

The Eastern Partnership and the New European Security Architecture: A New *Ostpolitik*

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ABSTRACT

Changes in the security orientation of Washington since the beginning of the year, in particular toward Eastern Europe, are generating for the EU a growing need to act and ensure stability on its eastern border. Simultaneously, the consequences of the absence of Russian participation on an equal basis in existing security institutions (“security architecture”) since the end of the Cold War are intensifying. Particularly in their common neighborhood, the EU and Russia demonstrate diverging perceptions of security interests and threats. While Brussels concentrates on modernization promotion and crisis prevention in the eastern neighborhood, Moscow bemoans the neglect of hard security aspects in EU rhetoric, distrusting its intentions there. As long as Russia remains isolated from decision-making in the European security architecture, new initiatives such as the Eastern Partnership (EaP) will have little chance for success. Dmitri Medvedev has offered the EU a unique opportunity to jointly create a new agreement for the future of the European security architecture. The EU should seize this chance and react constructively and in unity to the proposal in order to make progress on necessary reforms. Parallel to the inclusion of Russia, the region awaits advancements in the EaP and a new partnership agreement with Russia. This paper offers recommendations for a more holistic and effective approach to the *Ostpolitik* of the EU.

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1. The Importance of European Cooperation in the East

Twenty years after the fall of the Berlin wall, the West has failed to effectively incorporate the Russian Federation into security institutions in Europe. The consequences of this deficiency reach from the recurrent reigniting of “frozen” conflicts and gas rows to a growing inability in Europe to successfully confront common challenges of the 21st century. This realization, coupled with the new security orientations that accompanied administration changes in both Washington and Moscow, offers a chance to harmonize EU policy and relations with the United States, Russia and the Eastern neighborhood.

With the discontinuation of plans in Poland and the Czech Republic, President Barack Obama appears to have assumed a more consistent line of engagement in his security policy in comparison to his predecessor. While the Bush administration insisted on installing the anti-missile system in Eastern Europe, it expected Russia’s cooperation with sanctions against Iran, with the fight against terror and with military transport to Afghanistan. Exactly this form of contradiction met with non-cooperation in Moscow. Consequently, the Obama administration is increasingly pursuing a prioritization of security threats rather than attempting many contradictory endeavors at once. The nuclear program in Iran is at the top of the list.

Without cooperation from Moscow, attempts by the United States and its allies to pressure Iran will prove futile. Russia has the ability to produce and transport goods for the entire

spectrum of Iranian demand, which would render tougher sanctions ineffective.¹ Until recently, President Medvedev refused to support the tougher sanctions pushed by the US. However, on September 23 in Pittsburgh—shortly after Obama’s compromise in regards to the anti-missile system—he agreed that Moscow would be open for tougher sanctions against Iran.² These latest events show the extent to which the United States will have its hands tied in potential conflicts between Russia and the “near abroad”.

Despite the fact that recent developments do not deliberately aim at worsening ties between Washington and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the concessions of the Obama administration nevertheless carry serious consequences for those countries. The cancellation of the placement of anti-missile defense systems in Poland and the Czech Republic not only marks a turning point in relations between Washington and Moscow, but also signals at least in the medium term a fundamental alteration in the security situation on the eastern borders of the EU. This evolving security reality

¹ George Friedman. „The BMD Decision and the Global System.” STRATFOR, Geopolitical Intelligence Report, September 21, 2009: (last accessed 21.09.2009).

² According to a member of the administration, the concession on the part of president Medvedev was only possible due to the gesture of Barack Obama to rethink the placement of the antimissile system: „Iran is Warned over Nuclear ‘Deception’”, New York Times, September 25, 2009: <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/26/world/middleeast/26nuke.html?pagewanted=2&ref=global-home>.

demands a more proactive role of the EU in fostering positive cooperation with Russia in the common neighborhood in general and in conflict prevention in particular. A combination of existing and developing instruments lend themselves to this end: the Eastern Partnership (EaP), the dialogue over president Medvedev's proposal for a new European security architecture, a new "Euro-Atlantic Council" within the OSCE, the Four Common Spaces and a new partnership agreement between the EU and Russia.

