Report of the International Seminar on "Political and Security Cooperation in Europe's Four Sea Basins"

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Abstract

The seminar aimed to assess the role and impact in the political and security fields of sub-regional ac-tors and organisations in the four sea basins: Mediterranean, Baltic, Black and Caspian seas. Also, it evaluated whether the EU, as well as NATO and other international organisations rein-force security co-operation at the sub-regional le-vel. While the EU has always been keen on pro-moting regional and sub-regional multilateralism, pro-posing itself as a sort of model of such kind of cooperation, its strate-gies and policies have not always been consistent with that aim.

Keywords: *Mediterranean Region / Baltic Region / Caspian Region / Black Sea Region / Caucasus / Central Asia / Regional Cooperation / European Union / NATO / Crisis Management*

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"Political and Security Cooperation in Europe's Four Sea Basins"

by Nona Mikhelidze[*]

International seminar on political and security cooperation in Europe's Four Sea Basins, which took place in Rome on April 3rd and 4th, was the second event of the EU4Seas project, supported by the 7th Framework Programme of the European Commission and organized by Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI). The seminar aimed to assess the role and impact in the political and security fields of sub-regional actors and organisations in the four sea basins. Also, it evaluated whether the EU, as well as NATO and other international organisations reinforce security cooperation at the sub-regional level. While the EU has always been keen on promoting regional and sub-regional multilateralism, proposing itself as a sort of model of such kind of cooperation, its strategies and policies have not always been consistent with that aim.

The seminar provided debates/discussions about defining security agendas in the four sea Basins (Mediterranean, Baltic, Black and Caspian Seas), cooperation between the sub-regional organisations on conflict resolution issues as well as their ability to promote democracy, good governance and human rights in above mentioned regions, and finally the impact of international organisations such as EU, NATO, OSCE on sub-regional security. The seminar was completed with the roundtable, which provided open presentations of international practitioners about the NATO/EU strategies (i.e. comparison among strategies to promote security in different sea basins; comparison about the results of these strategies; the effectiveness of the cooperation between the EU or NATO and sub-regional security organisations in the different basins etc.) to promote security in Europe's four basins.

The seminar hosted international experts, officials and practitioners (see attached list of participants). This report provides a summery of discussion around four main issues: Defining security agendas in Europe's four Sea Basins; sub-regional cooperation on conflict resolution and beyond; sub-regional perspectives on the transformation of political system: democracy, good governance and human rights in Europe's four Sea Basins; and the impact of EU and NATO enlargement and neighbourhood strategies on sub-regional security.

Programme

The event opened with a welcome address and introduction to the seminar by Ettore Greco IAI director and Jordi Vaquer i Fanés, Director of Centro de Investigaciones de

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Relaciones Internacionales y Desarrollo, CIDOB Foundation, Barcelona and EU4SEAS Coordinator.

The first session

The first session (Friday, April 3, 10:00-11:45) "Defining Security Agendas in Europe's Four Sea Basins" was chaired by IAI director Ettore Greco. The papers were given by: Fulvio Attinà, Jean Monnet Professor, Department of Political Studies, University of Catania, which presented the outline of its work "Security Agenda in the Mediterranean Region;" he was followed by Silija B. Omarsdottir, Director of the Institute of International Affairs, Faculty of Political Science, University of Iceland, Reykjavik, with the presentation "Defining Security Agendas in the Four Sea Basins: The Baltic Sea". The paper "Security Agenda in the Black Sea" was provided by Dana Depo, Research Fellow for European Programme, International Centre for Policy Studies (ICPS), Kiev. Finally Leila Alieva, President of the Center for National and International Studies (CNIS), Baku, presented "Caspian Security: Challenges of a Basin on the Cross-Roads".

The paper *"Security Agenda in the Mediterranean Region"*, presented by F. Attinà, describes political and economical factors affecting states security in the Mediterranean. The lack of security culture is considered as a major implication to meet a common agreement on security co-managements in the Mediterranean region, as security policies are influenced by believes and traditions of the past experiences. The study further deals with security problems which are common for all Mediterranean countries as well as the appropriate definition of the region, namely the criteria of inclusion and exclusion of the countries, and the criteria for eventual division of Mediterranean in the sub-regions. The research outlines the hard factors affecting security and absence of shared practice of management of security problems in the region. In order to avoid the escalation of various crisis and create co-management strategy for lasting security conditions in the region, the author proposes two-track security agenda: Track-one actions include the following measures: (1) the implementation of all existing agreements of disarmament, armaments control, and non proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; (2) strengthen the dialogue between different parties in order to create a base of cross-culture values as a requisite for establishing common political institutions; (3) elaboration of various measures for containing the negative effects of the current economic crisis; (4) the improvement of the status of civil liberties in the countries of the Mediterranean basin; continuous upgrading of environment protection. As for track-two agenda, its goal is to create a regional security partnership. To achieve this objective is necessary to restart negotiations on establishing multilateral offices that can make operational the Barcelona Declaration as well as create mechanisms for conflict management and prevention.

In the paper *"Defining Security Agendas in the Four Sea Basins: The Baltic Sea"* S. Omarsdottir analyses the security trend in the Nordic and Baltic region, underlying the limited history of the cooperation in this field. The paper tackles the question whether exists a Nordic/Baltic security community or not. Key actors of the region are four Nordic littoral states, the Baltic states, Germany, Poland and Russia. The Nordic states

have had a long-standing tradition of collaboration centring on political and cultural issues, however the discussions of common security was always carefully excluded from their partnership; that's why everybody agree that security community exits in the Nordic states, but not everyone consider that it is based on security cooperation. To the absence of such cooperation has contributed the fact that there was/is no need to avoid conflict between the Nordic countries.

Similarly the cooperation between Nordic and Baltic states has more a-security character and is based mostly on soft security (environment, democracy, economy, etc.), even if for Baltic countries the security concerns are, of course, more vulnerable, as in the game enters the relationship with Russia, Kaliningrad factor and the eventual Russian setting up missiles there. However the Baltic states have made already big progress in the security field by becoming members of Euro-Atlantic institutions. A more successful approach among these countries, according to the author, could be the application of the Nordic model of "a-security discourse" and to develop regionalism on other issues.

