islamic faith collides with a self-destructive European culture, as a result of which Europe relinquishes its Western identity and its current beliefs.

Construction will continue at a feverish pace in the Old World battleground; the minarets will rise, and as they do, the myth of Islam's conquest will intensify. Europeans are increasingly interested in the *idée fixe* of whether Islam is expansionistic and conquest-driven by its very nature. Or is this just a fear of the arrival of a barbaric, brutal and unpredictable, anachronistic extremism whose adherents think differently and resort to throwing stones and suicide terrorism? To sum up, the tolerant West is changing, even though politicians have not yet managed to find a common

denominator to label it or to serve as a platform for continuing progress. What we do hear primitive slogans lobbed stubbornly at society, driven by populist instincts.

What is misguided, in my opinion, is not only the idea that Europe needs cultural protection – and fast. It is wrong even to assume that all Europeans – parties, states, ideologies – see things the same way. But for many opinion leaders, the fact that an anti-Islamic book was authored by – surprise, a social democrat – shows that the left-wing ideology has reached a bit of an impasse. Sarrazin's book was seen as an attempt by its author to counter the left's traditional views against nationalism and racism and in favour of a tolerant multicultural welfare society that they have been trying to build for the last couple decades.

It has often been said that national diversity stemming from immigration jeopardizes Western welfare states, for like attracts like and people feel most comfortable in the company of their own, raising a series of serious questions for Europe how Ricœur's above-mentioned "Others" fits into life here.[35] But there is another argument: the more there are of the others, the less one encounters "us"-feeling. As the Swedish elections showed, even Nordic voters are haunted by similar feelings. American society has lived with the knowledge that there are no foreigners, as (almost) everyone is foreign. But when minorities become a majority, a reversal takes place in society. For instance, the more American society became American, the original settlers started associating new diseases and viruses with the newcomers. As the feeling of "togetherness", the feeling of "us" diminishes, with contemporary policy-making having adapted to it, multiculturalism theory also recedes, step by step, seeming like a nostalgic and slightly embarrassing movie of the past. There are many backdrops.

[35] Paul Ricoeur, "Being a Stranger." Translation by Alison Scott-Baumann for *Theory Culture Society* 2010. The online version of this article can be found at: http://tcs.sagepub.com/content/27/5/37

First of all, the subjects of multiculturalism have become transformed. Feminists, civil rights activists, sexual minorities have all developed over time, and achieved much, becoming staid and static. Religious minorities, on the other hand, have become overly bold – too strident for the tastes of otherwise tolerant minorities. Politicians have understood that they must pay less attention to minorities and more to the majority – the average voter – as the diversity promoted for the last decades is no longer a tempting topic for courting potential votes. (The European media has already fired off accusations at French President Nicolas Sarkozy, who by "sending the Roma home" is allegedly getting ready for the presidential campaign to be held in 2012.) This is also attested to by developments around New York's so-called Ground Zero mosque, as we have seen a number of politicians and public figures markedly distance themselves from constitutional principles and coming closer to defending the fears of the masses. In the larger scheme of things, this change of mind can also be seen in the rhetoric expressed by Estonian parties with regard to Estonian Russians after the riots during the relocation of the Soviet war memorial in Tallinn in April 2007, in which the latter were not just participants but fellow victims, as they lost the trust of the majority. Secondly, the main emphasis of left-wing ideologies has shifted to economic issues, due to the financial crises faced by society. Those who talk of economic inequality seem far more up-to-date than those who keep on preaching about discrimination. Third, the 9/11 attacks were accompanied by general but occasionally blind solidarity, which discredited the noble ideas of multiculturalism.

A new sort of liberalism is making inroads– take for example Michael Tomasky in America[36] – which no longer

[36] For example: Michael Tomasky, "Against Despair," *Democracy Journal*, no. 17 (Summer 2010). Also: Michael Tomasky, "Party in Search of a Notion," *The American Prospect*, May 2006, and William Galston, Jedediah Purdy, Ron Walters, Amy Sullivan, Fred Siegel, "Is the Common Good Good?" *The American Prospect*, June 2006.

centres on diversity or rights of the individual but rather propagates the "public interest". We are all part of some national project, we must all sacrifice something and, sooner or later, cede part of our narrow personal interest for the "greater good".[37] Battling for exclusive problems is, unfortunately, a thing of the past, the future will be marked by general interests and economic fragmentation. And herein is the nail in the coffin for our multiculturalism – compared to the past, the people fear that the state will no longer stand up for their general good, even if it intended to do so conceptually.

Nationalism is back

Every couple of months, the same script plays out in some European country: A right-wing party preoccupied with issues of crime and immigration gets into parliament or increases its influence, whereupon mainstream parties circle their wagons and declare that they will not work with the extremists, muttering that Islam preaches peace; what problems still exist can be resolved by redoubling integration efforts.

Frequently, and as evident at present, European law and principles are being gutted in the name of national sovereignties, which must bow to the supremacy of the community in some domains. European power has not been formally rejected, but subjected to a tenacious desire to see it camouflaged, concealed.[38] At the European Council meeting held in Brussels during the Roma expulsion crisis, a number of Sarkozy's fellow leaders went public in their defence of the French president. Italian Prime Minister Silvio

[37] Multiculturalist advocacy of collective rights has opened the door in some western nations for religious law to take precedence over civil law, argues Kenan Malik in "Mistaken Identity," *New Humanist* 7/8 (2008).

