

RSPI NUOVA SERIE



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RIVISTA DI STUDI POLITICI INTERNAZIONALI

Direttore MARIA GRAZIA MELCHIONNI

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OTTOBRE-DICEMBRE 2014 ANNO 81 FASC. 324

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Abstracts - Résumés

SANDRO DE BERNARDIN, Lo stato d'attuazione della politica estera europea.

European foreign policy is not developed enough due to the lack of European political integration. Nevertheless, one cannot deny that a European foreign policy exists. Indeed, all European partners display a genuine interest in achieving convergence on how to handle international affairs. When they fail to do so, each of them feels that something went wrong for the common interest and should be repaired.

Being based upon the so-called intergovernmental approach, European foreign policy is the common denominator of the view points of the 28, which often risks to be low. The role of the high representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy (Cfsp) is to lead European partners to agree on targets that go beyond the 'natural' common denominator.

Times are ripe for fine-tuning Cfsp operational tools (namely sanctions) and the geographical distribution of Eu missions on the ground. The Ukrainian crisis should call the attention on the need for a strategic reflexion on the Eu ultimate borders: to delay further such reflexion would maintain an element of confusion in European foreign policy.

The dramatic developments which took place in the European neighbourhood in the latest four years demand an updating of the European Security Strategy. In the past, Cfsp 'leaps forward' were driven by the pressure of contingent international crises. Present crises may constitute the opportunity for further progress. The new high representative wears a special responsibility in making it to happen.

Le développement encore limité d'une politique étrangère européenne reflète le niveau insatisfaisant de l'intégration politique. Toutefois, on doit bien reconnaître que l'aspiration à atteindre une convergence européenne sur les questions internationales est très enracinée dans tous les pays de l'Union: l'échec éventuel est ressenti par tous comme un dommage à l'intérêt commun, que doit être endigué et réparé aussitôt que possible.

Basée sur l'approche intergouvernementale, la politique étrangère et de sécurité commune est le dénominateur commun des points de vue des 28 partenaires. Celui-ci risque d'être bas: en jouant un rôle actif de proposition, le haut représentant aurait la possibilité de rehausser la barre des ambitions de la Pesc.

Il est grand temps que l'Union européenne revisite les modes d'emploi de ses instruments opérationnels (en premier lieu des sanctions), aussi bien que la distribution géographique de ses missions sur le terrain.

La crise ukrainienne doit redonner priorité, dans l'agenda européenne, à une réflexion stratégique sur les frontières ultimes de l'Union: renvoyer le dénouement de ce noeud crucial rendra plus 'approximative' la politique étrangère européenne.

Les développements dramatiques dans les voisinages de l'Union conseillent une mise à jour de la Stratégie européenne de sécurité. Dans le passé, ce furent les crises internationales à stimuler les 'sauts de qualité' de la Pesc. Les crises du temps présent doivent être autant d'opportunités pour progresser davantage. Le haut représentant doit assumer une responsabilité spéciale pour que ces opportunités soient saisies.

PAROLE CHIAVE: Alto rappresentante; Sicurezza; Sanzioni; Vicinato; Allargamento.

TATIANA ZONOVA - ROMAN REINHARDT, Main vectors of Russia's foreign policy (1991-2014).

The article casts light upon the evolution of Russia's approaches to foreign policy throughout the period of 1991-2014 conditioned by changes of the geopolitical situation, shifts on the world arena, as well as the transformation of the country's position thereon. It provides an acute insight into the major dimensions of Russian foreign policy, in particular relations with the Usa and Nato, the European Union (Eu) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (Cis). Alongside tracking the alterations of foreign policy doctrines and key concepts, the Authors also look into its causes and underpinning by analyzing internal political processes and conflicts of interests within Russia. A special emphasis is put not only on the contrast between Yeltsin's and Putin's/Medvedev's external policy courses, but also on the changes undergone by the latter within the last 14 years. As far as today's complicated situation involving the Ukrainian crisis is concerned, the outlined experience gives ground for a rather positive outlook about the possibility to overcome the current confrontation between Russia and Western countries provided both parties prove the willingness to do so.

L'article porte sur l'évolution des approches de la Russie par rapport à sa politique étrangère pendant la période 1991-2014 conditionnée par les changements de la conjoncture géopolitique, la transformation de la scène internationale ainsi que par la position du pays sur celles-ci. Dans le texte il s'agit des dimensions principales de la politique étrangère russe, en particulier des relations avec les États-Unis et l'Otan, l'Union européenne et la Communauté des États indépendants (Cei). Tout en regardant les modifications des doctrines et des conceptions de politique étrangère, les Auteurs en examinent aussi les causes par l'analyse des processus politiques et des conflits d'intérêts en Russie-même. En ce qui concerne la situation difficile d'aujourd'hui créée par la crise en Ukraine, l'expérience faisant l'objet de cette étude permet de faire un pronostic plutôt positif sur la possibilité de surmonter la confrontation actuelle entre la Russie et les pays occidentaux pourvu que les deux parties fassent preuve d'une réelle volonté politique.

KEYWORDS: Russia-Nato relations; Russia-Eu relations; Commonwealth of Independent States; Ukrainian crisis.

ALEXEY GROMYKO, Smaller or Greater Europe?.

The Author states that the national interests of Russia with its vast territory, innumerable natural and mineral resources, a well-educated labour force and valuable human capital demand from Russia strategic relations with Europe, Asia and other regions and continents, in other words: a transregional foreign policy with global elements. He elaborates the idea that in recent decades the European Union (or Smaller Europe to be distinguished from Greater Europe, which includes Russia and other non-Eu countries) has turned into a significant player on the global scene. In parallel, he is analysing the idea of polycentricity, noting that it has been accelerated by the global crisis. After the period of deep rifts in the Euroatlantic community, caused by the Iraq intervention and other controversies, geopolitical disagreements have faded. From the Author's point of view, this does not mean that the divergence between the allies in 2003 was an aberration. On the contrary, those events demonstrated that in Smaller Europe there is a profound potential to establish its own vision of regional and global problems. In the concluding part of the paper the Author deliberates on the Ukrainian crisis, pointing out that it has created one more setback on the way of the Eu acquiring its autonomous foreign and security policy and strategic vision. The crisis has been used for the new round of the Euroatlantic consolidation, which in the beginning of the XXI century was getting more and more pluralistic. The Author deplores that this consolidation is based on the well-known and regrettable tune: the «threat from the East».

L'Auteur considère que dans les intérêts nationaux de la Russie, compte tenu de son vaste territoire, des ressources naturelles et minérales innombrables, ainsi que de la main d'oeuvre bien formée et du capital humain important, imposent au pays la nécessité de relations stratégiques

avec l'Europe, l'Asie et d'autres régions et continents, autrement dit: une politique étrangère transrégionale avec des éléments globaux.

Il avance l'idée que ces dernières décennies l'Union européenne (ou la Petite Europe à la différence de la Grande Europe, englobant la Russie et les pays non-membres de l'Ue) est devenue un acteur important sur la scène internationale. Au même temps l'Auteur analyse l'idée d'un monde polycentrique, dont la formation a été accélérée par la crise globale. Après une période de clivage profond au sein de la communauté euroatlantique causé par l'intervention en Iraq et d'autres divergences géopolitiques, les désaccords se sont atténués.