The paper *"Caspian Security: Challenges of a Basin on the Cross-Roads"*, presented by Leyla Alieva, outlines some main factors influencing Caspian security: (1) Geographical position of the region representing cross-road between East and West with its energy-strategic military importance in the context of an access to Afghanistan and Iran; (2) the competition between local and external actors over their control on hydrocarbon resources; (3) "transition" character of the regional states, as four of them are former Soviet republics, along with the ambiguity of the concept of "borders", emerging in various territorial conflicts; besides the transition process in the oil rich Caspian states seems to result in consolidated autocracies. Other challenge is the presence of opposing security alliances such as Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) on the one hand and Organisation for Democracy and Economic Development (GUAM) or North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) on another; (4) the lack of common EU/US strategy towards the region or external actors (Russia with its presence and Iran with its nuclear program) involvement in the Caspian security issues: the EU tries to avoid such projects which could deteriorate its relations with Russia, whereas the US is actively engaged with military build-up of the new independent states; (5) also asymmetry of naval powers – Russia's navy is ten times larger than any other state in the Caspian – has an additional negative impact on the security pattern, as it is causing perception of threats by other regional states and consequently the arms raze in the basin; (6) unresolved issue of the legal status of the Caspian basin and thus division of the offshore fields. According to the author, the Caspian security may be successful only in such areas as environmental security, terrorism, trafficking, or demilitarisation of the region.

The paper of Dana Depo *"Security Agenda in the Black Sea"* offers two dimensions of the region: The Black Sea region including littoral states as well as Armenia, Azerbaijan, Moldova and Greece and Wider Black Sea Region including SE Europe, littoral states and the Caucasus. Three countries of the region are NATO members and other three NATO partners. The territorial conflicts, along with energy supplies, environment and pollution, local government corruption, illegal trafficking, terrorism, and separatist nationalism are considered as major security challenges in the region.

Russia, EU, NATO and the sub-regional Organizations like BSEC, GUAM, and CIS represent key security actors in the area. Russia is not actively involved in the institutional cooperation, but is indirectly involved in all tensions in the region; it plays major role in the Black Sea by maintaining there its naval forces. The EU conducts bilateral relations with regional states through the ENP, Strategic Partnership with Russia, and Accession Process with Turkey; since 2007 its is also interested in multilateral cooperation such as Black Sea Synergy, the Eastern Partnership (EaP) or Union of the Black Sea – an initiative included in the EU commission's 2007 strategy paper. NATO does not have any formal relations with the sub-regional organizations, but tend to develop individual approach to each single country in the region. BSEC, with its 12 Member States, is oriented to the economical and security cooperation, but the effectiveness of its activities is limited. Main reasons for this are: difficulties in reaching consensus among all Member States, little tradition of cooperation, deceleration of the initiatives by Russia, ineffective decision-making process and difficulties with implementation of the projects. Among regional initiatives the author outlines naval cooperation: BLACKSEAFOR, Operations Black Sea Harmony and Black Sea Confidence and Security Measures enhancing regional security and stability of the littoral states. Other initiatives are: Platform of security and stability in Caucasus proposed by Turkey aiming at conflict resolution through development of regional economical cooperation; Baku Initiative providing policy dialogue on energy cooperation between the European Union and the littoral states of the Black Sea, Caspian Sea and their neighbours, undertaken as part of the INOGATE programme; Black Sea Forum for Dialogue and Partnership, Black Sea Euroregion, Border Defence Initiative, South East European Cooperation Process, Southeast European Cooperative Initiative, and Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. The major part of these initiatives do not have any significant impact on the sustainable security in the region, as sub-regional organizations in the Black Sea basin lack a common policy on regional cooperation.

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During the discussion all participants agreed that apparently the four regions are completely different. There are different approaches and perceptions about common security agenda: (1) it is important to point out the fact that there is clear difference between Northern dimension and the other three sea basins. In the Northern dimension there are no regional conflicts, whereas the security structure in other three regions is very much affected by regional conflicts; (2) the main difference between Mediterranean Sea and the others is that the rivalry between Russia and the West is not so obvious as in other three regions. NATO's enlargement is reviving traditional security perceptions, and in such way it is influencing also the sub-regional security agenda. According to some participants, if Russia-Western relations continues deteriorate this rivalry will be extended to the Mediterranean Sea; (3) The countries of the Nordic cooperation are feeling to be part of one common region and security space, whereas in the Mediterranean this is not the case.

For the Mediterranean region is characteristic the plurality of regional identities (Arab-, Muslim-, North Africa identities and concept of greater Middle East). Furthermore there is no shared perception about common security agenda in the Mediterranean. EU-Mediterranean countries believe that their security in the case of border problems

should be shared with each other and in particularly with the EU; whereas other states of the region (for example the governments of Libya, Tunisia or Egypt) consider such problems as private challenges. Also in the case of armaments problem (including terrorism) in the Mediterranean the European Mediterranean countries are stressing to put this question on the common agenda, whereas other states are not so much interested in this. It is hard to say if in the future the Mediterranean countries will manage to share their security problem and to bring them into a common agenda.

Other point is that different actors and in particular different external actors are promoting different kind of interests and different kind of identities through different regional constructions. On the one hand it is true that external influences on the sub-regional efforts are limited but on another hand it is also true that different types of regional constructions promoted by different external actors can have hindering effect on the development of the regional cooperation.

However, there are some similarities among the four sea basins: (1) security concerns are high on security agenda, although with different meanings and with variety of different problems; (2) limited influence of external security organizations, such as NATO, OSCE and also the influence of the EU is not so much strong and decisive in terms of assistance for regional countries to address security concern; (3) all countries of all sea basins are trying to find the ways towards regional cooperation.

The second session

The second session was chaired by Nathalie Tocci, Senior Fellow at the IAI (Friday, April 3, 12:00-13:45). Papers were given by: Eduard Soler i Lecha, Coordinator of the Mediterranean and Middle East Programme, Centro de Investigaciones de Relaciones Internacionales y Desarrollo, CIDOB Foundation, Barcelona, which presented "Sub-regional Cooperation and Stabilization in the Mediterranean Basin"; he was followed by Tiago Marques Research Associate, Estonian Foreign Policy Institute, Tallinn, with the presentation "Sub-regional Cooperation and Stabilization in the Mediterranean Basin". The paper "Political and Security Cooperation in the Black Sea region after the Caucasus crisis" was provided by Nadia Arbatova, Head of Department on European Political Studies, Institute for World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO), Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow. Finally, Oktay F. Tanrisever, Vice-Chairperson, Department of International Relations, Middle East Technical University (METU), Ankara, presented "Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and regional stability in the Caspian Basin".

