



# BLACK SEA NEWS UPDATE

EU – BLACK SEA OBSERVATORY

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#### **I. ABKHAZIA**

1.

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Abkhazia to Use Russia's Dialing Code

16.10.2009, Civil.ge

READ MORE: [http://www.civil.ge/eng/\\_print.php?id=21580](http://www.civil.ge/eng/_print.php?id=21580)

Authorities in breakaway Abkhazia said on Friday the region would adopt Russia's +7 international dialing code starting from November 15, the Abkhaz news agency Apsnipress reported. Russia's dialing code would apply to both fixed (840) and cellular (940) operators, Kristian Bzhania, the Abkhaz leader's spokesman said. He also said that Georgia's international dialing code, which is currently used by Abkhazia, would remain active, in parallel to the Russian one, only till January 1, 2010.

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## II. ARMENIA

### 1.

#### Opposition Journalist Trial Reopens Old Wounds

22.10.2009, Hürriyet Daily News

READ MORE: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=world-bank-azerbaijan-must-diversify-economy-2009-10-22>

A freedom-of-expression controversy in Armenia is intensifying amid the opening of the trial of one of former president Levon Ter-Petrosian's most influential supporters, opposition journalist Nikol Pashinian. Thirty-four-year-old Pashinian, editor-in-chief of the daily Haykakan Zhamanak, is facing criminal charges for allegedly "organizing mass disorder" and sparking violence against the government during the March 2008 clashes between police and opposition protesters that left 10 dead, reported EurasiaNet on its Web site.

### 2.

#### EU Plans Economic Aid to Armenia

18.10.2009, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: <http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1854862.html>

The European Union has announced plans to provide Armenia with economic assistance, RFE/RL's Armenian Service reports. The European Commission's office in Yerevan said in a statement that the EU's executive branch will ask member countries to approve a loan of 65 million euros (about \$97 million) and a grant of 35 million euros to help Armenia deal with its worst economic downturn since the early 1990s. It said the assistance will support an adjustment program agreed to between Armenia and the International Monetary Fund. The Armenian government projected a budget deficit of \$475 million for 2010 and said it plans to cover at least half of the spending gap with external funds.

### 3.

#### Armenian Opposition Leader Exercises Caution

14.10.2009, Eurasia Daily Monitor

READ MORE: [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no\\_cache=1&tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=35611&tx\\_ttnews\[backPid\]=7&cHash=342fdf77a3](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=35611&tx_ttnews[backPid]=7&cHash=342fdf77a3)

Despite promises of renewed "decisive" action, Armenia's largest opposition alliance led by former President Levon Ter-Petrosian remains reluctant to make a new push for power and is instead seeking to form a more broad-based anti-government coalition. Ter-Petrosian has publicly admitted that he and his Armenian National Congress (HAK) are unable to unseat President Serzh Sargsyan without the backing of other opposition groups. His effort to win them over has proven unsuccessful, putting Sargsyan in a stronger position to press ahead with far-reaching compromise agreements with Azerbaijan and Turkey.

### 4.

#### There is Negative Attitude to NATO in Armenia

13.10.2009, APA

READ MORE: <http://en.apa.az/print.php?id=109210>

"Normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations will make Armenia close to NATO", NATO officer for the South Caucasus Zbigniew Rybatsky, APA reports quoting Armenian news agency. He stressed the intensive development of NATO-Armenia relations within the existing cooperation program.

## III. AZERBAIJAN

### 1.

#### "Reporters Without Borders" Enlist Azerbaijan Among Countries with Poor Freedom of Press

21.10.2009, Caucasian Knot

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READ MORE: <http://www.eng.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/11501>

On October 20, the international organization in defence of journalists "Reporters without Borders" (RwB) has published its annual rating list on the freedom of press in the world. The report entitled "Global Freedom of Press Index-2009" rank Azerbaijan in the 146th place among 169 countries. According to the results of the study, other countries of Southern Caucasus - Georgia and Armenia - take the 81st and 111th places accordingly, while Russia is record-breaking low - in the 153rd place.

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2.

Azerbaijani Opposition Party Visits Turkish Soldiers' Graves

21.10.2009, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: <http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1857826.html>

An opposition party has protested against the removal of Turkish flags from a memorial in Baku, RFE/RL's Azerbaijani Service reports. The Azerbaijan People's Front Party (APFP) put wreaths on the graves of the Turkish soldiers, who helped defend Azerbaijan from Armenian forces in 1918. The protesters said their goal was to show the eternal solidarity of Turkey and Azerbaijan. Police detained three youths who raised both country's flags.

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3.

Shah Deniz Production down, Baku Says

16.10.2009, UPI

READ MORE: [http://www.upi.com/Science\\_News/Resource-Wars/2009/10/16/Shah-Deniz-production-down-Baku-says/UPI-33441255712149/](http://www.upi.com/Science_News/Resource-Wars/2009/10/16/Shah-Deniz-production-down-Baku-says/UPI-33441255712149/)

Production at the offshore Shah Deniz gas field is in decline due to the halt in production from a third well overseen by a division of BP, Baku says. Khoshbakht Yusifzadeh, the first vice president at the State Oil Co. of Azerbaijan Republic, said the BP-led consortium in Shah Deniz is not providing information on problems at a third well, the Azerbaijan Business Center reports.

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4.

The Certain Work is Carried out to Increase Responsibility for Violating Migration Legislation: Chief of Azerbaijani State Migration Service

13.10.2009, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/print/1558150.html>

Chief of Azerbaijani State Migration Service, Arzu Rahimov spoke with Trend News in an exclusive interview.

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## IV. BULGARIA

1.

Bulgaria Ousted from Russia's South Stream Pipe

20.10.2009, EurActiv

READ MORE: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/energy/bulgaria-ousted-russia-south-stream-pipe/article-186583>

Russia has obtained all the permits necessary to build its 'South Stream' gas pipeline through Turkish territorial waters, discarding Bulgaria as one of the project's transit countries, the Russian press writes today (20 October). Taner Yildiz, Turkey's economy minister, has granted all the necessary authorisations for the South Stream project to run through Turkish territory, the Russian daily Kommersant writes.

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2.