Selon le point de vue de l'Auteur, les désaccords entre alliés en 2003 n'étaient pas un malentendu. Au contraire, cela a démontré que la Petite Europe dispose d'un potentiel important susceptible de la munir de sa propre vision des problèmes régionaux et globaux.

Dans la partie finale de l'article l'Auteur réfléchit sur la crise ukrainienne en constatant que celle-ci a de nouveau handicapé le développement d'une politique étrangère et de sécurité indépendante de l'Ue, ainsi que sa vision stratégique. Cette crise a été utilisée pour un nouveau tour de la consolidation euroatlantique qui devenait de plus en plus pluraliste au début du XXI^e siècle. L'Auteur regrette que cette consolidation soit inspirée par la mélodie bien connue et déplorable de la «menace de l'Est».

KEYWORDS: Russian foreign policy; Polycentricity; Euroatlantic community; Eurasia; Ukrainian crisis.

EKATERINA ENTINA, Russia's return to the international arena. How the Eurasian Economic Union should be estimated?

For a long time countries that were once a part of the Ussr coexisted with Russia in a single economic system which was destroyed by the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Commonwealth of Independent States (Cis) built instead of the Soviet Union fulfilled its tasks of a peaceful break-up and dialogue between the Republics. Nevertheless, the Cis has been ineffective in solving the problems of a deeper cooperation in relation to integration. By the end of last century in search of large markets Russia understood the need to restore the economic space in which it historically operated. The formation of the Eurasian Economic Union (Eeu) became one of its most ambitious projects and the integration potential of this geopolitical project is of course high. However, the way to its implementation is full of challenges.

Pendant des décennies la Russie faisait partie d'un mécanisme économique unifié avec les autres Républiques de l'Union Soviétique. La disparition de l'Urss avait détruit ce mécanisme. Pour substituer quelques-unes de ses fonctions la Communauté des États indépendants (Ceï) était créée avec la vocation d'assurer la séparation pacifique de ces Républiques et le dialogue entre elles. Mais la Ceï assez vite avait démontré qu'elle était incapable de lancer la coopération plus approfondie et le processus d'intégration. Vers le début des années 2000 la Russie a compris qu'elle avait besoin de marchés plus larges et a commencé à recréer l'espace économique historique dans le cadre duquel elle se sentait à son aise. Alors l'établissement de l'Union économique eurasiatique est devenu sa priorité primordiale et son projet géopolitique le plus ambitieux. La capacité d'intégration de ce projet est formidable. Mais la Russie doit faire face au même temps à plusieurs défis d'envergure.

KEYWORDS: Eeu treaty; Cis; Customs Union; Regional integration; Economic cooperation.

IGOR SHCHERBAK, New horizons for a Greater Eurasia.

The present article was inspired by Michael Emerson research *Towards a Greater Eurasia: who, why, what and how* which raised a lot of far-reaching ideas concerning the future vision of a Greater Eurasian community on the crossroads of globalization and integration. The Author shares the pragmatic and evolutionary approach of Emerson towards modernization of Asem and

transforming it into a coordination mechanism bridging European and Asian major regional players.

The Author considers that the Ukrainian crisis over the Eu-Ukraine Association agreement (Free Trade deal) highlighted that the international community is confronted nowadays with totally new challenges to its security and stability not directly connected with traditional political and military factors. Non-traditional risks associated with trade, sanctions and tariffs wars, precipitated or imposed expansion or enlargement of geographical areas of regional organizations and arbitrary utilization of trade, financial and economic sanctions could be equally damaging for stability and security and finally for integration processes between Europe and Asia.

The integration and harmonization of the Eurasian space should be supported by an adequate system and mechanisms for crisis prevention and crisis management. The central coordinating role in this respect should belong to Asem and major regional organizations (some of them, like Osce, could perform 'bridging' functions in integration processes).

The article favours a new model of cooperation in Eurasia based on mutual openness of all regional organizations to each other, maximum transparency, adoption of universal rules and technical regulations, emphasis on accelerating harmonization of the Eurasian trade and economic space.

Le présent article a été inspiré par le travail de Michael Emerson *Towards a Greater Eurasia: who, why, what and how* qui a soulevé énormément d'idées d'une grande portée sur la vision future d'une plus grande communauté eurasienne à la croisée des chemins de la globalisation et de l'intégration. L'Auteur partage l'approche pragmatique et évolutive d'Emerson vers la modernisation de l'Asem et sa transformation vers un mécanisme de coordination rapprochant les principaux acteurs régionaux européens et asiatiques.

L'Auteur considère que la crise ukrainienne sur le fond de l'accord d'association Ue-Ukraine (traité de libre commerce) a mis en évidence l'existence de nouveaux défis de sécurité et de stabilité, pas directement en lien avec des facteurs militaires et politiques traditionnels, auxquels la Communauté internationale est confrontée aujourd'hui. Les risques non traditionnels associés aux guerres de commerce, sanctions et tarifs, l'élargissement des zones géographiques des organisations régionales et l'utilisation arbitraire du commerce, les sanctions économiques et financières pourront apporter à part égales des préjudices à la stabilité et à la sécurité et également au processus d'intégration entre l'Europe et l'Asie.

L'intégration et l'harmonisation de l'espace eurasien devront être soutenues par un système adéquat ainsi que des mécanismes de prévention et de gestion des crises. Le rôle central de coordination devrait revenir à l'Asem et aux organisations régionales majeures (certaines d'entre-elles pourront contribuer au 'rapprochement' dans un processus d'intégration semblable à celui d'Osce).

L'article préconise un nouveau modèle de coopération en Eurasie basé sur l'ouverture mutuelle entre toutes les organisations régionales, un maximum de transparence, l'adoption de règles universelles et de régulations techniques, l'effort sur l'accélération de l'harmonisation du commerce et de l'espace économique eurasien.

KEYWORDS: Asia-European Meeting (Asem); Crisis prevention mechanisms; Eu-Ukraine Association agreement; Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (Osce), Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (Ttip).

HOUMAN A. SADRI, Eurasian Economic Union (Eeu): a good idea or a Russian takeover?

The Eurasian Economic Union has sparked a debate in the literature regarding who it benefits and what its consequences would be. This paper reviews the argument put forth by Michael Emerson that Europe and Asia should grow together to form a Greater Eurasia. I use this initial argument as a springboard to examine the American literature regarding the formation of the Eeu. I do this by examining four key components: benefits of the formation and expansion of the Eeu, difficulties and concerns regarding the formation and expansion of the Eeu, the local perspective, and the implications for the European Union and the United States. The paper concludes by stating that

examining the Eeu and its relations are in the United States' interest and should be paid attention to in regards to foreign policy. With this conclusion we note that currently the American literature is limited and needs to be further researched.

L'Union économique eurasiatique (Uee) a lancé un débat dans la littérature de recherche en ce qui pourrait concerner ses bénéficiaires et ses possibles conséquences. Cet article examine l'argumentaire par Michael Emerson qui affirme que l'Europe et l'Asie devraient se développer conjointement afin de former une Grande Eurasie. Nous prenons cette argumentation comme point de départ à l'examen de la littérature américaine sur la formation de l'Uee. Pour cela, nous examinerons quatre éléments fondamentaux: les avantages de la création et de l'expansion de l'Uee, les difficultés et inquiétudes en ce qui a trait à la formation et l'expansion de l'Uee, ses implications à l'échelon régional et ses effets sur l'Union Européenne et les États-Unis. Cet article se termine en affirmant qu'il est dans l'intérêt des États-Unis d'étudier l'Uee et ses relations et que plus d'attention devrait y être consacrée en ce qui concerne ses politiques étrangères. En conclusion, nous soulignons que la littérature américaine sur le sujet est peu abondante pour l'instant et qu'il est nécessaire d'effectuer davantage de recherche dans ce domaine.