The paper *"Sub-regional Cooperation and Stabilization in the Mediterranean Basin"*, presented by E. Soler, seeks to understand the linkages between regional and sub-regional cooperation and conflictivity in the Mediterranean region. Further the paper tackles the question if the dialogue and cooperation are possible without resolving regional conflicts. According to the author, the regional tensions were the motive for hindering and promoting the sub-regional cooperation at the same time. The Barcelona process, for instance, has often suffered from the deterioration of the Arab-Israeli conflict, whereas Algeria-Morocco relations and the Western Sahara issue or Greek-Turkish conflict over Cyprus have never hampered the political dialogue in the

framework of the EMP; but it impeded the effective implementation of the Agadir agreement. On the other side, no-sub-regional cooperation has been launched in the Mashreq. Also the integration process in Maghreb was hindered by the intra-maghrebian tensions.

The necessity of conflict resolution gave the input to cooperation in Western Mediterranean (5+5 dialogue). This initiative can be regarded as successful because of real equality among members, weak institutionalisations and low visibility. Furthermore it allows some euro-Mediterranean countries to cooperate despite the Arab-Israeli conflict and creates confidence-building mechanisms among Maghrebian countries. However the Arab-Israeli conflict impedes any attempt to create in the Mashreq the framework similar to the 5+5 or the UAM. Other successful case is Gulf Cooperation Council, where the threats posed by Iraq and Iran have favoured this cooperation. The author concludes that sub-regional cooperation tries to create peaceful relations among the regional countries but they also are hampered by existing conflicts; in the Mediterranean region the Maghreb sub-region presents a slightly better balance sheet that the Mashreq; the 5+5 dialogue is the best practice demonstrating that collaboration is possible despite of existing conflicts; that's why it should be evaluated the enlargement of the 5+5 by inclusion of Egypt and Greece there.

The paper *"Sub-regional Cooperation and Stabilization in the Mediterranean Basin"*, presented by T. Marques, tells that sub-regional multilateral cooperation frameworks in the Baltic Sea Region have partially evolved from building regional security via de-securitisation mechanisms to partial re-securitisation of specific defence issues, mostly related – but not exclusively – with the multibilateral approach to EU-Russia relations in security and defence matters. The gradual abandonment by the Nordic/Scandinavian sub-regional security complex of its post-modern construction of a-security in favor of a gradual rapprochment with more traditional ways of thinking and projecting security have contributed for a reinforcement of self-other security imaginaries between new EU Baltic member states and the Russian Federation. A shift from the attempt at building a more consensual common security framework in the Baltic Sea Region, namely by reaching out to more inclusive ways of practicing security politics has been sidelined in favor of a hard-headed engagement with a more liberal security approach that highlights the importance of applying shared norms and values.It is no coincidence that especially after the three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania joined NATO in 2004, the debate about the possibility of having Finland and Sweden in NATO – traditional central actors on the post-modern a-security reading of European security – became fully open in both Helsinki and Stockholm. By the same token, the current re-securitisation of the Baltic Sea Region security agenda owes much to the increasingly assertive Russia, with the tipping point taking place in August 2008 as a result of the Russian-Georgian war over the fate of the secessionist republics of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. This is more so since there seems to be now a shared understanding by both the Nordic and Baltic EU member states that the current sub-regional cooperation mechanisms – that were never meant to deal with hard nor even soft security issues – are not able to deal with the vastly increasing new security challenges posed by Moscow in the region. That is also one of the reasons why political and social tensions related to minority issues in the Baltic have been mostly left untouched by those same organisations, as they are normally treated as country-specific internal matters.

The Baltic Sea Region faces today three main security challenges that bring together both hard and soft security (energy security, environmental challenges/climate change and territorial defence). The increasing geopolitical confrontations taking place at today's EU borders have given new impetus for a closer relationship between Baltic and Nordic countries with NATO, in detriment of a more qualitative participation of those countries in the structures and operations of the European Security and Defence Policy. This is intimately connected with the reassertion of territorial defence as a central tenet of what one can call the current developments of the Eurasian security architecture. Curiously so, one can probably identify today an increasing "Balticisation" of the Nordic foreign and security policy agendas in favour of a more pronounced confrontational approach towards the Other in the self-other relationship between the EU and Russia. The post-modern security agenda of the post-Cold War era seems to be on the verge of being sidelined in favour of a more traditional reading of security that emphasises territorial integrity and not-so-post-modern security guarantees. The gradual abandonment of a soft security approach and the snubbing of a narrower reading of EU's human security agenda that is in-built in its European Security Strategy may also signal the current disenchantment by the Baltics with the bureaucratic conundrums of EU CFSP.

The paper *"Political and Security Cooperation in the Black Sea region after the Caucasus crisis"*, presented by N. Arbatova, analyses political consequences of the Russian-Georgian August war at local (Black Sea region) and international level. The heterogeneity of the Black Sea region and its common security arrangements are hampered by several factors: (1) membership of the regional countries in the different international organizations (EU, NATO, OSCE, CIS, BSEC and GUAM); (2) presence of the external players with sometimes contra standing interests and tense relations with each other; NATO's enlargement strategy to Ukraine and Georgia causes tensions in the relations with Russia, as from the Russian perspective, this strategy is at odds with Russia's security interests to prevent the presence of such military alliance, which excludes Russia, and to ensure military, energy and trade communication in its "near abroad"; also by EU proposed Eastern Partnership is criticized by Moscow, as it excludes Russia under the pretext that Russia/EU relations should be developed within the separate framework; whereas by Turkey proposed Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform (CSCP) is approved by Moscow as it excludes the cooperation with US and the EU; (3) "frozen" conflicts and competitions over the energy route issue. The regional cooperation is directly linked with the Russia-West relations and Caucasus crisis was the demonstration of this circumstance; hindered regional development is the direct result of deteriorated Russia-US/NATO relations.

The Georgia-Russia war brought to the fore also the effectiveness of the CIS, as it highlighted Russia's inability to build collective positions on this crisis. After Georgia's withdrawal and growing tensions between Russia and Ukraine, the organization is undergoing the deepest crisis in its history. The August war brought implications also to the pipeline projects in the region: the future of Nabucco is uncertain. As for BSEC which is the most important sub-regional organisation in the area, it is concentrated generally on the economic cooperation excluding "hard" security matters from its activities. However, almost all economic projects are highly politicised.

According to the author, the security and stability in the Black Sea region as well as sub-regional cooperation can not be achieved without common Black Sea security agenda, which should include several criteria: (1) make one common idea of what constitutes a common security space both geographically and functionally; as there is no such notion as a common security space in the Black Sea region. In the region acting external players (EU, US, NATO, GUAM, BSEC, Turkey) are having own and from each other different vision on Black Sea security. (2) a shared perceptions of common external threats, their origins and adversaries; three dimensions of the ethnic conflicts should be taken into the consideration: internal (ethnic-territorial problems existing before the Soviet era), the Russia/CIS (collapse of the USSR and ill-conceived policy of Russia) and international (mistakes of external actors – USA, NATO and EU); (3) identify common framework of actions (including military component) addressing international problems; (4) establish the administrative and structural echelons for security cooperation.