EU Funds still Vulnerable to Fraud in Bulgaria

20.10.2009, EUobserver

READ MORE: <http://euobserver.com/19/28852?print=1>

Most EU funds are still on hold in Bulgaria due to weak financial supervision and scant follow-up on

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irregularities, while Romania seems to manage the monies better, a special report by the EU commission seen by this website reveals. The document is a review of all EU financing programmes in Bulgaria and Romania from the date of their accession on 1 January 2007 until 31 July 2009. It was requested by the European Parliament in April, after the EU commission decided to freeze €500 million of payments due to fraud and corruption.

## V. GEORGIA

### 1.

#### Tbilisi Tries to Improve Prison Conditions

22.10.2009, Eurasia Insight

READ MORE: <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insightb/articles/eav102209b.shtml>

Human rights advocates have long assailed Georgia for the squalid conditions of its prisons. Reforms implemented in early 2009 have produced few tangible improvements inside prisons, activists say. Officials insist, however, that the overhaul of the prison system is moving forward ahead of schedule. In a 2006 report, Human Rights Watch characterized conditions in Georgia prisons as "appalling." Many inmates were vulnerable to "degrading treatment" due to overcrowding and unsanitary facilities, the report added. More recently, the State Department's 2008 human rights country report for Georgia noted that the country's prisons and pre-trial detention centers failed to meet international standards. It also expressed concern about Georgian Justice Ministry data that showed 94 inmates died while in custody in 2008.

### 2.

#### Georgia Accused of Holding Political Prisoners

23.10.2009, Institute for War & Peace Reporting

READ MORE: <http://www.iwpr.net/EN-crs-f-356858>

Activists cite cases where they claim members of opposition convicted in totally - or partially - fabricated trials. Georgian human rights groups are becoming increasingly concerned about the number of opposition figures being prosecuted in the country, despite government denials that they are political prisoners. They say the number of political prisoners rose sharply following months of protests earlier this year against President Mikhail Saakashvili, who rejected protesters' demands that he resign. The groups won support from the International Federation for Human Rights, FIDH, which in a report in August concluded that the Georgian authorities are holding political prisoners and demanded their release.

### 3.

#### Georgia in RSF Press Freedom Index

21.10.2009, Civil.ge

READ MORE: [http://www.civil.ge/eng/\\_print.php?id=21593](http://www.civil.ge/eng/_print.php?id=21593)

Press freedom has improved in Georgia and the country jumped 39 places to number 81 on a 2009 ranking by Reporters Without Borders (RSF) released on October 20. 120th ranking in the previous similar index for 2008 was mainly attributed to the death of three journalists during the August war. "Indicators point to a deterioration in the press freedom situation in almost all of the former Soviet Republics except Georgia," the new index for 2009 by RSF says.

### 4.

#### Sabotage' Derails Georgian Train

21.10.2009, BBC

READ MORE: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8318782.stm>

A goods train has been derailed in a blast in Georgia, which officials said was "sabotage". No-one was hurt. A railway spokeswoman said TNT may have been used against the train, which was carrying oil products. The blast broke nearby windows and damaged power lines. It took place on a line between

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Senaki and the Black Sea port of Poti, one of two used to transport oil and gas to Europe from the Caspian Sea.

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5.

Tbilisi Court Starts Hearing Russia Espionage Case

20.10.2009, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: <http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1856544.html>

A court in Tbilisi has begun hearing the case of Vakhtang Maisaia, who is accused of spying for Russia, RFE/RL's Russian and Georgian services report. Maisaia, a political observer and military specialist, was arrested in May. He is accused of providing Russian secret services with classified information during the Russia-Georgia conflict over Georgia's breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia in August 2008. Maisaia's confessions were televised in Georgia, and President Mikheil Saakashvili personally accused Maisaia of treason.

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6.

Priests Attempt to Create Incident in Mosque of Georgia's Gardabani Region

19.10.2009, APA

READ MORE: <http://en.apa.az/print.php?id=109501>

The incident took place at about 19.00 on Saturday. Adviser to the Georgian government minister for re-integration affairs Savalan Mirzayev told APA that the priests entered into the mosque in Aghtehle village and demanded the praying young people to leave and to close the mosque.

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7.

Ergneti to Host Georgian-Ossetian Meeting

19.10.2009, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/print/1561598.html>

Today, on Oct. 19, in the Georgian-Ossetian conflict zone, the Ergenti village will host the next meeting of the working group comprising representatives of the South Ossetia and Georgia under the OSCE mediation within the Geneva format. This meeting is dedicated to prevent tension in the region.

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8.

Georgian Orthodox Church Patriarch Criticizes Saakashvili for War

16.10.2009, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: <http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1853790.html>

Georgian Orthodox Church leader Patriarch Iliya II has criticized President Mihkeil Saakashvili for his actions in South Ossetia in August 2008 that led to a military conflict with Russia, RFE/RL's Georgian Service reports. Independent television station Maestro showed Patriarch Iliya at a meeting with teachers on October 16 in which he said it was possible to avoid military conflict with Russia over Georgia's breakaway region of South Ossetia last year.

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9.

Saakashvili on Media Freedom in Georgia

16.10.2009, Civil.ge

READ MORE: <http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=21581>

President Saakashvili said in an interview with CNN's Connect the World, when asked about media freedom in Georgia: "We have twenty seven independent channels in Georgia; we have dozens of political talk shows every day." "I think we are politicized society to the extent you won't find in most of the eastern and central European countries and we welcome it," he said.

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10.

CoE Report on National Minorities in Georgia

13.10.2009, Civil.ge

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READ MORE: [http://www.civil.ge/eng/\\_print.php?id=21565](http://www.civil.ge/eng/_print.php?id=21565)

Council of Europe's Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) published on October 12 its first report on Georgia, saying that protection of linguistic rights of national minorities "is a major challenge." The report is enclosed with the Georgian government's comments, which contains 40 pages of the government's responses to some of the opinions laid out in the report. The report says that FCNM welcomes the fact that the ratification of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by Georgia in 2005 triggered "a debate on the introduction of a more comprehensive legal framework for protecting national minorities."

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## VI. GEORGIA-RUSSIA

### 1.

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Group Seized on S. Ossetia Border

26.10.2009, BBC

READ MORE: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8326536.stm>

Georgia has accused Russian forces of abducting 16 of its nationals near the breakaway region of South Ossetia. A South Ossetia government spokesman said the men were detained by Russian soldiers after crossing its border and "carrying out illegal deforestation".