Beyond its stabilizing character, a truly functioning partnership with Russia and the eastern neighborhood countries would offer manifold advantages for the EU. Only the constructive inclusion of this important European player in the security policy dialogue will enable the EU to help shape Russia's (re)emerging role in a multipolar world. Notwithstanding Russia's loss of power in the global arena following the end of the Cold War, other not-so-insignificant reasons exist for the indispensability of Russian-EU cooperation. In addition to the fact that Russia possesses more fossil fuels than any other country worldwide as well as one of the two largest nuclear arsenals, its borders stretch from Europe across the greater Middle East and Central Asia to East Asia and thus across many of the most important geostrategic regions and those essential for countering transnational threats. Furthermore, a great deal of potential exists in cooperation toward necessary global reforms of the international financial system and combating global warming.³

³ See for example John J. Hamre und C. Fred Bergsten (2009), Preface in: Anders Aslund und Andrew Kuchins, *The Russia Balance Sheet*. Washington, DC: Peterson Institute for

In no other area can Moscow better demonstrate its willingness to build a new, substantial partnership with the EU than in the common neighborhood;⁴ A partnership based on common principles of non-violence—including the prohibition of the threat of violence—and mutual respect for state sovereignty presupposes that these principles also apply in the common neighborhood. Against this background, this paper analyses the intentions of president Medvedev's security policies regarding the European Union and the "near abroad". Subsequently, it will examine the hitherto existing *Ostpolitik* of the EU with particular consideration of the Eastern Partnership and opportunities for a more effective cooperation with Russia. On the basis of this analysis, this paper will offer recommendations for a holistic EU approach in Eastern Europe.

2. Security Ambitions in the European Neighborhood under Dmitri Medvedev

2.1 Foreign and Security Policy under Medvedev

Put forward in June 2008, president Medvedev's proposal for a "new European security architecture from Vancouver to Vladivostok" has since gained momentum, attracting the attention of the U.S. and European policy communities alike. Indeed, Russian administrations since the end of the Cold War have continually questioned the

International Economics und Center for Strategic and International Studies.

⁴ Edward Lucas (2009). *The New Cold War: Putin's Russia and the Threat to the West*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

existential purpose and direction of NATO, but failed to deliver a concrete, constructive counterproposal. Then came the war with Georgia. As Dmitri Medvedev presented his concept anew at the World Policy Conference in October 2008 in Evian and then at the Council on Foreign Relations that November, he asserted that no war would have taken place had an appropriate and effective security architecture been in place.⁵

At the very latest by the beginning of the Russian-Georgian war, security deficits forced the EU and the US to recognize that neither individual states nor the presently existing security organizations, in particular NATO, were in a position to prevent the war or resolve the underlying conflict. Moreover, one must acknowledge that the current framework still remains incapable of settling a number of other frozen conflicts in the region that threaten the security of Europe (Nagorno-Karabakh, Transnistria, Crimea, and Kosovo).⁶

The Medvedev proposal for a new security architecture must be considered in the context of other security documents and statements of his administration. Of these,

⁵ Council on Foreign Relations. "Transcript: A Conversation with Dmitry Medvedev." November 15, 2008: http://www.cfr.org/publication/17775/conversation_with_dmitry_medvedev.html (last accessed November 8, 2009).

⁶ A recommendable analysis of Medvedev's proposal can be found under: Klein, Margarete (2008). „Der russische Vorschlag für eine neue gesamteuropäische Sicherheitsordnung: ernst zu nehmender Vorschlag oder Spaltungsversuch?“ *Russland Analysen*. 2009-07-22: <http://www.laenderanalysen.de/russland/pdf/Russlandanalysen175.pdf#page=9> (accessed September 1, 2009).

the most important include the five guiding foreign policy principles of the Russian Federation, announced in an interview with Euronews in September 2008⁷ and the National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020, ratified by presidential fiat on May 12, 2009.⁸

After the war in Georgia, two of the five guiding principles deserve particular attention: point 4 emphasizes the protection of Russian citizens also abroad as a foreign policy priority and point 5 defines certain regions as "regions of privileged interest" for the Russian Federation. In contrast to "sphere of influence"⁹ rhetoric, that of "regions of privileged interest" indicates a position in Moscow that third countries should have limited rights (rather than none at all) in these areas. In the case of Georgia or Ukraine, such a position rejects the endeavors of these countries to acquire NATO membership or accept military bases from western countries.¹⁰ The EU however has an obligation to respect the right of

⁷ Dmitri Medvedev, Interview on Euronews, Moscow, September 2, 2008, www.kremlin.ru (accessed August 8, 2009).