The paper *"Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and regional stability in the Caspian Basin"*, presented by O. Tanrisever, tries to analyse the attempts to promote regional stability in the Caspian basin by focusing on the regional dimensions of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. It emphasizes geopolitical importance and energy dimension of the region and argues that Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has played critical role in the evolution of the regional security complex in the Caspian basin. According to the author, regional stability is hampered also by Moscow which uses territorial conflict for its own interests. The paper starts with the description how the policies of the regional states have been evolved after the collapse of the USSR. In this period the Caspian security complex was shaped by Russia's foreign policy in the near abroad defined at the end of 1992 in the "Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation". Also the creation of CIS and CSTO strengthened Russia's influence in the region. None of them has contributed to the conflict resolution, on the contrary, Russia's attempts to keep the influence in the region through CIS and exclude Western involvement in the conflict resolution process, makes it difficult to find the solution of the problem.

Next, the paper tackles current characteristics of the Caspian security complex. Other important sub-regional organisation BSEC is focused more on creation of economic interdependence and less on conflict resolution. However, BSEC could link the Caspian and Black Sea regions and make them more stable by using economic instruments for regional integration. After examining the impact of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict on the security issues in the region, the paper evaluates the prospects for future regional stability. According to the author, in the foreseeable future it is getting more and more difficult to prevent the escalation of the frozen conflict in the region. To achieve conflict resolution the confronted parties should elaborate new plans for peaceful settlement and the external actors (especially Turkey) should be involved in this process.

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During the discussion it was underlined once more again that in the three Sea basins conflicts are one of the pursuing factors and at the same time hindrance for regional cooperation. All countries of these areas perceive Russia as a threat (what does not mean necessarily enemy). The Sub-regional cooperation in these three regions is

influenced also by Russia-West relations. According to some participants, when we speak about Russia in relations with western countries, we should keep in mind that Russia, as an actor, is not comparable with other states in the region. This is why the ENP, the Eastern Partnership, or Black Sea Synergy could not be addressed to Russia. EU has different kind of relations with Russia represented in the EU-Russia strategic partnership. According to other participants, the West should not exclude Russia from its initiatives. Nowadays there is no substantial strategy towards Moscow; EU-Russia contractual relations are scarcely developed through the loose Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. It is paradoxical in fact that while Russia is excluded from EU's regional initiatives under the pretext that it is an important partner, the EU offers little or nothing to Russia at a bilateral level. NATO enlargement represents a further factor complicating relations. If Russia perceives NATO, as evidenced by the manner in which NATO is portrayed in the Russian media, then NATO must acknowledge that if such threat perception is not corroborated in terms of substance then the problem must lie in the domain of communication. Likewise, if Russia claims that it does not represent a threat to its Baltic or Black Sea neighbours, then it must be able to communicate this to its partners given that this is a rooted perception in these sub-regions.

Meanwhile, the EU should give clear answers to three contradictions: the contradiction between the normative goals of territorial integrity and self-determination; the contradiction between State sovereignty and the tendency to interfere in other States' domestic affairs, including humanitarian intervention; each State's right to choose its security alliances and a State's right to oppose the expansion of those alliances which it perceives as a threat. Some participants discussed also Russia's role in the Mediterranean, affirming that Russia has no clear strategy towards this region; there are only contradictions in how Russia behaves vis-à-vis Iran or Iraq, the Arab-Israeli conflict or Syria, its role in the "Quartet" is also unclear.

Further, it was noted that in the case of conflicts in the Black Sea there are clear hindrances to regional cooperation as opposed to the 5+5 initiative in the Mediterranean. One of the reasons for the success of the 5+5 initiative is the fact that all member countries are equal. One of the keys to the success of regional cooperation is the sense of equality between members. Also the Maghreb Union has had success in terms of economic cooperation, even if on the political level cooperation has failed. However, the local actors as well as the EU are interested in the further development of Maghreb integration, as cooperation is regarded as a tool for more stability, prosperity and growth in the region.

The third session

The third session *"Sub-regional Perspectives on the Transformation of Political System: Democracy, Good Governance and Human Rights in Europe's Four Sea Basins"* was chaired by Gianni Bonvicini, Executive Vice-President of the IAI (Friday, April 3, 15:00-16:45). Papers were given by: Amr Hamzawy, Senior Associate, Middle East Center, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Beirut, who presented *"The Role of Sub-Regional Organisations in Promoting Democracy in the Mediterranean Basin"*. He was followed by George Tarkhan-Mouravi, President, International Centre for Geopolitical and Regional Studies, Tbilisi, with the presentation *"The role of Sub-*

Regional Context, Actors and Organizations in Promoting Democracy, Human Rights and Good Governance in the Black Sea and Caspian Basins". The paper *"The Role of the EU in Promoting Democracy in Europe's 4 Sea Basins: One Size Fits all or Different Strategies of Democracy Promotion?"* was presented by Elena Baracani, Senior Fellow and Deputy Director, CIRES, University of Florence. Finally, Neil Winn, Senior Lecturer in European Studies, Faculty of Education, Social Sciences and Law, University of Leeds, presented *"The Role of the Council of Europe, OSCE, and NATO in Promoting Democracy, Human Rights and Good Governance in Europe's Four Seas Basins"*.

In the paper *"The Role of Sub-Regional Organisations in Promoting Democracy in the Mediterranean Basin"* A. Hamzawy points out two main reasons why it is difficult to address the issue of democracy promotion by external actors or sub-regional organizations in the South and Eastern Mediterranean: (1) in spite of much debate about democracy, good governance and rule of law, little has taken place. In particular, nothing has changed regarding two key components of democracy – rule of law and rotation of power. Instead, in many republics we are increasingly seeing the evolution of *de facto* monarchic rulers (Syria, Yemen, Tunisia); (2) in spite of the rhetoric by local and international actors alike, no single actor has committed strategically to democracy promotion. The US's push for democratisation of the region lacked consistency. The same can be said about the official European talks on democracy promotion, which suffered from policy deficiencies. Likewise, ruling establishments failed to move beyond rhetoric.

In the Mediterranean we have: (1) the group of semi-authoritarian countries (Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Yemen and Bahrain) with limited, organised, managed pluralism by respective ruling establishments; (2) the group of clear authoritarian cases (Syria) without any kind of political pluralism. The same can be said of Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries; (3) the group of failed, failing and weak states (Iraq, Lebanon and occupied Palestinian territories) where, despite political pluralism, politics of contestation, the absence of an effective state hollows out any progress towards democracy.