KEYWORDS: Us foreign policy; Us-Russia relations; European Union; Economic integration; Near East.

GIUSEPPE PERRI, Premesse storica e linee di tendenza della politica polacca verso l'Ucraina.

The article points out, in its first part, the historical legacy of the relations between Poland and the Ukrainian world, starting with the annexation of Galicia to the Polish Crown in the XIV century, through the long and productive historical period of Ukraine's entire membership in the Lithuanian-Polish *Rzeczpospolita*, during which Ukraine enjoyed the beneficial effects of contacts with the Latin and the Renaissance culture. Then, with the traumatic break tied to Cossack uprising of 1648, the aristocratic oligarchy who led the *Rzeczpospolita* preferred an agreement with Muscovy and a partition of the Ukrainian territories. A strategy which, however, did not prevent Russian expansionism and the annexion, with the partitions of the XVIII century, of a large part of Poland itself. Are then examined the complex Russian-Polish-Ukrainian relationships in the Russian Empire in the XIX century, which also play an important role for the historical clarification of the current dynamics.

The second part of the article, starting with the aforementioned reconstruction of the historical past, focuses on the two basic and alternative strategies that the governments of the reborn Polish national State have adopted towards the eastern neighbour of Ukraine. On the one hand, the strategy of nationalism, that was anti-Ukrainian and in favour of a partition and a stabilization of the border with Russia; the other strategy was pro-Ukrainian, first embodied by the hegemonic neo-federalism of president Piłsudski, then reworked, in the sense of respectful of Ukrainian independence, by the circle of liberal emigration grouped around the Parisian magazine «Kultura» and its director, Jerzy Giedroyc. These strategies have alternated over time, leading at times of renewed historical contrasts between Ukrainians and Poles. The article discusses also the position of communist Poland in the international context and the mindset that spread in this period, in relation to Ukraine and its people.

Since the days of Solidarność, and even more so since the advent of the new post-communist Poland, has finally prevailed the recovery strategy developed by the group of «Kultura» and that is an attitude that sees the freedom of Poland in close relation with the Ukrainian freedom. This is not without oscillations, made of indifference and hostility towards Ukraine, which still exist in Polish society.

The new Russian-Ukrainian crisis, however, puts at risk the Polish Eastern policy as a whole and the ruling class of that country will have to take account of the multiple interferences that at this time are acting on the Giedroyc's strategy. The article lists the interferences and ends with a critical statement about those who, directly or indirectly or in good faith, do not do anything to avoid that Ukraine will be the scene of a war that would be disastrous and contrary to every Ukrainian national interest.

L'article analyse, dans sa première partie, l'héritage historique des relations entre le monde Ukrainien et la Pologne, à commencer par l'annexion de la Galice à la Couronne polonaise au XIV^e siècle, à travers la longue et fructueuse période historique de l'appartenance de l'ensemble de l'Ukraine à la *Rzeczpospolita* polono-lithuanienne, au cours de laquelle l'Ukraine a subi les effets bénéfiques du contact avec la culture latine et de la Renaissance. Puis, avec la rupture traumatique liée au soulèvement cosaque de 1648, l'oligarchie aristocratique qui dirigeait la *Rzeczpospolita* a préféré un accord avec la Moscovie et une division des territoires ukrainiens. Une stratégie qui, cependant, n'a pas empêché l'expansionnisme russe et, à l'époque des partitions du XVIII^e siècle, l'annexion à la Russie d'une grande partie de la Pologne elle-même. On examine ensuite les relations complexes russo-ukraino-polonaise dans l'Empire russe au XIX^e siècle, qui jouent également un rôle important pour la clarification historique de la dynamique actuelle.

La deuxième partie de l'article, à commencer par la reconstruction précitée du passé historique, met l'accent sur les deux stratégies alternatives que les gouvernements de l'État national polonais ressuscité après la première guerre mondiale ont adopté vers le voisin de l'Est, de l'Ukraine. D'une part, la stratégie du nationalisme, anti-ukrainien et en faveur d'une stabilisation par le moyen d'une partition avec la Russie; et l'autre stratégie, pro-ukrainien, d'abord incarnée par le néo-fédéralisme hégémonique du président Piłsudski, puis retravaillé, dans le sens d'égalité et de respect de l'indépendance ukrainienne, par les cercles de l'émigration libérale regroupés autour de la revue parisienne «Kultura» dirigée par Jerzy Giedroyc. Ces stratégies ont alterné au fil du temps, ce qui a entraîné parfois des contrastes historiques renouvelés entre les Ukrainiens et les Polonais. L'article traite aussi de la position de la Pologne communiste dans le contexte international et de l'état d'esprit qu'on détenait dans cette période par rapport à l'Ukraine et à ses habitants.

Depuis l'époque de la Solidarność, et plus encore depuis l'avènement de la nouvelle Pologne post-communiste, a finalement prévalu la stratégie de rétablissement élaborée par le groupe de «Kultura» et qui est une attitude qui considère la liberté de la Pologne en étroite relation avec la liberté de l'Ukraine. Mais il y a aussi des oscillations, entre l'indifférence et l'hostilité envers l'Ukraine, qui existent encore dans la société polonaise.

La nouvelle crise russo-ukrainienne, cependant, met en danger la politique polonaise de l'Est dans son ensemble et la classe dirigeante de ce pays devra tenir compte des interférences multiples qu'à cette époque pèsent sur la stratégie de Giedroyc. L'article énumère les interférences et se termine par une déclaration critique envers ceux qui, directement ou indirectement ou de bonne foi, ne font pas ce qu'il faut pour éviter que l'Ukraine soit le théâtre d'une guerre qui serait catastrophique et contraire à tout intérêt national ukrainien.

PAROLE CHIAVE: Isolazionismo polacco; Federalismo jagellonico; Rivista «Kultura» diretta da Jerzy Giedroyc; Eastern Partnership; Difesa della 'nuova' Europa.

Russia's return to the international arena. How the Eurasian Economic Union should be estimated?

EKATERINA ENTINA

Analysing Russia as a subject of world politics and international relations one needs to have a clear understanding of what a huge and valuable historical baggage Russia has. It is essential to remember to what extent the current situation can be explained by the events of different periods of formation and prosperity of the Russian Empire and then the achievements and failures of the Soviet Union.

Russia and the Russian Empire

The symbol of the dilemma faced both by the Empire of the past and present-day Russia, is the double-headed eagle. Its two heads face two opposite sides: East and West. However it would be a mistake to oppose them. The Empire never allowed this opposition. It never sacrificed its policy in the East to its western policy. Port Arthur, the defeat of the Pacific Fleet, territorial concessions, the defeat from Japan were not the result of underestimation of the importance of relations with the eastern powers, but strategic misunderstanding of limitations of its own forces and the striking manifestation of uselessness of the rotten State machine in desperate need of modernization.