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### 2.

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Russia Considers Applications on Political Asylum from Two Georgian Journalists

23.10.2009, Caucasian Knot

READ MORE: <http://www.eng.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/11523>

The Department for Information and Press of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) said that it would consider the requests of two Georgian journalists on granting political asylum to them with account of the situation with the freedom of mass media in Georgia. The "Caucasian Knot" has reported that in October Badri Afanasiev, former producer of the "Imedi" TV Company, addressed Russian authorities for political asylum; and last month in was done by Levan Gudadze, founder of the Information Agency "ITNexclusive".

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### 3.

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Hollywood Comes to Georgia

21.10.2009, EuroNews

READ MORE: <http://www.euronews.net/2009/10/21/hollywood-comes-to-georgia/>

It was a case of déjà vu for the residents of a small town in Georgia when a Hollywood crew turned up to make a film based on last year's Georgian-Russian war. Using the same streets and settings, locals not only watched the unfolding drama but actively participated in the story set in the five day conflict. Executive producer, Michael Flannigan: "I think our main concern was to show war as a bad thing. You know there are a lot of wars going on and this one kind of landed on us and we had an opportunity to really make an anti-war film and that is, I think, really a primary goal."

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### 4.

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Russia Jails Soldier for Spying for Georgia

17.10.2009, Civil.ge

READ MORE: [http://www.civil.ge/eng/\\_print.php?id=21583](http://www.civil.ge/eng/_print.php?id=21583)

A Russian military court found a serviceman of the Russian armed forces, Jemal Nakaidze, guilty of spying in favor of Georgia and sentenced him to nine years in prison, RIA Novosti news agency reported on October 16.

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### 5.

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Georgian FM: Moscow Wants to Start Talks with Tbilisi

16.10.2009, Civil.ge

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READ MORE: [http://www.civil.ge/eng/\\_print.php?id=21582](http://www.civil.ge/eng/_print.php?id=21582)

There are "signals" indicating that Russia wants to start talks with Georgia, but it is impossible under the current condition when Moscow continues occupying 20% of the country's territory, Grigol Vashadze, the Georgian foreign minister, said on October 16.

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6.

Georgian Vice Speaker calls Russia's Terrorism Claim 'Absurd'

13.10.2009, RIA Novosti

READ MORE: <http://en.rian.ru/world/20091013/156449971-print.html>

The vice speaker of Georgia's parliament dismissed on Tuesday the Russian security service's allegation that Georgia has been supporting terrorists in the Caucasus, calling it a "provocation."

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## VII. MOLDOVA

1.

Moldova to Freeze Public-Sector Wage

26.10.2009, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: <http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1861611.html>

Moldovan Economy Minister Valeriu Lazar says the government will have to freeze public-sector wages in hopes of securing a loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), RFE/RL's Moldovan Service reports. Lazar told RFE/RL that the salary freeze will affect government employees and professional army officers who had been promised by the previous government a raise of up to 25 percent starting on October 1.

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2.

Moldovan Presidential Election Delayed - Election Chief

18.10.2009, RIA Novosti

READ MORE: <http://en.rian.ru/world/20091018/156508798-print.html>

The Moldovan presidential election scheduled for October 23 in Moldova's parliament will not take place, the chairman of the parliamentary commission on the presidential election said on Sunday. "The procedure is delayed as only one candidate has been registered for the post," Ion Pleshka said. Marian Lupu, the leader of the Moldovan Democratic Party, was the only candidate for the president's post. He represented the ruling Alliance for European Integration.

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3.

Moldovan Communist Urges Voronin to Avoid Early Elections

17.10.2009, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: <http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1854187.html>

A leading member of Moldova's Communist Party has written a letter to party chief and former Moldovan President Vladimir Voronin asking him to seek a compromise with the country's new leaders to avoid early elections, RFE/RL's Moldovan Service reports. Vladimir Turcanu told RFE/RL the letter represents his personal view and denied that the Communist Party is in danger of splitting.

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4.

EU Ready for New Partnership Talks with Moldova

16.10.2009, EUBusiness

READ MORE: <http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/moldova-politics.zv>

The European Union is ready to start talks on a new special partnership with Moldova, Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt said Friday. The new partnership will be "a powerful tool to promote deeper cooperation and approximation between Moldova and the EU," said Bildt, whose country holds the EU's rotating presidency, in a statement after talks in Chisinau.

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## 5.

### Explosion in Moldovan Capital Injures Dozens

15.10.2009, EuroNews

READ MORE: <http://www.euronews.net/2009/10/15/explosion-in-moldovan-capital-injures-dozens/>

Dozens of people have been injured in an explosion in the capital of Moldova, Chisinau, according to local media reports. The country's Interior Ministry says an "unidentified explosive device" detonated close to midnight on Wednesday, during celebrations of "City Day".

## VIII. ROMANIA

### 1.

#### Romania Favors Nabucco

16.10.2009, UPI

READ MORE: [http://www.upi.com/Science\\_News/Resource-Wars/2009/10/16/Romania-favors-Nabucco/UPI-31201255709621/](http://www.upi.com/Science_News/Resource-Wars/2009/10/16/Romania-favors-Nabucco/UPI-31201255709621/)

Romanian officials said the Nabucco natural gas pipeline should be the top priority for the European push for energy security. Europe aims to diversify an energy sector dependent on Russian gas with its Nabucco project from the Caspian region. Ankara hosted the signing of a multilateral agreement on the project in July, though gas commitments and financial obstacles still plague development.

### 2.

#### Progress, of a Sort and at a Price

15.10.2009, The Economist

READ MORE: [http://www.economist.com/world/europe/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=14663429](http://www.economist.com/world/europe/displaystory.cfm?story_id=14663429)

Egos, not the stricken economy, are at the centre of Romanian politics. It may have worked politically, but not on other fronts. Two weeks ago, Romania's prime minister, Emil Boc, doomed his own government to collapse by ousting his interior minister, Dan Nica. The ostensible reason was that Mr Nica, who represents a junior partner in the coalition, had groundlessly alleged that a huge electoral fraud was being planned in the presidential election due on November 22nd. He did not name the supposed ballot-riggers. But this is a touchy issue. Romania's president, Traian Basescu (a close ally of Mr Boc), won power in 2004 on the crest of an anti-corruption campaign. Since then some of his biggest supporters have become increasingly critical of his record.