⁸ Совет Безопасности Российской Федерации. "Стратегия национальной безопасности Российской Федерации до 2020 года." <http://www.scrf.gov.ru/documents/99.html> (accessed July 30, 2009).

⁹ The use of the term „sphere of influence“ dates back to Russian imperialism in the 19th century, where Russia used its military power to subjugate territories into its empire. Aslund und Kuchins (2009). *The Russia Balance Sheet*. Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Peter G. Peterson Institute for International Economics, pg. 120.

¹⁰ Ibid.

sovereign neighboring countries to make their own decisions on membership and association issues.

Much more detailed than the guidelines for the foreign policy of the Russian Federation, the national security strategy from May 2009 serves the purpose of creating a common basis for the work of various actors in the security sector.¹¹ However, it is precisely the lack of coordination and synthesis of the different sections in this document that prove striking. Because an array of various actors and ministries worked on the strategy, the final version alludes to interministerial disagreement.¹² In this respect, the security strategy of the Russian Federation under Medvedev remains relatively ambiguous as to what extent the document will actually steer the relevant security actors. None the less, the security strategy provides insight into the direction of Russian policy in her common neighborhood with the EU.

Most apparently, the national security strategy accentuates the importance of national economic development for the security of the country. It devotes, in fact, such a substantial proportion of the document to socioeconomic goals that they comprise 5 out of 7 of the measurable criteria by which progress in the security situation will be measured in the future: unemployment, Gini

¹¹ These include first and foremost foreign and defense ministries as well as the Ministry of the Interior, FSB, the office of the presidential administration, an administration representative (Vladimir Putin) and the Duma.

¹² Compare for example de Haas, „Medwedews Sicherheitspolitik: Eine vorläufige Einschätzung“ and Hans-Henning Schröder, „Ein strategisches Sammelsurium: Medwedews „Strategie für die nationale Sicherheit Russlands bis zum Jahre 2020““ in *Russland-Analysen*, Nr. 186, 3.7.2009.

coefficient, the development of consumer prices, national and foreign debt of the state as a percent of GDP and the level of resources provided to sectors of health, culture, education and sciences as a percent of GDP. Only the last two points refer to military power: the annual level of innovation in areas of military and armament and the degree to which human resources can be guaranteed in areas of military, technology and engineering.¹³

Despite both the weight given to the concept of security through development apparent in the strategy document until 2020 and the recognition of the importance of soft power, the Russian leadership has thus far perceived national economic development only as a means to enable its assertion on a global scale rather than as a means to ensure long-term stability through increased prosperity on its borders, as is the case in the EU security strategy. In the context of the “sphere of privileged interests” rhetoric, Russia offers the countries of the common neighborhood with the EU few incentives for convergence with the Russian development paradigm.

¹³ This strategy corresponds to the latest statements from high official levels in which representatives underscore that the RF is focusing predominantly on internal developments. Examples include the speech from Vladimir Kobrenez at the Deutsch-Russisches Forum on October 21, 2009 in Berlin and Dmitry Rogozin on November 5th in the DGAP in Berlin. Due to the effects of the financial and economic crisis, this internal concentration is likely to persist.