In the foreign policy of the Russian Empire the relations with Japan, China and Korea have always played an important role due to the exceptional positions of these countries, ready to surprise those who at least for a moment had left them unattended. In the 1990s, democratic Russia didn't pay much attention to them. Now it's been catching up. Communication with these countries is among Russia's top priorities. The ideas of equal distance and of the need to develop good neighbourly relations along the Russian borders have become dominant. However, pontificating about the fact that the eastern direction is becoming the priority for modern Russia remains a fantasy or even an exaggeration. The main infrastructure and economic potential of the country are concentrated in its western part. Most of Russia's economic interests are focused on the West. Culturally and historically Russia is, of course, a European country.

Today's Russia inherited a few extremely important but probably not the best features from the Russian Empire. The Empire had vast lands and huge population. However, only high-ranking officials were valued. Maybe that's why

it was always ready to sacrifice the heads of its citizens to its geostrategic interests. The Empire disregarded all the losses. In this respect nothing has changed since then.

Both many years ago and now the politics has been personalized. Historical periods in Russia are usually connected with tsars, generals and leaders, not with interests, institutions and communities. Unfortunately, the partners also see Russia not as a people whose hopes and aspirations must be respected, but as Vladimir V. Putin's regime.

Russia had and still has an enormous territory and borders on many countries; therefore Russia has always been interested and objectively involved in all the aspects of global politics. Moscow has always been very sensitive about any attempts to do something behind its back. After all, they were equal to the desire to profit at its expense or to get something to the detriment of the country.

Finally the internal development of the Empire went convulsively. It always had to catch up and make up for something. Even now solving problems of modernization and obtaining western technology is crucial for the country.

Russia and the Soviet Union

More than seven decades separated the Russian Empire and modern Russia. Naturally, the impact of the recent past on the life of the Russian society and its foreign policy is much stronger. In addition, one can't disregard the fact that the Soviet Union not only broke with the political system and economic structure of the Russian Empire, but also refused to consider itself its successor. The new rulers proclaimed the emergence of an entirely new subject of international law, which was not bound by previous commitments and would not pay for its debts. At that time, it seemed that it was almost the only possible solution in that situation. Decades later, historians tend to believe that a radical break with the past was more expensive than all the unpaid debts. Only fairly recently modern Russia was able to negotiate the fact that no claims would be made anymore. The problem of legal succession in relation to the USSR was solved in a fundamentally different way. This is a unique case. Such a decision had never been taken before. In agreement with the partners (the United States and the European Union), Russia declared itself not the legal successor but the 'continuator' of the USSR. What is the difference? All the independent States that emerged from the dissolution of the Soviet Union are the legal successors. In case of Russia's agreement to such status, it would have had to share all the international heritage of the Soviet Union with others, including its debts, status, property and powers. By declaring itself a 'continuator', Russia pledged to pay all the debts of the USSR itself. But it retained much more, including the status of the superpower, the status of the permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (with the right of veto) and possession of all the nuclear weapons of the former USSR. Russia inherited all the foreign property of the USSR, automatic membership in all international organizations, which included the Soviet Union, and participation in

all its international treaties. Everyone else had to ask for membership, re-enter and join again.

Russia is thus the founder of both the Un and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (Osce), the original party to all fundamental multilateral international treaties, etc.. Practically Russia used a scheme by which others came out of the Soviet Union, and Russia didn't, despite negotiating the self-destruction of the Soviet Union with them. It turns out that the Russian Federation refused the socialist order of society and planned economy and at the same time inherited all the international baggage of the Soviet Union and its international positioning. Maybe this can explain numerous challenges in the international arena that Russia is facing today and the foreign policy conducted by the government. After all, practically in some aspects Russia broke up with the Soviet Union and its recent past, and in other aspects it didn't. Therefore speculative accusations of its adversaries that the Russian Federation is a new edition of the Ussr may seem somewhat reasonable.

Russia is being accused of conducting an imperial policy and imposing its approaches on others. Russia undoubtedly wants other parties to consider its opinion and share and support its point of view. Since it has not only ambitions, but also the status and resources, it has a real impact on what is happening in the immediate vicinity of its borders and around the world. However, it is a clear distortion of facts and malicious distortion of reality to accuse Russia of the imperial policy and say that it acts as the Soviet Union did. Russia is doomed to intervene in everything, because of the size of its territories, proximity to the United States (Us), Japan, China, and throughout the perimeter of its borders, including all European countries (through the Eu), and because of its nuclear parity with the world's sole superpower and a special responsibility for international peace and security as a permanent member of the Un Security Council.

Moscow is under pressure to repent for all the sins and crimes of the totalitarian regime and to apologize to other countries. But where do speculations lie? First of all, all the nations, rulers and States that emerged from the former Soviet Union were a part of it. They were all equally involved. Some part of the whole can't just escape and solely declare responsibility. If any responsibility is possible, it should be shared by all. Secondly, all the countries, including Russia and the Russians were victims of the totalitarian regime. To say that some were butchers and others were victims under the totalitarian regime is just cheap politics. Finally, modern Russia broke up with the totalitarian past. It refused the communist choice. From the perspective of the political system and political choice it is a completely different country. It is impossible to present it as related to past crimes.

These explanations should always be kept in mind when comparing the position of Russia and the former Soviet Union in the world, foreign policy pursued by the Russian Federation and the Ussr, and when talking about the similarity of traditions and continuity.

An enormous difference of the Soviet Union from modern Russia is that it offered the world its project for the future world order. It gave it an enormous, incomparable soft power.

The USSR and communist ideology gave the world a dream. It was built of several elements, equally attractive for ordinary people. The Soviet Union was building an egalitarian society in which there was no place for inequality by one fundamentally important criterion: the denial of money as a measure of personal success, bridging the gap between the rich and the poor, equality between people in this regard. It promised that in the future there would be a society that would meet the needs and demands of everyone, not just the elite. Finally, it ensured social self-realization, social mobility, participation of the majority in the functioning of the party and the State. On the basis of this ideology and such project for the future, the USSR surrounded itself with Eastern Europe, created the socialist camp and included the countries of the socialist camp in the Warsaw Pact and Comecon. It involved a large group of countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America in this project. The appeal of the project could not be undermined even by the fact that it was far from reality. The USSR lost economic race with the West. It could not win the battle for the minds, as the political elite sought to cash the power concentrated in their hands. It failed to build the egalitarian society. Stratification in the USSR and the socialist countries was not by the criterion of wealth but by the criterion of place of an individual in the party-State hierarchy. Most people lived on their salaries, using only those educational, medical, social and trade union benefits which were granted by the State. Privileged minority treated the country's property as their own.

Having broken up with the Soviet Union and with the Soviet socialist organization of society, Russia killed the dream. It refused to implement an alternative project. It ceased to be an alternative and as a result it became a loser. Russia certainly doesn't have its attractive idea, ideology or a future project. It is more difficult to implement someone else's project, particularly the project of pluralist democracy and consumer society. All the new partners have a competitive advantage. Besides, the Russian Federation has become weaker and smaller than the USSR.

Having lost the ideological baggage of the USSR, Russia has lost or abandoned the systematic mechanism of influence on international affairs, which had been used by the Soviet Union. Diplomacy was always a secondary tool for the Soviet Union. The inter-party relations were the main one. The USSR was a party-State, in which power and resources were concentrated in the hands of the party leaders. This model worked for all the countries of the socialist camp and socialist orientation. Nurturing the party elite in the global sense provided for the efficiency of interstate relations. Inter-party channels of the USSR were used for making fundamentally important decisions and ensuring coordination and solidarity.