### 3.

#### No-Confidence Vote Topples Romanian Government

13.10.2009, The New York Times

READ MORE: [http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/14/world/europe/14iht-romania.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/14/world/europe/14iht-romania.html?_r=1)

The Romanian government collapsed after a vote of no confidence Tuesday, further undermining the economy of a country already severely buffeted by the global financial crisis. The toppling of Prime Minister Emil Boc's centrist government — the first time a government in Romania has been dismissed since the fall of Communism in 1989 — reinforced the sense of political upheaval in Eastern and Central Europe. A succession of countries in the region, including Hungary, the Czech Republic and Latvia, have seen their governments collapse in recent months amid economic hard times.

## IX. RUSSIA

### 1.

#### Gazprom Forecasts \$20-30 Rise in Gas Export Prices in 2010

26.10.2009, RIA Novosti

READ MORE: <http://en.rian.ru/business/20091026/156593548-print.html>

Gazprom forecasts a \$20-30 increase year-on-year in gas export prices for European consumers in

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2010, a deputy board chairman of Russia's energy giant said on Monday. Alexander Medvedev said earlier the average gas export price would exceed \$280 per 1,000 cubic meters in 2009.

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2.

New pro-Russia Campaign Comes to EU Capital

26.10.2009, EUobserver

READ MORE: <http://euobserver.com/9/28883?print=11%20of>

Russian news agency Ria Novosti is rolling out a new public relations campaign in the political capital of the European Union which, according to sources in the PR industry, aims to justify Russia's great power ambitions and improve the image of Joseph Stalin. The state-owned news agency has teamed up with a little-known Washington, London and Zurich-based consultancy called RJI Companies and is trying to recruit one of the top 10 PR firms in Brussels to put the project in play.

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3.

Is Russia Using Serbia to Strengthen Hand On European Security?

23.10.2009, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: <http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1859382.html>

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev traveled to the Serbian capital this week bearing gifts: a \$1.5 billion loan and a clutch of energy and development deals. In return, Medvedev did a little favor for himself. Speaking before the Serbian parliament, he announced that Belgrade -- Moscow's closest ally in the Balkans -- would play an integral role in Russia's plans for a new security strategy for Europe. Serbia and Russia "have a similar approach to assessing the international situation, as well as issues of European security," Medvedev said. "We are, of course, prepared to promote our initiative together with our Serbian partners." Serbian President Boris Tadic said his country was "open" to the initiative.

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4.

A False Alarm? National Media Group Denies Plans to Outsource its News Production

21.10.2009, Russia Profile

READ MORE: <http://www.russiaprofile.org/page.php?pageid=Culture+%26+Living&articleid=a1256144281>

Last week, Russia's liberal establishment was perplexed by the announcement of changes at REN TV and the St. Petersburg Channel Five. The two stations, lauded as the last bastions of independent broadcasting on Russian television, are undergoing restructuring, which could potentially see their news services taken over by another company. But is it a move by the state to bring to heel the last remnants of independent reporting on television, or simply a pragmatic management decision prompted by hemorrhaging advertising revenues?

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5.

Russian Defense Ministry Reorganizes Information Services

20.10.2009, Eurasia Daily Monitor

READ MORE: [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=35623&cHash=860a8bd1fa](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=35623&cHash=860a8bd1fa)

On October 1 the Russian defense ministry abolished all the former information structures throughout the armed forces, including within the military districts. Consequently, the press service and information directorate of the defense ministry has emerged as a revamped version of the directorate for information and public relations, now subordinated to the defense minister. "In accordance with a directive of the Chief of the General Staff, on October 1 all positions in information and public-relations services were removed from the staffs of the main commands of the branches of service and combat arms," a defense ministry source reported

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6.

#### Democracy in Russia a 'Mockery,' Says Gorbachev

19.10.2009, Hurriyet Daily News

READ MORE: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=democracy-in-russia-a-mockery-says-gorbachev-2009-10-19>

The last Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev on Monday launched his bitterest attack yet on the state of democracy in Russia, saying elections had turned into a mockery and the whole system was faulty. Gorbachev's comments came after the ruling United Russia party led by Prime Minister Vladimir Putin swept this month's local polls, prompting allegations of fraud and a rare walkout of parliament by three opposition parties. "In the eyes of everyone, elections have turned into a mockery of the people and people have great distrust over how their votes are used," Gorbachev told the opposition newspaper Novaya Gazeta, which he part owns, in an interview.

7.

#### Democracy Loses Support in Russia

16.10.2009, BBC

READ MORE: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8311189.stm>

A growing number of Russians believe their country does not need democracy, a nationwide survey by one of Russia's leading polling agencies suggests. The poll by the Levada-Centre showed that 57% of those questioned considered that Russia needed democracy - the lowest number since 2006.

8.

#### Joint Bid to Delay Russian WTO Entry, says Negotiator

15.10.2009, EurActiv

READ MORE: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/trade/joint-bid-delay-russian-wto-entry-negotiator/article-186408>

Russia's bid to join the World Trade Organisation (WTO) alongside Belarus and Kazakhstan at the same time is likely to delay Moscow's entry significantly, the senior official steering the negotiations said on Wednesday (14 October). "Any simultaneous bid is likely to significantly delay the process and set back Russia's bid," Stefan Johannesson, who chairs the global trade body's key working group on Russia's membership efforts, told Reuters in an interview.

9.

#### Russia: Ominous Demographics

14.10.2009, ISN

READ MORE: <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Current-Affairs/Security-Watch/Detail/?id=108474&lng=en>

In 2010-2011, Russia will not have enough conscripts to continue to man its army at current levels, and the strategic and resource-rich Siberian expanses are facing depopulation. How the Kremlin manages this coming crunch will determine whether or not Russia has the human capacities to remain a great power, Ben Judah writes for ISN Security Watch.

10.

#### Doubt Cast on Russian Statistics

13.10.2009, The Financial Times

READ MORE: <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/ab2127be-b7ec-11de-8ca9-00144feab49a.html>

The outgoing head of Russia's main statistical agency has warned that the objectivity of the data it publishes is threatened by political interference following a government shake-up in 2008. Vladimir Sokolin, who will be leaving Ros Stat, which publishes economic data such as GDP and unemployment, said in an interview published Monday in the Moscow magazine Itogi that subordinating his agency to the ministry of economics had been a "big mistake".