In general, if we look at the Eastern and Southern Mediterranean we clearly see Arab regimes with no willingness to promote democracy in their countries. One of the most successful ministerial organs of the Arab League is the meetings of interior ministers. Their resolutions are binding and consequently implemented. But aside from this, the picture is widely different. The functional organizations of the AL do little. There were talks in the Arab League about creating institutions addressing human rights protection, but nothing was done. The degree of cooperation between Arab opposition movements is also very low. It is true that there is coordination among Islamist and religious-inspired movements, human rights organizations or women's movements, but in general civil society organizations lack efficiency.

As for the external temptation to promote democracy in the region, two Western approaches have not materialized: American democracy promotion did not create greater political freedom or a more shared distribution of power in the Middle East. The EU's Barcelona Process and its gradualism and cooperation did not lead to democratisation either. The reasons for this are: (1) the lack of consistency towards all

Arab countries; (2) the gap between public rhetoric and behind-closed-doors diplomacy; (3) European and American dependence (for different reasons) on local rulers; The authoritarian regimes are natural partners for European and Americans, and they do not push for democracy; there are only cynical attempts to point out some reformist groups as natural allies in the region (4) finally the ruling establishments are not committed to democratisation.

In the paper *"The Role of Sub-Regional Context, Actors and Organizations in Promoting Democracy, Human Rights and Good Governance in the Black Sea and Caspian Basins"* after describing the geopolitical picture of the region, G. Tarkhan-Mouravi analyses the ability of external actors to promote democracy. According to the paper, the US is more interested in military cooperation with regional states and appears more tolerant towards the failures of local governments in democratisation and human rights protection. The author argues further that the ability of the EU to promote democracy, human rights and good governance is rather limited, partly due to the EU's unwillingness to expand further to the East. European "soft power" is a slow power explains. That is why many of the EU's objectives in the region remain unmet. Successive EU proposals such as the ENP, sectoral agreements, ENP Plus, Black Sea Synergy and EaP all demonstrate the weakness in both the formulation and implementation of policies. However, the EaP could be a useful instrument to promote democracy in the region, but should be strengthened with clear prospects of accession and by combining soft power with more hard power.

In the paper *"The Role of the EU in Promoting Democracy in Europe's 4 Sea Basins: One Size Fits all or Different Strategies of Democracy Promotion?"*, E. Baracani identifies the key features of EU activity in democracy promotion in Europe's four sea basins and evaluates whether the EU adopts or not a "one size fits all" approach. Additionally, the paper analyses the relationship between EU activities in democracy promotion and policies aimed at maintaining stability, as well as between democracy promotion policies and conflict resolution policies. According to the author, the most commonly used model of democracy promotion by the EU is "conditional democracy assistance" focused on human rights protection, free and fair elections, decentralisation and separation of powers and independent judiciaries. In democracy promotion, the EU has adopted different approaches to its Southern and Eastern partner-countries: with Turkey the Union uses political dialogue and democracy assistance accompanied by positive and negative conditionality in the framework of the pre-accession policy; with the ENP partners the model is political dialogue in the framework of the institutions created by the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements and the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements and democracy assistance together with conditionality in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument (ENPI). In relations with ENP countries, the EU does not use democracy promotion through integration. Additionally, the ENP APs are country specific and depend on the third country's will to democratise as well as on the EU's own will, given the tension between democratisation and the promotion of stability. With Russia stable economic relations are more important than promoting democracy.

In the paper *"The Role of the Council of Europe, OSCE, and NATO in Promoting Democracy, Human Rights and Good Governance in Europe's Four Seas Basins"* N. Winn outlines the differences between the policies of NATO, OSCE and the Council of

Europe towards the four Sea basins. The general approach adopted by NATO in promoting democratic values is *ad hoc*. NATO is oriented towards collective security, the OSCE looks for the promotion of security and stability in Europe and its vicinity; it also tends to carry out specific action programmes financing civil society to promote democracy and stability; and finally the Council of Europe is concerned with individual human rights and their legal application. In general, these organisations follow pragmatic policies towards each of the four sea basins. For example, NATO Member States are aware of the geo-economic importance of the Black/Caspian region and concentrate on energy projects and not on democracy promotion. The paper outlines that there is a lack of joint projects between these international and sub-regional organisations in the four sea basins. Also the coordination between sub-regional organisations on the promotion of democracy is insufficient. Additionally, sub-regional organisations are generally interested in the development of bilateral relations with single Western states. The mechanisms used by international organisations in democracy and human rights promotion are soft power – diplomacy and conditional economic aid. Conditionality is the most effective policy tool for promoting democratic values. The "carrot" of membership in sub-regional organisations and eventual integration into the Euro-Atlantic institutions is the most effective tool to promote good governance, democracy and human rights protection. For this there is a need for greater cooperation between NATO, the OSCE, the Council of Europe, the EU and the US towards the four Sea basins.

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During the discussion almost all participants agreed that Western democracy promotion policies should take into account the political culture of the region in which they act. Therefore a case-by-case approach is fundamental, accounting for the specificities of each target countries. The approach should be also time specific. All these factors are not taken into consideration by the EU and US in promoting democracy in the South Mediterranean countries. That is why these policies have rapidly lost credibility. Other deficiencies include the lack of coordination among international organizations in democracy promotion and an ineffective use of conditionality in view of the prioritization of maintaining good relations with political elites. Indeed the EU appears to have become increasingly pragmatic and less idealistic in its relations with its neighbouring countries placing decreasing emphasis on democracy. This said, participants agreed that democratisation processes should have internal impulses and cannot be promoted only by external actors.

The fourth session

The fourth session *"The Impact of EU and NATO Enlargement and Neighbourhood Strategies on Sub-regional Security"* was chaired by Michele Comelli, Senior Fellow at the IAI (Friday, April 3, 15:00-16:45). Papers were given by: Roberto Aliboni, Vice-President, IAI, Rome, who presented "Political and Security Cooperation in Europe's Four Sea Basins"; he was followed by Riina Kaljurand, Deputy Director, ICDS, Tallinn, with the presentation "The impact of the EU and NATO Enlargement and Neighbourhood Strategies on the Baltic Sea Region". The paper "The impact of the EU and NATO Enlargement and Neighbourhood Strategies on the Black Sea Region" was

given by Olga Shumylo, Director, ICPS, Kiev. Finally, Nargis Kassenova, Lecturer, Department of Political Science, KIMEP, Almaty, presented "Beyond Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policies: EU's Central Asia Strategy".