After the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and up until now there has been a desire to build an interaction through special

relationship with the party and government leaders. However, the possibilities to use them have become more limited. Dominance of the party relations in the power hierarchy explains the significance of the impact of the global networks of the time – the Communist International and close collaboration with the communist parties of the western countries. All pro-Soviet political forces in other countries had their own media used for propaganda.

The only element that modern Russia has is diplomacy. Interparty relations are broken or do not work. There are only a few ideological allies left. Russia isn't properly built in the global party structure. International inter-governmental organizations that worked under the auspices of the Soviet Union have been disbanded. International non-governmental organizations have either been inactivated or work autonomously. Russia doesn't control any global media (except for «Russia Today»). There has been a successful information war against Russia. The inability to explain and share its point of view explains many foreign policy challenges that the country faces.

However, Russia decided to keep some tools from the Soviet arsenal. Along with the Us, Russia is the largest nuclear power. Russia and the Us have more than 90% of nuclear missiles; therefore a strategic dialogue with the Us, started in the times of the Cuban missile crisis, remains a major component of Russian foreign policy.

Russian diplomacy benefits from being a permanent member of the Un Security Council. This is a key instrument in the post-war world. There are other mechanisms but it is through the Security Council that Russia participates in the discussion and resolution of all military and political issues, relevant for the planet and all its regions.

Russia has ceased to be an alternative to western ideology, western lifestyle and western values but to some extent it has remained a counterweight to the West for its global interests. Take, for example, special relationship with China, India and many other developing and non-aligned countries, Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America or the approaches to the solution of global, regional and other problems.

The Ussr produced 20% of world Gdp; today's Russia produces less than 3%. Military spending of the Ussr and the Us were comparable. Military triad of the countries of the socialist camp, the core of which was the Ussr, was equal with the armed forces of the Us and Western Europe. Today the Us spends on weapons ten times more than Russia and all American Nato partners together. The Us is decades ahead in regard to military technology and military capabilities. Only China is capable of catching up with the Us. The Ussr had military bases scattered around the world: in Cuba, Vietnam, on the other side of the Sahara, etc.. Russia has left them all. Partners expected that Russia would finally turn into a purely regional power and limit the scope of their interests with its immediate neighbours. This did not happen. Russia remains a global power with global interests and presence in all regions of the world. There is a direct link between

the former USSR and modern Russia in the involvement in making numerous decisions on global, regional, bilateral and sub-regional problems.

In terms of the strategic partnership, strategic dialogue and security issues, the Soviet Union always favoured relations with the Americans. Russia in this respect fully continues the former strategy, seeing all the other players as less influential and important. In terms of economic cooperation the USSR most actively developed relations with Western Europe and the countries of today's EU. The lack of balance there is obvious today. The EU is the main economic partner of Russia, the main market for Russian exports. Russia depends on advanced technologies developed in the EU. Importance for Russia's European policy can also be explained by the fact that most of the economic potential of the country is focused on its European territory. This includes more developed infrastructure, higher scientific potential and most of the population living in the European part of Russia. Economic, demographic imbalances and disproportionate distribution of productive forces are the legacy of the former Soviet Union. It is unacceptable not to take this into account in the positioning of Russia and its foreign policy.

When Russia separated from all the other countries that emerged from the former Soviet Union, its leaders were convinced that it would build a modern society and economy easier and faster than the rest. It turned out that the political weight of the country without its allies was much lower. Markets are vital for today's economy. In addition, the former Soviet Republics are closely linked together in history, culture, language, interests and economic opportunities. Therefore, the CIS countries and the promotion of its own integration project have become the top priority for Moscow.

However the same mistake is often made in the analysis of integration projects that Russia tried and is trying to build on the post-Soviet space, harmonizing its own geopolitical interests. It happens as a result of not quite accurate interpretation of the characteristics described above. It is argued that the Soviet Union for decades was and was playing the role of an independent centre of power. Russia has grown out of it. Therefore, it is quite natural for Russia to play this role and all integration projects of the Russian Federation are an attempt to restore some form of Empire. Of course, the Soviet Union was an independent geopolitical centre. Moreover, it was one of the poles of the bipolar world. But the position of the Soviet Union in the international arena does not mean the same for Russia. Russia is the largest part, but it is still just a part of the USSR. The collapse of the USSR brought much more than just losing almost half of its population and much of the area. It brought broken economic relations and ties with traditional allies and partners. It is clear that the parts, especially separate parts, are less than the whole. But even this is not important. Russia has completely and radically changed its political system and the model of socio-economic development. So it physically could not and can't act in the same way as the USSR. Even those people who called themselves managers in the Soviet Union have failed. It must be stated that Russia has no experience in

implementing policies as an independent centre of power. There is the memory of how it was done by the Soviet Union but it is not applicable to a completely new country. Russia is either unable to act as the Soviet Union or is counterproductive. It hasn't gained its own positive experience. Projects to create geopolitical zones around the country are just attempts to create a completely new player in the international arena, the economic and political potential of which would correspond to reality and to the inherited international legal status.

For years the Russian Federation and its leaders paid lip service to the priority of building friendly relations with the neighbouring countries that emerged from the former Soviet Union. The Cis countries were declared the priority of Russia's international efforts in all of its updated concepts of Russian foreign policy and in the foreign policy statements of her leaders¹. In fact, Russia has repeatedly revised its policy towards the Cis; each time giving this a different place in the priority list and introducing quite a few nuances. On the one hand, a large proportion of Russians still live in the Cis countries. Relations with these countries have been of the usual and familiar character, where most issues could be resolved on a personal level. On the other hand, Russia has had to find its place in the world and revive its economy. The Cis countries clearly weren't leading world powers that made critical decisions. Hence, in reality, we see the inconsistencies and contradictions of Russia's policy in this important geopolitical area. Only relatively recently has it become truly comprehensive and systematic.

Features of Russia's policy towards the Cis countries in the 1990's, 2000's, and current

At the very beginning, trying to resolve the issues caused by independence from the Soviet Union, the new political elite had to justify why the Soviet Union had disintegrated and work out the arrangements for the most painless break up with its former Republics. At that time, the prevalent opinion suggested that Russia on her own would find it much easier and faster to follow the path of democratization, economic restructuring and building an effective modernized State.

At the same time an international institution for maintaining a constant direct dialogue with the leadership of new sovereign States was required. The Cis became such an institution. It turned out that the Cis was an ideal match for both the break-up and the dialogue between the countries. Not without the help of the Cis would the break-up of former Soviet Republics follow a peaceful scenario. It bore no resemblance to the catastrophe in Yugoslavia. Administrative boundaries become interstate so that everything that belonged to the Soviet Union and was on the territory of the former Republics fell under their sovereignty.

¹ See, for example, *Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation 2013*, http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/0/6D84DDEDEDBF7DA644257B160051BF7F.

However, this structure turned out to be less suitable for some more ambitious ideas and fairly quickly it became clear that much more would be required. The views that Russia would benefit by getting rid of the ballast of the Asian 'freeloaders' and that she could establish a privileged relationship with the Slavic brotherhood were the consequence of a far too simplistic and idealistic picture of the world.

The thesis that Russia was a donor-country proved to be inadequate due to the fact that it had no meaning in a practical sense. All the former Republics were an organic part of a single economic complex; the beneficial division of labour had been established between them, they complemented each other and struggled to exist without the existing specialization of production and exchange of goods. The disintegration of integrated economic ties generated extremely negative results, which no one was able to quickly overcome. All the former Republics have gone through a severe economic recession, unheard of in peacetime.