## X. TRANSNISTRIA

### 1.

#### Chisinau's Proposals to Change Peacekeeping Format in Transdnistria Premature

22.10.2009, Kyiv Post

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/world/detail/51143/print/>

The number of peacekeeping checkpoints in the security zone covering part of Transdnistria and part of Moldova on both sides of the Dniestr river could be reduced, said Moldovan peacekeeping commanders. Their view is strongly opposed by Transdnistria. "Given that we have had peace for 17 years, given the current situation where cooperation has established not only between the peacekeepers, but also law enforcement authorities of both parties, there is an opportunity to optimize the peacekeeping operation. Today there is no need to keep two peacekeeping posts in the same place on both sides," Commander of Moldovan peacekeeping troops Col. Aurel Fondos told journalists after a two-day military exercise by the peacekeeping forces.

### 2.

#### Transdnistria Okays Proposal for Next Five Plus Two Meeting

21.10.2009, KyivPost

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/world/detail/51096/print/>

Moldova's breakaway Transdnistria region expressed support for a proposal by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to hold on November 6 the next round of "five plus two" talks in seeking a solution to the Moldovan-Transdnistrian conflict. The five plus two format are talks bringing together Moldova and Transdnistria, Russia, Ukraine and the OSCE as mediators, and the European Union and United States as observers.

## XI. TURKEY

### 1.

#### EU Comments on Ankara's Policy in the South Caucasus

22.10.2009, Eurasia Daily Monitor

READ MORE: [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no\\_cache=1&tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=35644&tx\\_ttnews\[backPid\]=7&cHash=8dc4c52e47](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=35644&tx_ttnews[backPid]=7&cHash=8dc4c52e47)

The European Commission has released its "2009 Progress Report" and "Enlargement Strategy Paper" in which it assessed developments in Turkey. The strategy paper stressed Ankara's role in contributing to the stability of the Middle East and the South Caucasus. Turkey's efforts toward the normalization of its ties with Armenia and its key position on the Nabucco project, which will ease the EU's energy dependence on Russia, was also discussed in the strategy paper (Anadolu Ajansi, October 14).

### 2.

#### France Courting Turkey for Increased Trade Relations

18.10.2009, Sunday's Zaman

READ MORE: <http://www.sundayszaman.com/sunday/detaylar.do?load=detay&link=190237>

"There is a great desire on the French side to reinforce relations with Turkey including in all economic sectors," said a top French diplomat in Turkey, signalling that Paris is ready to embark on healing the rift that emerged over opposition to Turkey's full membership in the European Union.

### 3.

#### Turkey's Game for the Caucasus

16.10.2009, EurActiv

READ MORE: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/enlargement/turkey-game-caucasus/article-186438>

"The process of normalising Turkish-Armenian relations which has been observed [since the Russian-Georgian war in August 2008] is the most important element of Turkey's new policy towards

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the Caucasus," writes Maciej Falkowski, a researcher at the Warsaw-based Centre for Eastern Studies (CES), in an October paper."

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## **XII. UKRAINE**

1.

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Communist Leader Symonenko Asks Central Election Commission to Register Him as Presidential Candidate

21.10.2009, Kyiv Post

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/51094/print/>

Communist Party of Ukraine Leader Petro Symonenko has asked the Central Election Commission register him as a candidate for the post of the Ukrainian president. A representative of the press service of the Central Election Commission told this to Ukrainian News.

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2.

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Council of Europe Hopes Ukraine Takes into Consideration Recommendations of Venice Commission Concerning Law on Election of Ukrainian President

21.10.2009, Kyiv Post

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/51088/print/>

The Council of Europe has said it hopes that Ukraine will take into consideration the recommendations of the Venice Commission concerning the law on the election of the Ukrainian head of state. "We know this opinion [of the Venice Commission] and we hope that Ukraine will take into consideration this opinion and will assist in improving of the Ukrainian election legislation," Jean-Louis Laurens, Director General of Democracy and Political Affairs of the Council of Europe said at a press conference in Kyiv on Wednesday.

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3.

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A Rebel without a Cause

20.10.2009, Russia Profile

READ MORE: <http://www.russiaprofile.org/page.php?pageid=International&articleid=a1256056713>

Yatsenyuk's Attempt to Take on the Image of a Lighter Version of Vladimir Putin Will Hardly Help Him Win the Ukrainian Presidential Election Ukraine's youthful Presidential Candidate Arseny Yatsenyuk is tailor-made to be a pro-Western leader, but his stagnating ratings show how weak this political constituency has become in Ukraine. Instead, all three leading contenders in the presidential election campaign that kicked off this week are making pro-Russian statements.

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4.

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Ukraine's Energy Mess Threatens to Overshadow Presidential Election

20.10.2009, Eurasia Daily Monitor

READ MORE: [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=35624&cHash=1174c1cf28](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=35624&cHash=1174c1cf28)

As the Ukrainian government of Yulia Tymoshenko continues to struggle with the impact of the global economic crisis, its troubled energy sector has taken a number of new hits. The state-owned oil and gas monopoly, Naftohaz Ukrayiny, was degraded by Fitch Ratings to "restricted default" from C, the lowest grade before default level, after it missed a principal payment on Eurobonds on September 30. More positively, Naftogaz, the cash-strapped Ukrainian energy giant, announced on October 8 that 92 percent of note holders have agreed to restructure a \$500 million Eurobond issue that matured on September 30. The vast majority of note holders accepted restructuring by an October 8 "early bird" cut-off deadline that included incentives ([www.kyivpost.com](http://www.kyivpost.com), October 9). This represents a significant boost for the company, as it attempts to avoid default and restructure a \$1.7 billion debt. Final approval is scheduled for October 19.

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5.

#### Ukrainian Election Campaign Begins today

19.10.2009, Today's Zaman

READ MORE: <http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/news-190310-104-ukrainian-election-campaign-begins-today.html>

Whatever happened to Ukraine's Orange Revolution? As the country starts its first presidential election campaign since that popular movement in 2004 broke the grip of the post-Soviet establishment, its leader, President Viktor Yushchenko, stares a painful reality in the face.