2.2 The Proposal for a New European Security Architecture

Taking a closer look at both the initial, rather vague proposal for a new European security architecture and then the more detailed version from president Medvedev, it becomes possible to formulate some assumptions about the intentions of the proposal. In his speech in Berlin, president Medvedev explicitly appealed to the EU member countries to participate in a summit on the topic as individual countries rather than in blocks or as a group. Moscow continually attempts, often successfully, to reach bilateral agreements with individual EU states rather than addressing the diverse group as a whole. Although this approach from Moscow is understandable, (less obstacles and a more favorable power dynamic) it does not serve the interests of the EU and raises suspicions that Russia is attempting to “divide and conquer”.¹⁴

Many of the later defined details of the proposal proved neither new nor specific in terms of implementation. These aspects included: 1) respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all countries; 2) prohibition of the use of force as well as the threat to use force; 3) insurance of equal security for all (this point alludes to a ban on military alliances such as NATO that threaten, according to Medvedev, the security of some non-members); 4) the rejection of an exclusive right of one state or organization to maintain security in Europe (yet a further reference to NATO) and; 5) fundamental rules for improving arms control.

¹⁴ It should be mentioned that Medvedev invited participation from organizations and groups such as the EU and NATO in his later address.

In particular, points 3 and 4 aim unmistakably at the weakening of NATO's role in Europe. The last point, arms control, refers predominantly to U.S. – Russia relations and the first two points already exist in international law. However, a novelty does exist in the legally binding character proposed in which all of these points would be unified. Thus far, the central issue of enforcement of even such a binding agreement remains unclear. For the security dilemma in the EU neighborhood, the first two points carry special relevance. Against the background of the war in Georgia, in which Russian troops advanced beyond Abkhazia and South Ossetia into Georgia proper, central and eastern European countries condemn Russia for a *lack* of respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty of their countries. Many doubt the sincerity of the proposal, insisting that Moscow will never itself abide by the ban on the use or threat of force. While the “Report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia”¹⁵ found Georgia responsible for the first strike in the conflict in South Ossetia, it admonished Moscow for its disproportional reaction and illegal invasion into Georgian territory beyond the enclaves.

Interestingly, the proposal from president Medvedev focuses exclusively on hard security and military defense, which fundamentally diverges from the comprehensive EU security concept based on internal modernization of the state. According to the European security strategy, “the best protection for our security is a world

¹⁵ Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia (IIFFMCG – CEIIG), September 30, 2009: <http://www.ceiig.ch/> (accessed October 2, 2009).

of well-governed democratic states.” For this reason, the EU views “spreading good governance, supporting social and political reform, dealing with corruption and abuse of power, establishing the rule of law and protecting human rights” as the best means to ensure security.¹⁶ While EU member states do not completely abstain from the use of hard security, they chiefly rely on soft power and common values such as democracy to influence developments in neighboring countries. While one could argue that the EU can only afford to focus on soft power because of the hard security guarantee from the United States and NATO, the fact remains that the security reality in Europe over the last decades has changed normative perceptions in the EU about what a secure Europe should look like.

Although aspects of democracy and human rights do not find explicit mention in Moscow's proposed treaty, president Medvedev offered the EU an open dialogue about these issues in June 2008 during his stay in Berlin and underlined the “humanistic ideals and values that are shared by all of Europe and are an integral part of the culture of Russia and the unified Germany.” He moreover appealed to a common European identity and foundations of democracy, which also in Russia find their roots in Roman, Germanic and French law.¹⁷ This appeal to common values serves as confirmation of the attractiveness of the EU's soft power and the effectiveness of a

¹⁶ European Security Strategy: „A Secure Europe in a Better World.“ December 12, 2003, pg. 9.

¹⁷ President of Russia Dmitry Medvedev's Speech at Meeting with German Political, Parliamentary and Civic Leaders, Berlin, June 5, 2008: <http://news.kremlin.ru/transcripts/320> (last accessed November 2, 2009).

comprehensive security strategy based on European values.¹⁸

3. Recommendations for EU Action

3.1 Unity

When it comes to relations with its eastern neighbors and with Russia, both “old” and “new” member countries struggle to come to agreement on the proper course. While Poland, Estonia, Sweden and England tend toward skepticism in dealings with Russia, Deutschland, Italy, France and Hungary actively seek deeper cooperation.¹⁹ Not able

¹⁸ These expressed values can also be found throughout Dmitri Medvedev's internal communications, for example on the Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Political Repressions. See Dmitri Medvedev, “ Память о национальных трагедиях так же священна, как память о победах.” October 30, 2009: <http://www.kremlin.ru/transcripts/5862>.