The recession has become even more difficult because prior to this, the economic relations established within the socialist community had disintegrated. Only the Baltic States recovered fairly quickly as they received massive help from the West. It supported their financial system, provided a flow of investment, restructured their economies and involved them in the global economy.

The calculations of the Russian leadership about implementing a new version of the Marshall Plan towards Russia also didn't stand the test of time. It turned out to be almost impossible to build relations for all parties in a strange, unknown and alien market.

Attempts to adapt the Cis to the needs of recovery with the reintroduction of economic ties, assimilation of legislation and development of the general political, economic and social course haven't proved to be successful. The independent States of the former Soviet Union have drifted further apart. Centrifugal forces prevailed and nullified any effort to change things, to restore or to reverse them.

The same was happening in foreign policy. Russia helped others to join the Un, Osce and other international organizations and treaties. However, at no point the Cis countries had a wish or intention to vote in the Un or anywhere else as a single group with a common opinion.

The Us, Eu, Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia and later China, all main world and regional actors at the exception of Japan dragged the areas that had once been common in different directions. The Independent States were too weak. They were scared of openly opposing the international community and also being seen to be failing to support the independent voice of Russia in international organizations.

Internal and interstate conflicts have significantly complicated the relations between the Cis countries. These include the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh and Transnistria and the fierce confrontations between Tbilisi and its independently claimed regional autonomies. Inter-ethnic conflicts have taken the most dangerous forms in Central Asia.

Russia took a role in all of these events and, as we have seen, the Cis was also ill-suited to resolve them. Its contribution into finding solutions or even providing a necessary framework for negotiation was minimal.

It seems that since the early 2000's the Cis has turned over a new leaf. It turns out that the development of political and economic relations with other regions of the world has given Russia much less than it expected. All the requirements of the previous period related to the break-up have been completed and Moscow now began to look at the Cis as a real tool for economic development and to strengthen its position in the world.

By this time a large number of multilateral treaties had been signed². Institutional structures have now been long established and extensive experience achieved in doing business in the usual interstate mode, as opposed to the previous practices. The need to restore and deepen economic ties, which will make both Russia and all its neighbours succeed, is obvious.

The old *clichés* about Russians looking down upon others have been eliminated. The course adopted has been for the transformation of the Cis into an international organization of integration type, thus re-establishing many of the relationships that previously existed; in essence, it is pouring fresh wine into old bottles.

However, international centrifugal forces have their continuing effect. Neighbours are suspicious of Moscow's intentions and, in some instances, the disengagement between them has enhanced as they find themselves in the area of influence of other global or regional centres of power.

Russia still hasn't decided on making the joint economic, legal and humanitarian order around it the geopolitical number one priority. Absence of the main driving force of integration turned the efforts of remaking the Cis into a bureaucratic exercise.

In these circumstances, the use of a different nature of cooperation becomes an alternative with Russia starting to build advanced relations with the post-Soviet countries which are ready for this. Many of them are aware that Moscow is their only reliable guarantor of stability and political continuity and security.

In the Cis or in relation to the Cis region there is a set of interstate organizations working in various fields. They are reminiscent of a Russian wooden doll *matryoshka*. There is a Union State of Russia and Belarus, where theoretically the ties should be very close. The next one is the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC) with somewhat broader membership. The Union of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan will later create the Customs Union. Then come the Common Economic Space and the Cis free trade zone. The Collective Security Treaty Organization (Csto) compliments them. Finally, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization institutionally became a qualitatively new global

² See: *The Single register of legal acts and other documents of the Commonwealth of Independent States*, <http://cis.minsk.by/reestr/ru/index.html>.

player of the post-Soviet era. Therefore, there is a noticeable complication in connections within the region.

Gradually, building a political union and a common market around it has become a major priority of Moscow. Russia showed the seriousness of its intentions and willingness to sacrifice almost everything during the last leg of negotiations on Wto accession. Russia delivered an ultimatum to the Us and the European Union (Eu): either you accelerate the process of accession to the Wto or we do something else. Then it refused to progress on all previously negotiated agreements and completely switched to the creation of the Customs Union.

At first it seemed that the Customs Union would give the same stillborn result as many of the previous projects of the Cis. Negotiating its parameters was a very complicated process, but nevertheless the sceptics have been brought to shame. Three countries harnessed their willpower and overcame all odds; success has been possible only because all the forces of the government, key ministries and agencies of the three countries were thrown at solving the problems connected with building the Customs Union. The very thought of a possible failure was excluded and its creation became a genuine breakthrough.

The Customs Union is built not only as an integration, but also as a supranational project. It has all the relevant attributes: the legal framework, institutions and mechanisms of enforcement. Integration processes in the Cis have acquired a core and the Cis has now got a backbone.

The changes have been of great practical importance for organization of external trade for businesses, exporters and importers, logistics providers, etc.. Currently, a significant part of all transactions are made not on the basis of Russian legislation but under the common Customs Code convention. Document flow is conducted under the instructions and according to the explanations of the Economic Commission, not by national authorities.

The Customs Union has had a major economic effect for the Member States. It has stimulated economic growth and contributed to the reorientation of trade and financial flows. It has also led to a significant increase in bilateral trade.

The successful establishment of the Customs Union paved the way for the implementation of a much more ambitious project, the formation of the Eurasian Economic Union (Eeu).

Genesis of efforts to establish the Eeu. Its main characteristics. Features of creating the institution

For a long time all the proposals for the establishment of the Eurasian Union remained a beautiful slogan. However, the formation of the Customs Union became a turning point. At the EurAsEC summit in Moscow in December 2010, the parties reached an agreement on the formation of the Customs Union on the basis of a single economic space of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia³.

³ Eec treaty to be signed by January 1, 2015. *Rbc the whole world*, March 19, 2012, <http://top.rbc.ru/politics/19/03/2012/642431.shtml>.

In the autumn of 2011 Vladimir V. Putin, at that time Russian prime minister, published an article in «Izvestia», called *A new integration project for Eurasia. The future in the making*⁴. It proclaimed that the Eeu could become one of the poles of the modern world. In fact, Russia is aware that it needs a broader market, as the internal national market is not enough. It needs real effective allies in an integration, internationally but where relations do not depend on political situation.

The article and Putin's presidential election campaign were followed by a series of decrees focussing the efforts of the entire State machine to achieve the stated objective. On the 18th of November, 2011 Dmitry Medvedev, Alexander Lukashenko and Nursultan Nazarbayev signed a declaration on Eurasian Economic Integration in Moscow⁵.

From the 1st of January, 2012 the Customs Union became an effective single economic area in three countries. The full Common Economic Space (Ces) agreement came into force in July of the same year. Officially stated goals of the Ces included creating conditions for sustainable economic development and effective improvement of living standards of the Member States⁶.

In order to accelerate the progress of creation of the Eurasian Union and run it from the 1st of January 2015, Russia prepared a draft of a comprehensive agreement on the Eurasian Economic Union in great depth and with expertise. It provides for the creation of supra-national bodies, including the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government. The project advocates the idea of the supremacy of the Union legislation over domestic law of the Member States, thus overriding their domestic laws.

The proposal is very extensive with more than half of the articles devoted to Customs issues. Others represent a codification of existing contractual matters. This draft was used as leverage in negotiations and trilateral consultations between Moscow and Minsk, Moscow and Astana.