6.

#### Macroeconomic Indicators - EBRD Downgrades Ukrainian Forecast

19.10.2009, Steel Guru

READ MORE: [http://steelguru.com/news/index/2009/10/19/MTE2NzMz/Macroeconomic\\_indicators\\_-\\_EBRD\\_downgrades\\_Ukrainian\\_forecast.html](http://steelguru.com/news/index/2009/10/19/MTE2NzMz/Macroeconomic_indicators_-_EBRD_downgrades_Ukrainian_forecast.html)

It is reported that the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development now believes Ukraine GDP will shrink 14% in 2009 compared with its earlier forecast for a 10% contraction. However, the bank now believes Ukraine GDP will grow 3% in 2010 compared with its forecast for zero growth previously. Mr Alexander Pivovarsky EBRD chief economist said Ukraine economy was hit hard by the crisis and the outlook for a rapid recovery is limited by weak foreign and domestic demand.

7.

#### EBRD Lends USD 50 Million to Noble Group for Development of Business in Ukraine

19.10.2009, Steel Guru

READ MORE: [http://steelguru.com/news/index/2009/10/19/MTE2NzMx/EBRD\\_lends\\_USD\\_50\\_million\\_to\\_Noble\\_Group\\_for\\_development\\_of\\_business\\_in\\_Ukraine.html](http://steelguru.com/news/index/2009/10/19/MTE2NzMx/EBRD_lends_USD_50_million_to_Noble_Group_for_development_of_business_in_Ukraine.html)

It is reported that the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development has lent Noble Resources Ukraine LLC a wholly owned subsidiary of Noble Group Limited leading global supply chain manager in agricultural and other commodities. The loan agreement was signed by the sides on October 13th 2009.

8.

#### The Rise and Fall (And Rise?) of Arseniy Yatsenyuk

18.10.2009, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: <http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1854794.html>

The one enduring symbol of Ukraine's problems since the 2004 Orange Revolution has been the constant, wearisome guerrilla warfare between its main personalities: the predictable triptych of President Viktor Yushchenko, current Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, and Yushchenko's defeated rival in 2004, Viktor Yanukovich. When the economic crisis hit Ukraine in October-November 2008, Arseniy Yatsenyuk, leader of the newly created Front for Change, initially seemed like a breath of fresh air. His Obama-lite campaign turned the contest for the next president into a three-horse race, with himself in third place as Yushchenko dropped out of contention. By this spring, Yatsenyuk was polling at 12-13 percent, almost catching up with Tymoshenko in second place behind Yanukovich.

9.

#### Ukraine Grain Production may Double

18.10.2009, Hürriyet Daily News

READ MORE: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=ukraine-grain-production-may-double-2009-10-18>

Ukraine plans to almost double grain production as demand for agricultural commodities from countries such as India and China increases, Ukraine's Economy Minister Bohdan Danylyshyn said. Ukraine's output may climb to 80 million metric tons in 2015, from a forecast of 45 million metric

tons next year, Danylyshyn said in an interview in New York over the weekend. Wheat may make up about 70 percent of the harvest by 2015, the minister said.

10.

Crimean Organization of Party of Regions Put Forward Yanukovych as Candidate for President Post  
17.10.2009, Kyiv Post

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/50860/print/>

The Crimean organization of Party of Regions at a party congress held on Saturday decided to put forward Viktor Yanukovych as a candidate for the president post. MP Vasyl Dzharty said at a press conference that the congress sent an address to the congress of the Party of Regions to be held on October 23 in Kyiv.

### **XIII. BLACK SEA**

1.

Fisheries Commission for C. Asia, Caucasus

25.10.2009, Hürriyet Daily News

READ MORE: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=fisheries-commission-for-c.-asia-caucasus-2009-10-25>

In an attempt to create a turning point for “a sector in decline,” the agricultural arm of the United Nations has approved the creation of a new regional fisheries management body for the Central Asia and Caucasus region, including Turkey. Its mission will be to work regionally to promote the development, conservation, rational management and most optimal utilization of fishery resources, as well as the sustainable development of aquaculture, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, or FAO, said on its Web site Friday.

2.

Demonstrators in Novorossisk to Demand Nuclear-free Black Sea Status

17.10.2009, Caucasian Knot

READ MORE: <http://www.eng.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/11477>

On the International day of the Black Sea to be marked on October 31, a demonstration is planned in Novorossisk under the slogan "Nuclear-free status - to the Black Sea!" As explained by Vadim Karastelyov, expert of the Novorossisk Committee on Human Rights, who has submitted an application on the action to the Mayoralty, such status means a ban not only on nuclear weapon, but also on transportation of spent nuclear fuel (SNF) across the sea waters.

### **XIV. BSEC**

1.

BSEC to Discuss its Activity for Last Six Months: Azerbaijani Deputy Foreign Minister

22.10.2009, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/print/1564058.html>

The Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization's activity for six months will be discussed on October 22, Azerbaijani deputy foreign minister Mahmoud Mammadgulyev said before a meeting with participation of foreign ministers of BSEC countries. Azerbaijan, Bulgaria and Turkey will be represented by foreign ministers Elmar Mammadyarov, Rumiana Jeleva and Ahmet Davutoglu. During the meeting the Russian delegation will be headed by the first deputy foreign minister Andrey Denisov. Armenia, Greece, Georgia, Romania, Serbia and Ukraine will be represented by deputy foreign ministers of these countries, Albania - by secretary general of the foreign ministry, Moldova - by state minister.

2.

#### Azerbaijan Achieves economic Growth in World Crisis: Minister

22.10.2009, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/print/1564106.html>

Azerbaijani foreign minister called the session of BSEC experts as productive. Azerbaijan reached significant success in April 2004 after the meeting, Azerbaijani foreign minister Elmar Mammadyarov said at the opening of the meeting of BSEC council of foreign ministers. "The budget increased four times. Share of private sector increased up to 80 percent," minister said on October 22. He said that Azerbaijan could reach economic growth up to 8 percent during the world financial-economic crisis.

3.