¹⁹ ECPR divides member countries into five groups according to their patterns of behavior in relation to Russia: „Trojan Horses“ like Cyprus and Greece often veto common EU endeavors due to lobbying from Russia, „Strategic Partners“ such as Germany, France, Italy and Spain enjoy special economic privileges and seek deepened cooperation, „Friendly Pragmatists“ like Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, Hungary, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Slovakia and Slovenia tend to value business interests above political ones, “Frosty Pragmatists” in the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Ireland, Latvia, the Netherlands, Romania, Sweden and the UK exhibit prioritization of business interests, but speak out more often against Russian policies, and “New Cold Warriors” Lithuania and Poland have hostile relations with Moscow and block many decisions between the latter and the EU. For more on this analysis, see European Council

to establish concordance as a union, member states often conclude bilateral agreements with Russia rather than collective ones. One can only hope that through the Lisbon treaty and the High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy the EU will become more consistent not only in its strategic documents, but in practice as well. This development will first become apparent in the years to come.

The EU must harmonize its many strategies with its eastern neighbors in order to gain more consistency, avoid undermining its own strategies and emerge as an attractive, strong actor in not only development but also security issues in the neighborhood countries. So that the EU can act with a unified voice and meet regional as well as international challenges, new forums are needed which promote a process of vetting the many diverging security interests and perceptions and building consensus. After all, as the ECFR emphasized, the EU's most powerful leverage lies in its unity.

The EU member states must not only elaborate a common basis of interest for cooperation with neighborhood countries and Russia, but must also analyze to what extent the EU can actually influence developments in third countries and decide how much effort it is willing to make in order to reach the goals. To date, progress in cooperation in the East lacks measurability, as the EU has failed to formulate goals and objectives in a measurable way. The current Partnership and Cooperation Agreement consists for instance of many statements of intent but is void of measurable objectives. More clarity in defining these objectives with the consideration of both outcome and input-

on Foreign Relations. "A Power Audit of EU-Russia Relations." November 2, 2007.

oriented dimensions would prove more conducive to successful EU policies in the eastern neighborhood.

3.2 The Institutional Incorporation of Russia

An overarching lack of consequence and a common perception of security interests in the shared neighborhood present the most significant hitherto existing challenges for EU policies toward the Russian Federation. In regards to modernization promotion in the neighboring countries for example, the EU continually insists that the EaP is not aimed against Russia. Objectively, that is true. However, in the politics of security, perceptions of intentions outweigh the importance of the intentions themselves. In exactly this manner, Moscow can argue that it poses no threat to Central and eastern European countries. As long as these countries feel threatened, they will have a reason to block the further incorporation of Russia into European institutions. Consequently, it is imperative that the EU replace the practice of "clarification" of intentions with practical confidence-building measures in order to bring these diverging perceptions closer together in the long term. In a first step, cooperation in areas of shared interest will likely demonstrate the highest potential for success. Possible areas include conflict prevention, energy security and economic cooperation.

While both the EU and Russian Federation identified these areas as those of common interest, the EU only then can expect constructive cooperation with Russia when Moscow perceives that its security interests are being taken seriously. Taking Moscow seriously should not become confused with or equated to yielding to its demands.

Nevertheless, beyond isolated concessions (even if they are not communicated as concessions) such as the cancelation of the antimissile systems in the Czech Republic and Poland, institutional concessions for shared decision-making have fallen too short. Although president Medvedev welcomes the latest antimissile defense decision, the point of the matter is not just whether the EU, US or NATO make a decision in Moscow's favor, but whether Moscow is allowed to participate on level with these actors in the decision-making process.

Despite the isolated concessions and the rhetoric of *perezagruzka*, the perception in Moscow persists that the US "will never allow the Europeans or the Russians access to the button."²⁰ For this reason, it would be an illusion to expect that Russia will settle for their position within the framework of the NATO Russia Council. Regardless of the actual intentions of NATO or the US, due to Russia's perceptions of them, its incorporation into the security architecture in Europe must occur independently from but parallel to NATO: independently because a new council is needed that Russia can help shape from the very beginning and parallel because most EU states still see NATO and its US participation as the preferred institution for providing security in Europe. While it would run contrary to European interests to devalue NATO, the EU should not wait for a proposed solution from Washington, but rather take the initiative to explore possibilities for a more effective and institutionalized inclusion of Russia in the future of European security.