Direct work on the official agreement began much later. A multi-page program describes all the stages and sequence of the agreement preparation. Numerous drafting groups were created. Coordination between them is ensured. According to the official timeframe, the preparation of the document, its editing and national approval procedures should be completed by autumn 2014. This task was realised. The agreement will come into effect from the 1st of January, 2015, as planned.

Although the agreement is based on existing agreements and orders of the summits of Cec, EurAsEC and the Customs Union, it aims at solving larger problems. On the one hand, as in the case of the Eu, it is assumed that the Eeu will expand its geographical boundaries and other former Soviet Republics will be able to join it. Kyrgyzstan in particular is interested in membership. If this

⁴ Vladimir V. Putin, *A new integration project for Eurasia. The future in the making*, «Izvestia», October 3, 2011, <http://izvestia.ru/news/502761>.

⁵ *Declaration on Eurasian Economic Integration*, November 18, 2011, http://news.kremlin.ru/ref_notes/1091.

⁶ <http://www.eurasiancommission.org/ru/Pages/default.aspx> (accessed: 18/09/2013).

happens, Tajikistan's accession looks more likely; and Tajikistan will share a border with the Customs Union. The president of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan announced the intention to be involved in the integration project on the 3rd of September, 2013⁷.

On the other hand, theoretically Eeu can be opened for full or partial participation of non-regional players. In this case we will talk about creating a so-called Big Eurasian Union. This scenario is also under development.

Whilst Summits are the governing political body of the Customs Union, the Eurasian Economic Commission is gaining more and more weight in decision making. At present, the Commission controls about 170 functions of the Union and the number of Commission staff is growing rapidly. They currently prepare guidance and regulatory documents and control their enforcement. Nevertheless, it seems that only the Russian Foreign Ministry instructed its missions abroad to promote the interests of the Commission and the future Union outside. Embassies of Kazakhstan and Belarus are not as actively engaged in these issues as the Russian Federation.

As is natural for a newly integrated entity, little attention has so far been given to the Economic Court of the Customs Union and the Common Economic Space. Its headquarters are located in Minsk, with the members chosen on an equal basis. To some extent, underestimation of the importance of the Court is related to the fact that it is just developing the practices of resolving international disputes. The consideration of claims of economic entities to their State and other Member States will come into play a little later. In the future it will certainly play an important role in the structure of the principal bodies of the Union.

Over time, the Eeu Parliament will join it. At the moment its establishment is considered premature. The Information Office of the Customs Union is taking its first steps. It will later be converted into the Information Bureau of the Executive Committee of the Eeu. Its directors hastened to establish contacts with potential foreign partners. Thus, the delegation of the Bureau visited Luxembourg to study the experience of Eurostat.

The economic bodies which should supplement the Eurasian Economic Commission may include in near or more remote future the Commission for Raw Materials, the Foundation for Economic and Scientific-Technical Cooperation, the Commission for the Interstate and Financial-industrial Groups and Joint Ventures, the Commission on the Environment, Investment Bank and finally, the Commission on the Common Currency Unit.

Member States hope to solve many economic problems with the help of the Eeu. The most important tasks are to lower prices on exported and imported goods, increase competition, increase the competitiveness of national economies, etc..

⁷ Serzh Sargsyan *The accession to the Customs Union it doesn't mean the refusal to continue the dialogue with the European institutions*, «Armenia Today», September 4, 2013, http://armtoday.info/default.asp?Lang=_Ru&NewsID=95646.

Eeu treaty

The meeting of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council on the 29th of May, 2014 became a historic milestone in the creation of the Eurasian Economic Union. This was the assessment from the members of the Council, presidents of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan. It was possible to eliminate the last of the remaining contradictions, and the Eeu treaty was signed. Thus, the members of the Customs Union took a decisive step towards deeper integration. They brought it under a qualitatively new legal basis and consolidated their strategic decisions. They also created the prerequisites for political stability in the region, for acceleration of coordinated economic development, improvement of their competitiveness in the global market and for the introduction of new partners in the post-Soviet area.

Under the treaty, the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council represented by the leaders of the member countries, the Eurasian Intergovernmental Council composed of the heads of governments and permanent regulatory body of the Eeu – the Eurasian Economic Commission – with headquarters in Moscow became the main statutory bodies of the Eeu. The Eeu Court is also included in the system of the principal bodies of the Union. By 2025, a supranational financial institution will be added.

The treaty regulates in detail the competence, order of formation and functioning of each of these bodies. It is provided that all important decisions are made by consensus. Another guarantee of equality of participants in the integration process is an equal representation of the parties in the leadership of existing structures. Corresponding principles of recruitment are used in the replacement of all the posts of staff in the Commission, starting at the level of deputy director of the Department.

The treaty widely uses the standards of a teleological nature which involves the achievement of certain objectives specified in the standards. The essence of the general regime is to ensure freedom of movement of goods, services, capital and labour, and to conduct a coordinated, coherent and unified policy in key sectors of the economy. Thus, the common market of medicines and medical devices within the Eeu will be operational by 2017, the common electricity market by 2019 and a common market of oil and natural gas by no later than 2025. Until these dates, existing accepted patterns of interaction are going to continue.

The Eeu treaty will be established as an international organization of regional economic integration. The Union will have an international legal capacity. One of its key elements will be the right of the Eeu to exercise international activities within its competence which aim at achieving the goals and objectives set for it.

The treaty states that the Eeu is open for any State which shares its goals and principles to join. Conditions of entry are determined by Member States in each particular case, as for instance, in relation to Armenia. Any interested State is also given the opportunity to become an observer State of the Union.

The working language of the Eeu is Russian. International treaties within the Union and the Commission's decisions which are binding for Member States are all written in Russian. Then they are translated into the national languages of Member States, if required by their national legislation.

Thus, the treaty formalizes the transition to the next higher level of integration after the Customs Union and the Common Economic Space. It is the result of the codification and development of the positive elements accumulated by the precursors of the Eeu. It eliminates previously existing contradictions and inconsistencies and resolves identified problems. It also eliminates the need for reference rules. Even more importantly it ensures that the Eeu legal framework meets the Wto requirements and contains the necessary mechanisms for its further improvement and modernization.

Prospects of formation of the Eeu. Difficulties and opposition along the way. Ways to overcome the difficulties

Formation of the Eurasian Economic Union gained great momentum. However, challenges for the realization of this geopolitical project are obvious. It is revealing how difficult the negotiations on the text of the Eeu treaty really were. Minsk and Astana insisted that all the clauses about the political future of the Union had to be thrown out of it. The parties had to sacrifice a part of the conceptual elements that were going to transform the Eeu into a sequential integration association, including not only those involving formation of institutions, but also those that determine the balance between the domestic law of the Member States and the supranational legislation. The parties were unable to provide for the conversion of the Eeu Court into an analogue of the European Court of Justice in its impact, scope of authority and types of claims and requests.

The Economic Court is already considering some claims the outcome of which could have a significant impact on the future configuration of the common market. There were significant disagreements in connection with the illegality of the exemption of a range of goods, including energy, from the uniform rules. It is clear that Kazakhstan and Belarus would like to get immediate access to oil, gas, electricity, etc. at Russian internal prices. It is also obvious that all the parties of the formed integrated Union should make steps towards each other.

Both the Us and the Eu are highly resistant to integration processes in the former Soviet Union region. They use a standard excuse: Russia is allegedly recreating the Empire. She forces her neighbours into a union similar to the former Soviet Union. This is blatant disinformation. But the world's media together with the foreign affairs agencies are spreading it.