[38] Barbara Spinelli, "Axis of weevils," *La Stampa*, 17. 09. 2010.

Berlusconi was heard to say that the Commission should not criticize a member state about public opinion in that country. And the Commission made no bones about it, as it knew well that the club of European heads of state would scarcely support an attack by the Commission on one of them. Instinctively leaders form a defensive wall against a common enemy. The European Commission is "the Guardian of Treaties" but the same founding Treaties allow the Commission to fight a Member State only through a complicated and time-consuming court battle, not make value-based judgments regarding whether a given member state is fulfilling its obligations under EU law.

This simple example demonstrates the fairly pessimistic fact that the rift between the Commission and the member states has widened, even though it was presumed that disagreements would decrease with the Lisbon treaty. By not trusting the President of the Commission or his team, the EU's governments regress to the era of bilateral deals and leave the commission out of the game. By passionately defending the "community method", meaning the interinstitutional balance – i.e. decisions come into being through cooperation between the European Union's bodies and a system of checks and balances – and trying to prevent the spread of "intergovernmentalism", the European Commission keeps on doing itself a disservice. Secondly, it is clear that states and leaders claim the glory for themselves when the European Union does something good, but accuse "Brussels" when things go wrong.

How to define nationalism, so that it would encompass different levels? The European Union represents the opposite of nation-centred thinking which emphasizes temporal continuity and the preservation of nationality. The concept of nationalism can create equality but only within a nation. As we know, nationalist ideology can make selective use of any positive or dramatic events from the nationalist canon

in order to justify its principles, ideals and actions. It is very convenient for a party to declare in an election manifesto that it stands for restoring some former glory and later use it as a pretext for implementing discriminatory and conservative policies. The situation in Europe is complicated by the fact that most nation-states are home to very many minorities. People move around more and more, and migration is growing. The amount of minorities keeps on increasing.

Voters' support for the extreme right in Europe can no longer be downplayed as a marginal, country-specific phenomenon. The world's biggest democratic region is now the breeding ground for extreme-right politics. Post-war Europe had one great foe and one great friend to produce unity of political purpose, even if big parties battled over priorities. Social and Christian democrats were united against sovietism and Moscow's proxy parties on the communist left. The United States allied itself to the moderate right and left to create NATO, support the suppression of nationalisms with the creation of the European Union, and wean Europeans away from protectionist economics in favour of open trade and competitive markets.

Now Europe no longer faces an agreed common threat, despite the best efforts of an Islamophobe right to present Muslims as an alien invading force that must be confronted and contained. Without a common foe, politics in Europe has lost its moorings. Europe's become a headless chicken, forming new communities of true believers all over Europe, who trace their national woes to immigrants—or nuclear power, or the EU, or Muslims, or Jews, or market economics, or even the European Union and its free movement of —are uniting in new political communities, all of them harmful to society. The European politics of *Geselleschaft* – society – is being replaced by *Gemeinschaft* – community. The EU is currently driven by identity policy – a sort of navel-gazing that expresses itself always by denial. To govern

a society requires compromise and a choice of priorities. The guiding impulse of the new identity politics in Europe is to reject, to cry "No!" What Europe needs is a confident leadership that can unite its splintering communities behind one definitive, consistent vision. A vision that has a greater vocabulary than a resolute "no".

Radicals and racists can be found in every society. But what if we proceeded from the assumption that those who want to make themselves be heard are capable of becoming up-to-date with the key issues and of softening their views on this occasion, donning a clean apron?[39] The answer to this does not consist of how to stand up for oneself or justify the existence of dissident thinkers. It is more important to know how the majority reacts to extremism, and if the majority has made its decision, then it is time to think about how the radicals can be utilized. What should Europe's democratic parties do when lots of voters back a far-right party?

One answer is to address legitimate grievances about the scale and nature of immigration (in France Nicolas Sarkozy has, controversially, pinched far-right rhetoric) and stop using multiculturalism as a scapegoat. Another is to use the law to curb blatant examples of hate speech and insults from extremist politicians. And a step further: the temptation for many is to isolate the extremists, but that risks intensifying voters' sense that politicians are not listening to them, further boosting the extremists. Perhaps a more stable solution would be to not to ignore the extremists but secure them a place in the government, as the Dutch example, hoping it would tame them? This runs a risk – it could give them power without responsibility, concealed behind the back of the big parties that formed the government, where they

[39] New research showing that far–right ideology is a radicalization of mainstream values has a major impact on how populism is understood, writes Cas Mudde in "The populist radical right: A pathological normalcy." *Fronesis* 34, 2010, pp. 1–11.

could calmly operate, going about their business of spreading intolerance?[40] But such involvement could indeed have the opposite effect, taming them.

In the end, I must concur with the ironic proposal mooted by *The Economist,* that a better, braver strategy might be to bring far-right leaders into the cabinet, exposing their ideas to reality and their personalities to the public gaze: "Roll the dice and make Mr Wilders foreign minister: for how long could he keep telling the world to ban the Koran?"[41]

[40] Today, we are not experiencing a clash of civilizations, but a clash of intolerances, argues Ramin Jahanbegloo, "Beyond the clash of intolerances." *Caffé Europa*, 19.05.2006.

[41] "A false prophet. Why Geert Wilders is a problem, not a solution," *The Economist*, October 7, 2010.

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