²⁰ Dmitri Rogozin, 5. November 2009, DGAP Berlin.

Due to the broad participation in the OSCE, the organization should seize the suggestion of the Aspen European Strategic Forum and found a "Euro-Atlantic Council" within the OSCE.²¹ The new council would encounter more acceptance in Moscow and could improve the reputation of the organization on both a political and working level as one that is quick to act and dynamic in its responses. In particular, this council could formulate a common security strategy for new, shared security challenges. The fight against narcotics trade and Islamic extremism would lend themselves as pilot projects. Although the NATO-Russia Council could also deal with these topics, Moscow does not feel adequately included in decision-making processes and treatment of them in a new council would have a different character.

Just as NATO is currently revising its strategic concept, a Euro-Atlantic Council could formulate a common concept with the difference that Russia would also enjoy decision-making rights on the topics defined as falling within its mandate. Through an open dialogue in the course of formulating a strategic concept, Russia, the EU and the US, along with other OSCE members, would also define a common threat perception. The potential new council and NATO would need to decide which topics are more appropriate for which institution. Fundamental questions of NATO enlargement and others would still reside in NATO while the main responsibility for areas defined by the new strategic

²¹ Aspen Institute Deutschland. „Russia and the West: How to Restart a Constructive Relationship." Aspen European Strategy Forum, November 5, 2009: (accessed November 5, 2009) http://www.aspenberlin.org/uploads/assets/pdfs/general/AESF/Russia_and_the_West_fin.pdf.

concept could be anchored within the new Euro-Atlantic Council.

The new council could deal with the changes to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), necessary since the last NATO enlargement, in order to reach progress in an important area of hard security. Possible overlapping between NATO and the council within the OSCE should be considered positive as long as the needed coordination exists, as healthy competition between the two institutions could bring many advantages. The new council would only then persist when it proves effective and conducive to improved security in Europe and thus presents a win-win development in the European security architecture. Furthermore, it is worth consideration whether certain decisions of the Euro-Atlantic Council could be executed through projects within the framework of the EaP.

3.3 The New Ostpolitik

3.3.1 The Eastern Partnership in Context

Launched in May 2009, the Eastern Partnership must be considered within the context of the general neighborhood policy on the one hand and other regional organizations on the other in order to understand its potential added value for European security. The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), which provides the framework for cooperation between the EU and the North African, Mediterranean and eastern European neighbors, proved a first step, following the enlargement of 2004, toward preventing the creation of new borders within Europe. Yet it fell short of achieving its very ambitious goal of increased

prosperity and security on its borders. Experts attribute lack of success to the nature of the ENP as too comprehensive, not specifically tailored to each country context and void of adequate incentives for the proposed reforms.²²

With the enlargement in 2007, the need for action beyond the eastern border of the EU only intensified. Through the incorporation of Romania and Bulgaria into the union, the EU moved into a wider neighborhood, reaching the Black Sea and thus directly bordering not only the frozen conflicts of Southeast Europe, but also those of the Caucasus. Consequently, a new security policy that would effectively combat the insecurity of neighboring states reached a heightened level of prioritization. Simultaneously however, a direct response by the EU by way of hard security would run counter to her long-term interests. The EU enjoys a considerable advantage in comparison to other security actors in that she is perceived in the neighboring countries predominantly as a legitimate soft power with whom cooperation leads to an increase in standard of living. In order to assert itself as a superpower, the EU should not let itself be forced into playing the role of a hegemon, but rather continue excelling at that what it does best: trade and economic spheres, development and environmental policy, consumer protection and the area of culture—in other words areas of soft power.²³

²² See for example Susan Stewart (2009), „EU Relation with Russia and the Eastern Neighborhood in: Peter Ludlow (ed.) Setting EU priorities 2009, European Strategy Forum, Ponte de Lima 2009, pp. 125-150.