The paper *"Political and Security Cooperation in Europe's Four Sea Basins"* argues that NATO's enlargement has had no significant impact on non-EU Mediterranean countries and sub-regional relations between the latter and Western alliances. EU enlargement, by contrast, has had an impact on sub-regional relations in the region, because the inclusion in the EU of several Mediterranean countries changed the balance of EU external relations and Mediterranean perceptions. For the Arab countries EU enlargement has been perceived as a sidelining of the Mediterranean in favour of Eastern Europe.

Further, the paper tackles the evolution of security perceptions and evaluates the post-enlargement situation in the Mediterranean from the point of view of EU and NATO security objectives. The architecture of Euro-Mediterranean relations is shaped by an overall EU bilateral policy regarding the whole neighbourhood. This bilateral policy includes two distinct multilateral dimensions for each one of the two sub-inter-regional sectors of the ENP: the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. These dimensions are run by the EU while being framed by inter-governmental multilateral organisations (the respectively UfM and the BSEC). The paper then demonstrates how these policy frameworks shape inter-regional relations across the Mediterranean. The security dimensions of these policy frameworks are affected by a series of political, economic and social risks with no or low military components. To counter these risks the alliances have to shape the environment by introducing effective multilateralism in international relations and political reforms domestically. The NATO's MD (Mediterranean Dialogue), for instance, is a security framework aimed at establishing internationally normative relations among its members and promoting political reforms as well as the democratisation of armed forces.

Israel is regarded as a direct military threat to national security by Lebanon, the Palestinians and Syria. European frameworks like the EMP and ENP aim at fostering political and social reforms in general. In inter-regional Mediterranean relations the achievements of these frameworks of cooperative security initiated by the US and EU are far from satisfactory. They have failed above all to change security perceptions in the South of the Mediterranean. In the South, security concerns are focused on regime stability and consequently on opposition groups, in particular on religious movements. Political Islam – whether violent or not – is a concern. The EMP has failed in changing Arab security perceptions regarding the Israeli-Palestine conflict and EU security perceptions regarding the lack of reforms was perceived by regimes as a threat to stability. These frameworks were unsuccessful in triggering both political and economic integration and cooperation among Southern partners. All these factors have hampered effective multilateralism, whereas bilateral relations have developed both in the MD and in the EMP.

The paper *"The impact of the EU and NATO Enlargement and Neighbourhood Strategies on the Baltic Sea Region"* offers an overlook of security developments in the Baltic Sea region, in particular the change of the security environment after the end of the Cold War and the impact of EU and NATO enlargement on regional security. The

paper also tackles current trends in the Baltic security cooperation, threat perceptions and the role of external actors in the regional security system. The security situation in this area changed after the entry of the Baltic states and Poland into the EU and NATO. Now Russia's resurgence confronts the Baltic states with new obstacles. US military protection sheltered the European model from Russian revisionist influences. For several reasons the region stands at the forefront of new challenges: (1) the Baltic region encompasses the entire EU land-border with Russia, giving it special strategic importance; (2) the dependence on Russian energy resources is extremely high; (3) the region consists in very different states which render cooperation difficult. In general their different historical experiences pose a great challenge to formulate a regional security cooperation framework.

The paper *"The impact of the EU and NATO Enlargement and Neighbourhood Strategies on the Black Sea Region"* proposes three ways of looking at the Black Sea region: (1) an area of opposing EU-Russia and NATO-Russia interests; (2) are area in which security threats extending beyond the Black Sea region are projected (3) an area of local security conflicts. Overall, the geopolitical/security impact of EU and NATO expansion in the region has been mixed, due in large part to a widespread perception of these two processes as being intrinsically linked. While Russia did not have a knee-jerk reaction against the EU's entry into the Black Sea landscape, its behaviour shows that it does not intend to relinquish its dominant position in the region. The diverse set of countries of the Black Sea region has different perspectives on EU and NATO enlargement. Romania sees its presence in the Black Sea region as an asset. While it has its own Black Sea policies, it is interested in tackling the region's principal security challenges on behalf of the EU. It also sees a role for itself in the Moldova/Transnistria dispute. Although Ukraine sees the eastward expansion of the EU as positive, recent enlargements have raised unrealistic expectations in Kiev as to its own membership perspective. While Ukraine is active in helping to resolve regional security issues – Transnistria – its own geostrategic position makes it vulnerable to security threats. Georgia also sees EU enlargement as desirable, although it did not receive concrete support to help solve its numerous security challenges. Turkey favours enlargement and is itself an enthusiastic, if unlikely, EU hopeful. Finally, Russia's relatively faint reaction to the EU's expansion into the Black Sea region is due to the much greater geopolitical impact of NATO expansion and to its perception of EU weakness in the region.

As far as NATO enlargement is concerned, as a prospective Alliance member, Ukraine sees NATO's eastward expansion as positive, but it also understands its impact on its Behemoth of a neighbour, Russia. The resulting friction is acutely felt in many areas, with the Crimean peninsula often at the epicentre of tensions due to its secessionist/irredentist movement and the expiry of Moscow's lease of the naval base at Sevastopol in 2017. As the August 2008 conflict illustrated, Georgia has counted on NATO assistance to bolster its position – and has received practically none. As for Russia, it is, for obvious reasons, extremely weary of NATO expansion – but without NATO, Moscow could not indulge in geostrategic machinations to keep its former satellites – Ukraine and Georgia first among them – within its sphere of influence.

Further, the paper analyses what will be the potential impact of EU enlargement on security dynamics in the Black Sea region: (1) Turkey: EU enlargement into the region

should not affect the security of Turkey, which is unlikely to join the Union anytime soon; (2) Ukraine: EU membership would be a boon to Ukrainian security, but the prospects for accession remain murky; (3) Georgia: EU membership is highly unlikely, and enlargement into the Black Sea region will not have a significant effect on Georgian security. Arguing the potential impact of NATO enlargement on security dynamics in the Black Sea region in future, the key questions are whether there will be further NATO enlargement in the near future, and whether Ukraine and Georgia will be next in line. Geostrategy is a major factor here, as further eastward expansion will likely be seen by Moscow as encroaching on its traditional sphere of influence – and hence result in a more belligerent stance towards both countries immediately involved and their great-power sponsors. The (as of yet undefined) stance of the new US administration, which seeks to further its interests without providing fodder for anti-Americanism in Russia, will have major implications in this area. In addition, Ukraine and Georgia's internal instability and their apparent lack of strategic thinking make them unattractive NATO candidates in the short term.