#### Azerbaijan to Hand Over BSEC Chairmanship to Bulgaria

19.10.2009, APA

READ MORE: <http://en.apa.az/print.php?id=109517>

The 21st meeting of the Foreign Ministers Council of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation will be held in Baku on October 22. Increasing the organization's efficiency, improving the partnership with other international organizations, particularly with UN and EU will be discussed at the meeting. APA reports quoting BSEC press service that the restoration of the observation status and sector dialogue with various countries and organizations will be considered.

## XV. CAUCASUS

1.

#### Rapprochement between Turkey and Armenia Can Cause Problems in Georgian Region of Samtskhe-Javakheti: Fellow at Foundation for Strategic Studies in Georgia

26.10.2009, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/news/politics/foreign/1566320.html>

The process of rapprochement between Turkey and Armenia should be considered as regional one because it can cause problems in the Georgian region of Samtskhe-Javakheti, senior fellow at the Foundation for Strategic and International Studies in Georgia, Professor Vladimir Papava said. "I do not think that rapprochement between Turkey and Armenia is in the interests of the region. After rapprochement between Turkey and Armenia, Georgia will not have an argument that return of Turks-Meskhetians will create new ethnic problems in the region. But, in fact, Armenians living in those territories (Samtskhe-Javakheti) oppose and are afraid of Turks' return," Papava told Trend News.

2.

#### No Incident Occurred during OSCE Monitoring on Armenian-Azerbaijani Contact Line

22.10.2009, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/print/1564194.html>

Monitoring was held on the contact line between Armenian and Azerbaijani armed forces on Oct. 22 after a mandate by the special envoy of the OSCE chairman. The monitoring near the Gapanli village in Azerbaijan's Tartar region proceeded without incident on Oct. 22, the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry reported. The monitoring was held on the Azerbaijani side by OSCE Chairman-in-Office Personal Representative field assistants Pieter Ki and Irji Aberli.

3.

#### Armenian, Azerbaijani MPs To Discuss Karabakh

21.10.2009, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: [http://www.rferl.org/content/Armenian\\_Azerbaijani\\_Lawmakers\\_To\\_Discuss\\_Karabakh\\_In\\_Moscow/1857738.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/Armenian_Azerbaijani_Lawmakers_To_Discuss_Karabakh_In_Moscow/1857738.html)

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The Russian Duma will host a parliamentary meeting between Azerbaijani and Armenian lawmakers on October 22 in Moscow, RFE/RL's Azerbaijani Service reports. Each side, as well as the State Duma, will be represented by five deputies and talks will focus on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue.

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4.

Turkey and Azerbaijan: "One Nation-Two States?"

21.10.2009, Eurasia Daily Monitor

READ MORE: [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no\\_cache=1&tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=35630&tx\\_ttnews\[backPid\]=7&cHash=a22ca55b4f](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=35630&tx_ttnews[backPid]=7&cHash=a22ca55b4f)

The strains in Turkish-Azeri relations caused by Turkey's energy policies and its attempts to resolve its diplomatic problems with Armenia are beginning to dominate the agenda in Ankara's relations with Baku.

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5.

Azerbaijan Shooting Film on Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict

19.10.2009, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/print/1561905.html>

Azerbaijan is shooting a film about the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Under the financial support of the State Support Fund for Media Development under the Azerbaijani President, Trend News Agency is implementing a project "Creating and demonstrating a documentary film on informing the world about the reality of the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, exposing the occupation and terrorist policy of Armenia."

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6.

Azerbaijan Could Scuttle Nabucco over Turkey-Armenia Deal

19.10.2009, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: [http://www.rferl.org/content/Azerbaijan\\_Could\\_Scuttle\\_Nabucco\\_Over\\_TurkeyArmenia\\_Deal/1855784.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/Azerbaijan_Could_Scuttle_Nabucco_Over_TurkeyArmenia_Deal/1855784.html)

Azerbaijan has apparently decided to play its energy card. As much of the world applauded Turkey's historic rapprochement with Armenia last week, Azerbaijan felt left out in the cold and abandoned by its closest ally. Baku had argued strenuously that a deal to reestablish relations between Ankara and Yerevan should not be signed while Armenia continued to occupy Nagorno-Karabakh, and it threatened to take unspecified countermeasures if one was.

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7.

Politics Heat Up over South Caucasus Natural Gas

18.10.2009, Hürriyet Daily News

READ MORE: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=politics-heat-up-over-energy-bargains-in-south-caucasus-2009-10-18>

Although the normalization talks between Turkey and Armenia aim to thaw frozen conflicts in the South Caucasus, this recent diplomatic revival leaves the Azerbaijani president waving the energy card: 'No more cheap gas to Turkey,' he says. Turkey counters that the improved ties will restart the peace process in the contested region of Nagorno-Karabakh

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8.

Turkish, Armenian Journalists Find Similar Problems in their Respective News Coverage

18..10.2009, Sunday's Zaman

READ MORE: <http://www.sundayszaman.com/sunday/detaylar.do?load=detay&link=190252>

As the north-western province of Bursa hosted a historic soccer match between the national soccer teams of Turkey and Armenia, journalists from the two countries used the opportunity to exchange ideas on the coverage of news related to each others' countries. Researchers from both sides noted that there are the "same ills" and "similar problems" in the media of the two countries. One problem that the media in Turkey and Armenia suffer from is that they often follow the "official" agenda.

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9.

Azerbaijan Pumped 2.530 Billion Cubic Meters of Gas to Turkey, Jan-Sep

17.10.2009, APA

READ MORE: <http://en.apa.az/news.php?id=109488>

27.3 million tons of oil was pumped through the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline during January-September 2009, said Azerbaijan's Minister of Industry and Energy Natig Aliyev at a government meeting. According to him, in total over 100 million tons of oil was exported through this route since the launch of this pipeline in 2006.

10.

Armenia, Turkey: Soul Searching

13.10.2009, ISN

READ MORE: <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Current-Affairs/Security-Watch/Detail/?lng=en&id=108469>

Turkey and Armenia have opened a new chapter in bilateral relations, but ratification of the recently signed protocols will be another major challenge that will not take place without some serious soul searching, Asbed Kotchikian comments for ISN Security Watch.

11.