Many experts believe that Russia was late with the implementation of its geopolitical project. For the last two decades the economies of the Cis have

gradually reoriented away from the Russian market to the markets of the Eu and other third party countries. New economic ties are significant for them and the share of their foreign trade with Russia has reduced.

For the countries of the Caucasus it has dropped to a minimum. In Central Asia, China is enjoying the dominant position. Moldova, except Transnistria, is completely tied to Romania and the Eu.

To illustrate this: until recently, Moldova's wine export to Russia was approaching 300 million euros, a significant figure, and thus Moscow had a direct influence on Chisinau. Then Russia banned Moldovan wine. When supplies resumed after the embargo, their value did not exceed 60 million euros per year⁸. If Moscow once again closes its market and refuses to let the allegedly poor quality Moldovan wine in, it will no longer be critical to Chisinau.

The fact that the Cis partners moved to other markets made everything that was associated with the Eastern Partnership so difficult for the implementation of the geopolitical project of Russia. In June 2014 the Eu signed a Free Trade agreement with Moldova and Georgia. As a consequence, independent of the political situation in these countries, they will almost certainly be lost for the Eurasian Economic Union.

The documents mentioned above provide a gradual transition of associated countries to the Eu standards. They will have to accept Eu legislation almost automatically. In the future they will have to follow the newly adopted Eu norms, neither being able to influence them, nor refuse to implement them. Technical regulations of the Eu will operate on the territory of those countries. In fact, they are integrating into the structure and legal environment of the Eu, without the right to vote.

As in previous cases, Brussels will seize the domestic markets of the Eastern Partnership using administrative methods. Eu goods and companies will have significant principal benefits. The Eastern countries simply won't be able to supply most of their non-energy products due to non-compliance with Eu standards. In contrast, the competitiveness of Russia in these markets will fall sharply. In addition, for Russia there will be the same limitations that have already been introduced by the Eu institutions.

Azerbaijan refused closer ties with the Eu. Brussels itself refused any association with Belarus, at least for a period of time, while waiting for a change of power in Minsk. Armenia is subjected to unprecedented external pressures because of its choice in favour of the Eeu. However Ukraine remains of primary importance.

Moscow has lost the battle for Ukraine. It seems that it is an irrevocable loss. After the change of political regime in Kiev and subsequent events, Kiev sees its goal in inflicting maximum damage on Russia. It is strongly provoking and

⁸ *Export of the Republic of Moldova (without Transnistria) in the Russian Federation in 2010-2012*, http://www.ved.gov.ru/exportcountries/md/md_ru_relations/md_ru_trade/.

supporting the introduction of Us and Eu restrictions on economic cooperation with Moscow and Russian business. Whatever difficulties the Eu is experiencing, it seems more desirable, prosperous and promising for the Ukrainian elite and the younger generation. The elite keep their savings in the Eu banks, acquire property in the Eu and prefer to live according to the canons of the Eu. Kiev would disassociate itself from all Russian things. It is planning to cut itself from the instability of the North Caucasus and migration from Central Asia. What's more, the country cannot survive without external financial assistance.

The Ukrainian leadership (both the present and future) expects a flow of investment from the Eu and modernization of its economy. It turns a blind eye to the fact that the country is absolutely unprepared for Eu integration. Ukrainian leaders prefer not to notice that the removal of barriers for the expansion of trade and investment from the Eu will destroy the national economy. It will take years and billions, which Ukraine doesn't have, to rebuild the economy. Ukrainian industry won't be allowed to produce to the old technical standards and sell its products in the Eu. The Association agreement excludes this possibility. Kiev will not develop its independent industry, agriculture and banking system. No wonder some politicians in Germany, Poland and Sweden, those who are particularly active in promoting the Eastern Partnership, believe that the Eu has managed to include the three countries in its integration project on the most favourable terms and correspondingly the most disadvantageous for Russia and Eeu.

The Eu did not give those three countries anything; nothing was promised. The Eu countries have not given any serious commitment to permit them full membership and yet the three countries have given the Eu unfettered access to their markets and agreed to follow the Eu standards, foreign policy and its economic course.

Scepticism with regard to the Eeu can be also explained by other factors. It is claimed that its potential members have little to give to each other. They are not self-sufficient, they are trying to catch up in their development and they need sources of modernization, which they see in third party States and other groups of States. Orientation and dependence upon these, on their technologies and capital, potentially breaks the single economic space of the Eeu.

In addition, the economies of potential members of the Eeu do not complement each other very well. In their structure, the economic systems of the Eeu are rather competitive. Thus, the core of the economy of Russia and Kazakhstan is fuel and energy. Therefore, Kazakhstan establishes export channels for its energy bypassing Russia. Cheap Belarusian agricultural products slow down the development of dairy farming in Russia, etc.. Division of labour between them is impossible.

In addition, competitors are hoping that Russia simply does not have enough internal resources to feed all those who it would like to return to the bosom of its economic influence. As the reports of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank suggest, Russia's competitiveness is declining from year to year.

Development opportunities based on energy resources have been exhausted. Moscow does not have a convertible currency. It has not established a global financial centre yet. It cannot afford to take on the role of the locomotive of economic development for others.

Another negative factor is the legal disregard deeply inherent in societies of the countries coming together under the auspices of Russia. Neglect of the rights of law, a habit to evade the law and buy all the necessary legal and economic decisions and licenses will affect the integration project, turning it back.

One cannot ignore the fact that the Eeu is not quite in a favourable geopolitical environment. Areas of instability are scattered along its borders: for example, Afghanistan. After the withdrawal of the forces of the international coalition from Afghanistan the situation there will get worse and the threat posed by radical Islam is great.

All of these, as well as similar or even more stringent and critical arguments are very important. They cannot be ignored but also they give a biased one-sided interpretation of reality. It is obvious that association of potential partners creates new opportunities. It is easier to solve problems together and a wider and larger domestic market is much more promising.

All participants of the Russian geopolitical project are just seeking to overcome those defects in the functioning of their societies and the economic mismanagement which they are accused of. Therefore, much depends on the political will and perseverance in the project, on its openness and competitiveness.

We should not count on the fact that Russia will be able to create a reserve which nobody else can join. Russia will have to deal with the interests of extra-regional players when implementing the geopolitical project. They include the Us, China, the Eu, Japan, Turkey, Iran and Arab countries.

It is unmanageable and unnecessary to engage in confrontation with the rest of the world. These interests should become an advantage and only such a strategy is likely to be the key to success.

Pairing geopolitical efforts with the interests of non-regional players enables the receipt of support and attracts investment. It will facilitate a path of modernization and stop the negative effects of global challenges. Together with other players it should target opportunities to strengthen regional stability and to resolve the problems of soft security.

Only by cooperation with them will it be possible to realize the natural potential of Russia, which will have a much smaller impact in a narrow regional framework. It includes geography, land, culture, history, human factors, achievement of Russian science, leading positions of Russia in a number of areas, commodity reserves and many others. The uniting of the Russian natural potential with skilfully constructed international cooperation can bring the desired result.

It is even more galling that the Us and Eu, though the latter against its will, in order to counter Russia's geopolitical project commenced the actual

deployment of an economic war against it, its exclusion from the global economy, measures of isolation and containment. Firstly, the whole of Europe in totality and the global economy will suffer. However, hopefully, common sense will prevail.