Finally, EU and NATO enlargement will be shaped by a number of factors, on both micro and macro levels. Still, one should be weary of conceding the region to Russia, a strategy reminiscent of the 1990s. EU and NATO engagement in the region will undoubtedly lead to tensions, but these tensions might well be used as a catalyst for change and hence lead to new avenues and new possibilities. The other option is for the EU and NATO to refrain from engagement, thus prolonging the ambiguity about their intentions. This ambiguity will handicap the region's ability to solve its own security problems, such as frozen conflicts, and to pursue democratization.

The paper *"Beyond Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policies: EU's Central Asia Strategy"* tackles the new EU strategy for Central Asia, formulated in the document "The EU and Central Asia: Strategy for a New Partnership" drafted by the EU Council under the impulse of the German Presidency in the first half of 2007. The document cannot be considered as an effective political strategy even if it moves beyond mere financial assistance programmes. However, the initiative offers the following guidelines on how to make European engagement in the region more coherent and effective: intensification of political ties through regular dialogues at the top political level; political assistance in areas such as good governance, rule of law, human rights protection, education, environment, etc.; maintaining a regional approach for multilateral problems such as organized crime, drugs trafficking, water management, etc, while accounting for specific needs and expectations of the different countries through bilateral policies. The strategy pays particular attention to energy cooperation in the context of EU energy diversification policies in order to reduce the dependence on Russian supplies. It must be noted that the interest in the democratisation of Central Asia is more long-run, while the interest in hydrocarbons is short-term. Hence the EU chooses interests over values.

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The discussion in the fourth session largely concentrated on the Black Sea basin and Russian involvement in this area, as the impact of NATO/EU enlargement has been most notable here, causing a deterioration of Russian-EU/US relations. Almost all participants agreed that the EU must formulate its policy towards Russia more

coherently. However, some also noted that when it comes to the operational level of Russian engagement in European affairs it is very difficult to raise Moscow's interest in some of the initiatives offered in this context.

Roundtable: Strategies for promoting Security in EU Four Sea Basins

The final session of the seminar (Saturday, April 4, 10:00-12:00) brought together practitioners from diverse international organizations in order to assess the implications of policies conducted by European institutions as well as by sub-regional organisations and national governments. *Arslan Chikhaoui*, Chairman & CEO, of Nord-Sud Ventures, Strategy and Lobbying Consultancy, Algiers, focused on the 5+5 initiative. The 5+5 initiative was launched in Rome on 10 0ctober 1990, and generated concrete progress on sub regional cooperation in a pragmatic way. Compared to other initiatives of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation such as the Barcelona Process or the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), the approach of the 5+5 has shown its relevance and effectiveness. This cooperation framework has responded to the reality of an uncohesive Europe, driven apart by the diversity and political, societal, historical and cultural differences between each European player. The reported successes of the inter-governmental and sub-regional 5+5 instead result from specific commonalities between the ministries concerned. The main reasons for the success of the initiative include: (1) a small number of partners, which facilitates exchange and negotiations on partnership projects; (2) a genuine partnership between north and south regarding the identification of needs, the choice of actions, allocated responsibilities and the sharing of benefits. The commitment of the 5+5 partners is reinforced by the autonomy of the process from other cooperation forums; (3) the focus on concrete actions free from contentious political dialogue (4) privacy from the media (5) low costs, allowing southern members to participate as equal partners; (6) a working mechanism based on networks of contacts and confidence (7) a flexible framework for negotiation free from legal and contractual obligations.

Pauli Järvenpää, Director General, Defence Policy, Finnish Ministry of Defence, Helsinki, focused on regional security cooperation around the Baltic basin raising a number of basic premises to his argument: (1) Baltic states are not only littoral states but include all Nordic countries: Iceland, Norway, the Baltic states (including Sweden and Denmark and Russia or just the Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania?), Poland, and Northern Germany; (2) the Russian factor and its implications on security questions; (3) Developments over the last two decades which have witnessed NATO and EU enlargement in the region and significant amounts of military assistance to the Baltic states. Having set out the premises, Järvenpää raised the principal challenges currently faced by the region: how to integrate Russia in this security community? Whereas the Baltic states do not view Russia as an enemy, the political discourse used by Kremlin does not help cooperation in the security field. The strategy would be the involvement of Russia in a Baltic security community in three different areas: (1) soft security: environment, transport, epidemic diseases, migration; (2) energy security; (3) military cooperation.

The intervention of *Grygorii Perepelytsia*, Director, Foreign Policy Research Institute, Kiev, focused on the role of GUAM in promoting security around the Black Sea and

Caspian basins. Sub-regional cooperation depends on two main factors: (1) the region in question (2) the threats and challenges in the region. The impact of cooperation on international security is very low. What can GUAM contribute to a Black Sea security community in view of its limited leverage on security issues in general? The role of the GUAM is determined by a set of challenges. One is the rivalry of the great powers in the region. The transformation of the international system from a unipolar to a multipolar world will escalate this struggle for domination. It will lead not only to the escalation of the so-called frozen conflicts but it will also generate new tensions in the Black Sea region.

Many experts are sceptical of GUAM. When speaking about the future prospects for the development of this organization, we should first answer the following questions: (1) what are the common interests in the framework of GUAM which unite its Member-States? (2) what activities should be prioritized by the organization? Should cooperation have an economic or security character? (3) how can GUAM be located in the geopolitical constellation of the region? (4) what could GUAM's role be in the interaction with other international organizations like BSEC, NATO, EU, OSCE or CIS? A principal problem faced by GUAM is that its members have different priorities. For example, for Ukraine, GUAM was considered as a tool to create a Transcaucasian transport corridor connecting Central Asia to the Europe; for Georgia, Azerbaijan and Moldova, which have territorial conflicts, GUAM was viewed as a security organization. However, the current trend is that security problems predominate in this organization. The August 2008 war and NATO's refusal to grant Georgia and Ukraine a Membership Action Plan (MAP) is likely to lead to more intense political and military cooperation between GUAM countries in order to overcome common threats and challenges. What functions should be prioritised by GUAM? (1) protection from common threats, including energy and economic insecurity as well as hard security in the defence of State sovereignty and territorial integrity; (2) the resolution of frozen conflicts through GUAM's participation alongside other international peacekeeping troops; (3) cooperation on issues such as organised crime, drugs trafficking, illegal migration, etc. GUAM should be a sub-regional organization solving its problems on a sub-regional level. Therefore, GUAM should improve its executive mechanism. GUAM should not be considered as a military alliance or system of collective security. The activities of this organisation should concentrate on the reinforcement of regional and national security. GUAM should develop further its cooperation with other regional and international organizations. The strategic prospect should be the orientation towards Euro-Atlantic institutions.