²³ Compare Zepter, Bernard (2009). „Strukturen, Akteure und Inhalte der EU-Außenpolitik.“ In: Bendiek and Kramer. *Globale Außenpolitik der*

Legitimacy of this *Ostpolitik* lies in the fact that the EU applies the same values foundation for policies both within the EU and outside of its borders and that these policies aim to transfer its paradigm for stability and prosperity to these countries.²⁴

The key challenge the EU will have to face lies in utilizing its soft power for prosperity and stability promotion in the region and the effective resolution of frozen conflicts. In the past however, the EU's eastern neighbors did not perceive it as a relevant security actor in the region. Even the intervention for the mitigation of the crisis in Georgia in the summer of 2008 resulted from the strong French European Council presidency and remains both an exception and ad hoc.

Indeed, the EaP offers an approach for a solution to the prior inadequacies of the ENP, which also could not be corrected by the Black Sea Synergy or Black Sea Economic Council. Firstly, the "eastern European neighbors" receive the necessary prioritization in comparison to "Europe's neighbors" in the Union for the Mediterranean, as the EaP will receive an additional 75 percent increase of funding through the European Neighbourhood and

Europäischen Union: Interregionale Beziehungen und „strategische Partnerschaften“. Nomos: Baden-Baden.

²⁴ For more on this topic, see Annegret Bendiek / Heinz Kramer, "Die europäische Politik der interregionalen Beziehungen und "strategischen Partnerschaften": Hegemoniale Politik im neuen Gewand?", *Globale Außenpolitik der Europäischen Union: Interregionale Beziehungen und „strategische Partnerschaften“*, Baden-Baden 2009; Richard Rosecrance, "The European Union: A New Type of International Actor", in: Jan Zielonka, *Paradoxes of European Foreign Policy*, The Hague 1998, S. 15-25.

Partnership Instrument. Beyond this symbolic value however, the EaP, if successfully carried through, will lead to more convergence with the EU without promising membership, but also without eliminating this possibility in the future. Moreover, because of more tailored agreements, more self-responsibility and ownership ensues and further convergence with the EU gains a more performance-dependent character. The EaP breaks away from the path dependency of enlargement policy and the status denomination of "neighbor" or "member", advocating instead a dynamic policy framework that envisions a broader definition of enlargement.²⁵

The EaP presents a new approach to *Ostpolitik* precisely because it does not propose old patterns of integration, but rather offers a convergence that depends on the reform will of the individual state. Whereas the older members of the EU possess few carrots or sticks to induce reform in new member states, it leaves the membership question open for the time being, which enables it to offer gradual incentives through additional convergence funds. Instead of relinquishing all possibilities for influence at once, the EU offers incentives for various policy areas such as for a visa regime or for a free trade zone.

Concerning the further development of the EaP, which does not envision the institutionalized participation of Russia, the biggest challenge for the success of the initiative consists of the diverging perceptions of security interests of Russia and the EU.

²⁵ See for example. Lippert, Barbara (2007). „Teilhabe statt Mitgliedschaft?“. In: Osteuropa, Die EU und ihre Nachbarn: Inklusion, Exklusion, Illusion., Berlin.

The EU speaks about stability and implies long-term modernization that leads to stability and the resolution of frozen conflicts. Russia on the other hand, as mentioned in the above, concentrates on hard security. On an official level, Moscow regrets that the EU rarely addresses hard security issues explicitly in its conversations about its eastern neighbors.²⁶ Where security notions collide, namely in crisis management, the EU and Russia could work together within the EaP. The conflict in Transnistria offers promising possibilities for a first step in security cooperation in the shared neighborhood. Furthermore, rapprochement between Turkey and Armenia could be utilized to encourage a settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. As Russia plays a central role in both conflicts and Moscow expressed desire to cooperation in the area of crisis management, resolution of these conflicts—in addition to the immediate added value—would send a signal to the EU that Moscow is serious about its constructive proposal for a new European security architecture.

As long as the increasing convergence of the common neighborhood with the EU means a divergence from Russia, Moscow will view the EaP with suspicion and as if it were aimed against her and refuse to accept the invitation to participate in projects on an individual basis.²⁷ Although projects should exist that do not involve third countries, many projects are imaginable in areas of shared interest with Russia. The promotion of small and medium-sized business serves an

example of an area that could prove promising for a joint project within the EaP.