Only Caucasus Muslims Board to Organize Pilgrimage from Azerbaijan: Sheik-ul-Islam

13.10.2009, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/news/society/religion/1557967.html>

The pilgrimage from Azerbaijan will be organized only through the Caucasus Muslims Office (CMO), Chairman of the CMO Sheik-ul-Islam Haji Allahshukur Pashazade told journalist on Oct.13. Citizens who applied to travel agencies will not make hajj to Mecca. "While it is not too late, the people should contact the CMO till Oct. 25," Pashazade added.

12.

Turkey's Greens Back Armenian Deal

13.10.2009, Hürriyet Daily News

READ MORE: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=turkey8217s-greens-back-armenian-deal-2009-10-13>

Environmental parties in both Turkey and Armenia are expected to hold a simultaneous news conference over the Internet on Thursday regarding a recent thaw between the two countries. The joint initiative by the Green parties of Armenia and Turkey was scheduled for Monday but the Armenian party was forced to delay the conference due to a technical fault that could not be repaired in time. As a result, the two parties have rescheduled the joint Web conference for Thursday.

13.

A Small Step on the Road to Reconciliation between Turkey and Armenia

13.10.2009, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

READ MORE: <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=23992>

After last-minute mediation by U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and others, Turkey and Armenia signed historic protocols on October 10 in Zurich to restore diplomatic ties and open shared borders. Although the deal must still be ratified by their respective parliaments, it marks the first step in resolving tensions stemming from the killing of Armenians under Ottoman rule in 1915. Henri Barkey describes the significance of the agreement and its regional implications.

## XVI. NATO

1.

Robert Gates: "A Radar Station in Southern Russia Could Make a Useful Contribution to the U.S.-NATO Shield"

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26.10.2009, APA

READ MORE: <http://www.en.apa.az/news.php?id=109879>

A radar station in southern Russia could make a useful contribution to the U.S.-NATO shield in Europe, said US Defense Secretary Robert Gates at a new conference after the meeting of NATO defense ministers in Prague, APA reports. He said it would comprehensively protect Europe from missile attacks, particularly from Iran.

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2.

Rosoboronexport: Russia Supplies NATO with NATO-Standard Weaponry

22.10.2009, Kyiv Post

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/world/detail/51110/print/>

NATO countries buying Russian-made armaments and military hardware have acknowledged the quality of these products, Rosoboronexport Director General Anatoly Isaikin said in an interview to be published in the October 23 issue of the magazine VIP Premier.

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3.

Talinn Wants to See Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Ukraine in NATO, Says Estonian Foreign Minister

17.10.2009, Kyiv Post

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/50870/print/>

Foreign Minister Urmas Paet at a meeting with U.S. Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs Philip H. Gordon noted that he backs further NATO expansion. The press service of the Estonian Foreign Ministry told Interfax that Paet said that Tallinn supports an idea of provision of Georgia, Ukraine, Bosnia and Herzegovina with NATO's membership action plans.

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## **XVII. SECURITY**

1.

The Shifting Strategic Priorities of the Russian Navy

23.10.2009, Eurasia Daily Monitor

READ MORE: [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=35646&cHash=7052eee93a](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=35646&cHash=7052eee93a)

Over the last two decades, the oceanic navy that Russia inherited from the Soviet Union has declined in size and quality. There were repeated calls from naval officers over the last decade for new construction and a revival of the navy. On Navy Day July 27, 2008 the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Navy Admiral Vladimir Vysotsky spoke of a revival of Russian naval power over the next decade and declared that the navy would add six carrier battle groups to its complement of warships. Construction of these ships, he said, would begin in 2012 with three of the carriers assigned to the Northern Fleet and the other three to the Pacific Fleet. This month, after reviewing the naval activities of the Baltic, Northern and Black Sea Fleets during the exercise Zapad 2009, President Dmitry Medvedev repeated the call for a revival of Russian naval power and promised new acquisitions over the next decade. Medvedev noted that naval appropriations had not suffered major cuts during the current economic crisis. He stated: "I am convinced that over the next decade we can re-establish our navy at the level necessary to our state.....We need a powerful fleet" (Flag Rodiny, October 2).

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2.

Russia, Ukraine not Seeking Changes to Black Sea Fleet Deal

23.10.2009, RIA Novosti

READ MORE: <http://en.rian.ru/world/20091023/156567046-print.html>

Neither Russia nor Ukraine are seeking to revise the terms of an agreement on the presence of Russia's Black Sea Fleet in the Crimea, the countries' foreign ministers said on Friday. Russia's Black

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Sea Fleet uses a range of naval facilities in Ukraine's Crimea, including the base in Sevastopol, as part of a 1997 lease agreement valid until 2017.

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3.

#### Russian Black Sea Fleet Objects to Ukrainian Checks

18.10.2009, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: <http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1854864.html>

Russian Black Sea Fleet commanders have raised objections to spot checks of their military vehicles by Ukrainian traffic police, RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service reports. After two unsanctioned convoys carrying missiles drove through Sevastopol this summer, Ukrainian authorities began checking Russian naval convoys for proper documentation.

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4.

#### Russia Leads War Game

16.10.2009, The Financial Times

READ MORE: <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/c374b658-ba6e-11de-9dd7-00144feab49a.html>

A Russian-led rapid reaction force, portrayed as the Kremlin's answer to Nato, held its first war games on Friday in Kazakhstan, stoking concerns among some central Asian states at the nature of its military ambitions in the region. Seven thousand troops participated in the war games, the first by the force formed this year by the Collective Security Treaty Organisation, a loose security grouping between Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

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5.

#### Russia to Deploy New Multiple-Warhead Missiles in December

13.10.2009, Xinhua

READ MORE: [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-10/13/content\\_12223504.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-10/13/content_12223504.htm)

Russia will put the new multiple-warhead RS-24 intercontinental ballistic missiles into service in December, the commander of the Strategic Missile Force (SMF) said on Tuesday. Andrei Shvaichenko was quoted by local media as telling reporters outside Moscow that the SMF plans to conduct five missile launches by the end of the year.

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Editor: Olga Borou

Compiled by: Jan-Hinrich Wagner



EU – BLACK SEA OBSERVATORY

International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS)  
4 Xenophontos Str.  
10557 Athens, Greece  
Tel: +30 210 322321  
Fax: +30 210 324 2244  
Email: [icbss@icbss.org](mailto:icbss@icbss.org)  
Website: [www.icbss.org](http://www.icbss.org)  
Director General: Dr. Dimitrios Triantaphyllou