Alfredo Conte, Policy Planning and Early Warning Unit, Council of the European Union, Brussels discussed EU strategies towards the four sea basins. The European Security Strategy 2003 emphasized the EU's interests in the South Caucasus and the Mediterranean. The Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy 2008 underlined the EU's willingness to further engage with the regional dimensions of security, frozen conflicts, regional integration (through the Black Sea Synergy and Union for Mediterranean), the Caspian region, maritime security and migration. It also underlined the importance of effective political and security cooperation with its southern partners in the framework of the Barcelona Process, the ENP and newly launched EaP. Particular attention will be paid to energy security in the long-term and to a better coordination of the Black Sea Synergy initiative with regional partners like

Russia and Turkey. The goal is also to set-up sectoral partnerships following the Northern dimension model, particularly in soft security domains such as the environment and transport. There should be full complementarities between the EaP and the Black Sea synergy. By contrast, the Union for the Mediterranean is in the stalemate after the Gaza crisis. This shows that the attempt of the UfM, like the Barcelona process, to de-link the Middle East conflict from cooperation in the region is still far from being achieved. There is also uncertainty over the Eastern Partnership, and in particular concerning the participation of Belarus in it. The document emphasized further that the EU and NATO must deepen their strategic partnership for better cooperation in crisis management. Finally, the strategic importance of these fours sea basins is fully recognized by the EU. The main issue remains the coherence between various EU initiatives. The link between the EU's selection of its neighbourhood as the core of its strategic concept and concrete EU policies undertaken in these regions remains the principal challenge ahead.

The presentation by *Alberto Bin*, Head of Regional Affairs Section, Political Affairs and Security Policy Division, NATO, Brussels, focused on NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue. NATO's Mediterranean dialogue is the main policy instrument for cooperation between NATO and Mediterranean countries. This dialogue has developed substantially and positively throughout the last twenty years; it has provided an interesting forum for political consultation and practical cooperation primarily on defence and security matters. It has engaged seven partner-countries from the Southern Mediterranean rim (Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt and Jordan and Israel) in order to establish cooperation between the eastern and western parts of the Mediterranean. There are two phases to be distinguished in the history of NATO's Mediterranean dialogue: a first phase, which lasted around ten years starting in 1994, in which substantial efforts were made to alter NATO's rather negative image amongst the southern Mediterranean countries. In a second phase, beginning with the NATO summit in Istanbul in 2004, the decision was taken to enhance the NATO-Med dialogue through more substantial political initiatives in terms of practical cooperation. Since then, there have been many meetings at ministerial level, including not only foreign ministers but also defence ministers. In the first phase, NATO was a demander, whereas in the second phase of the partnership NATO has found an equilibrium between demand and supply. Now we have an increased interaction at the political, military, training and education levels.

The main characteristic of this dialogue, which sets it apart from the Partnership for Peace (PfP), is that it is based on a voluntaristic approach; this means that there is no legally binding agreement or document and the degree of cooperation is voluntary. NATO engagement with the Southern Mediterranean has a multi-bilateral character. A fundamental pillar of the dialogue is the equality between the efforts of different countries. For those countries interested in a high degree of cooperation, NATO has developed Individual Action Plans and Individual Cooperation Programmes. In terms of what works and what does not work, the Mediterranean Dialogue has clearly been a success, because it is the only global forum where Israel's chief of defence meets with six Arab colleagues at least once a year. The Dialogue offers also practical military cooperation, especially through participation in military exercises, contributions to NATO's operational missions including in the Mediterranean region. On the downside, the Dialogue also faces problems: (1) NATO has no regional policy towards the

Mediterranean and it is not involved in the Middle East peace process; (2) the dialogue suffers from regional conflicts (such as the Gaza crisis of 2009 and Lebanon crisis of 2006), because it does not have any means to confront such tensions; (3) there is no synergetic approach with other international organizations towards cooperation in the Mediterranean region. In terms of prospects for the future: The NATO-Med dialogue has proved its potential for further development, such as the inclusion of Southern Mediterranean military forces in NATO operations, as well as progressing on security sector reform.

James Henry Bergeron, Political Advisor, US Navy, Striking Force NATO, Naples, focused on US security policies and strategies in the Mediterranean. The Obama administration represents a new turn in US foreign and security policy. There will probably be greater emphasis on international organizations including NATO. President Obama has made it clear that the US will exercise its influence and role within the institutions of the international community. As for US engagement in the four sea basins, from the US perspective sub-regional cooperation is important and the idea of a greater Europe has always been welcome. The United States engages with these regions and with single regional states in two basic forms: (1) as allies within collective security efforts in Afghanistan, Kosovo, as well as in the redefinition of collective defence for the 21st century. (2) partnerships with single regions or countries and broader concepts of cooperation in maritime safety in order improve maritime security governance. The United States will engage further with the actors involved in the Middle East Peace Process, as well as Iran, Syria, and in general with the Muslim world. In the Baltic Sea basin, the US will participate in the process of reawakening of the broader security dimension in this region. In the Black Sea the general goal is to improve security and stability; to support NATO's initiatives there and to work with regional partners. The US has no intention to increase it presence in the Black Sea but neither to decrease it. The relationship with the Caspian states is also important. The US wants to continue its partnership with Russia and cooperate further with it not only in this critical region, but also on issues such as Afghanistan, non-proliferation, counter-terrorism and arms control. There are, of course, some issues on which the US and Russia disagree, such as Georgia and the CIS.

Finally, *Igor Sevastiyanov*, Senior Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the European Communities, Brussels, discussed the role of Russia in developing sub-regional cooperation with a special focus on the Baltic and the Black Sea regions. When speaking about factors affecting security and stability in Europe's four sea basins we should not underestimate the importance of economic cooperation. In the Baltic Sea we have several regional formats of cooperation. One of the most successful is the EU-Northern dimension common policy. This initiative has produced positive results, particularly on environment issues, health and social well-being, where the partnership accumulates knowledge and engages in joint projects in order to solve common problems. The partnership is also discussing how to extend its activities to transport and logistics including links between strategic transport corridors. It is also interested in integrating better the business community, civil society organizations and cultural associations in its common projects. In the Black Sea, the situation is more complex. Russia is not totally satisfied with the results of BSEC. There is need to reform this organization, to orient it towards practical cooperation and away from mere political declarations. For this we have to increase its budget, reform its secretariat, to

reinforce it with new experts, which can launch new projects. At the same time Russia is open to cooperate with the EU in this region on environmental and transport issues.

The seminar ended with a wrap-up by Michele Comelli and concluding remarks by Stefano Silvestri, President of the IAI.

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Istituto Affari Internazionali

The Institute

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