3.3.2 The Partnership Agreement and the Four Common Spaces

So that in a best case scenario, the convergence of the eastern European neighborhood countries could occur parallel to convergence with Russia in areas of common interest, the EU needs a new PCA with Russia, officially in negotiation since the EU-Russia summit 2008. At the moment, too much overlap exists between the outdated PCA from 1994 and the four common spaces, which have been implemented since 2005. These two institutional formats should be consolidated and optimized. The EU would be well advised to evaluate which of the four spaces (common economic space, Space of Freedom, Security and Justice, Space on External Security and that on Research, Education, Culture) have made progress thus far and in which of these spaces advancements can be expected. The EU should then foster these areas.

Due to the absence of the US in the common space on external security, cooperation in this area has been ineffective. Against this background, this common space lends itself all the more to a more inclusive forum such as the proposed Euro-Atlantic Council, as security issues in Europe will not be managed without the US and NATO in the near future. In the PCA as well as the four common spaces, economic cooperation presents the area with by far the most progress and potential for its successful further development from a standpoint of mutual interests. As suggested by Moscow political scientist Andrei Zagorski, the EU could work to merge the sectoral economic dialogues into a new partnership agreement and

²⁶ Vladimir Kobrinez, Speech at the Deutsch-Russischen Forum Oktober 21, 2009 in Berlin.

²⁷ Andrei Zagorski stressed this point at the Deutsch-Russisches-Forum on October 21, 2009.

thereby induce a targeted promotion of these areas. Moreover, further cooperation in the complementary area of Freedom, Security and Justice, which seeks to improve the legal conditions for a gradual liberalization of trade relations, could set the groundwork for Russia to join the WTO and lead to more convergence with the neighborhood and with the EU. Following entry into the WTO, a free trade zone could be gradually established.

Through the modernization and diversification of the Russian economy as well as through the growing middle class that this would generate, the EU can most effectively contribute to long-term political modernization. The EU must acknowledge the inconvenient reality that conditionalities in the area of democracy and human rights in Russia have hitherto practically failed. Rather than deploring internal developments against democracy and freedom in Russia and patronizingly formulating these issues unidirectionally as an area within the agreement, the EU would find its policies much more effective by formulating the basis for cooperation around the shared values of freedom and democracy recently so praised by Dmitri Medvedev.²⁸ In this context, the EU could still make critical statements, but in a more constructive fashion. Furthermore, not the EU, but the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) constitutes the appropriate forum for the institutionalized treatment of human rights abuses in Europe, including in the Russian Federation.

Finally, the potential impact of increased exchanges in the area of culture and civil society presents an aspect of convergence between Russia and the EU that should not

be underestimated. Visa facilitation on an EU level would be the most important single step toward advancing these exchanges.

4. Outlook

It will prove difficult if not impossible to receive a positive reaction from Moscow to the Eastern Partnership as long as the overarching relations, in particular in the area of security, remain unsettled. For this reason, the EU should respond positively to Dmitri Medvedev's proposal and engage in dialogue with Moscow in order to produce a more detailed version. After all, one should not forget that the Helsinki Accords from 1975 emanated from a Soviet proposal. Through dialogue and joint revision as well as concretization of the proposal, a mutually beneficial agreement could emerge. In particular, the Corfu process within the OSCE presents the proper forum to discuss the future of the European security architecture and the suggestion to found a Euro-Atlantic Council, through which all relevant actors could elaborate a joint threat perception and a concerted reaction to the new security challenges of the 21st century.

Significant potential exists for the further development of the EaP toward an effective instrument of cooperation and inclusive European security governance. However, the EU must act now, while this window of opportunity is still open. The proposal from president Medvedev placed the ball in the European court and the EU should put forward projects within the framework of the EaP in order to make Russia a concrete offer of inclusion in the initiative and to fill it with life.

²⁸ Schröder, Hans-Henning (2008). „Medwedew ante Portas“, SWP Aktuell, (Nr. 58/ June).