



BLACK SEA NEWS UPDATE

EU – BLACK SEA OBSERVATORY

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I. ALBANIA

- 1.

Council of Europe team seeks end to Albania stalemate

23.02.2010, EU Business

READ MORE: <http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/albania-politics.2tw>

A Council of Europe mission urged Albania to open an inquiry into disputed elections to help

unblock a political stalemate endangering the country's European ties, the delegation's head said Tuesday. While a number of sources said the envoys' talks with Albania's political leaders on Monday had produced no concrete result, the Council of Europe team put forward proposals designed to end the stalemate.

II. ARMENIA

1.

EU hopes for conclusion of Association Agreement with Armenia in near future

22.02.2010, Pan ARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=43217>

Head of the Delegation of the European Commission to the Republic of Armenia, Ambassador Raul de Luzenberger said Monday that the agenda of the EU Advisory Group covers a number of ambitious programs, including conclusion of Association Agreement with Armenia. "We are hopeful that Association Agreement with Armenia will be concluded in the near future, with the assistance of the EU Advisory Group," he said during the third meeting of the Advisory Group in Yerevan.

2.

Russia gas price hike shocks Armenians

19.02.2010, IWPR

READ MORE: <http://www.iwpr.net/EN-crs-f-360388>

The company that has a monopoly on selling Russian gas to Armenia has warned it will raise prices for ordinary consumers by 40 per cent in April, sparking anger in the country. Armrosgazprom, a Russian-Armenian joint venture, has sought permission for the increase from the official regulator and also wants to raise the gas price for businesses by 20 per cent. It is expected to be approved.

III. AZERBAIJAN

1.

EU special envoy: status quo in Nagorno-Karabakh conflict can not last forever

23.02.2010, TREND News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/news/karabakh/1644195.html>

During his visit to Azerbaijan, the European Union Special Representative for South Caucasus Peter Semneby will discuss the pressing problems of EU-Azerbaijan, in particular Azerbaijan's rapprochement with the European Union, the possibility of starting negotiations on the association agreement, the energy security, energy supply to Europe, regional security, as well as Nagorno-Karabakh conflict solution and normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations, Semneby told reporters today upon his arrival in Baku.

2.

Azeri oil production on the rise

23.02.2010, TREND News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/news/karabakh/1644195.html>

Oil production from the Azeri-Chirag-Gunashli offshore oil complex in Azerbaijan and other developments boosted growth by more than 17 percent, data show. Baku said it produced 31.5 million barrels of oil in January, a 17.6 percent growth from the year prior, the News.Az reporting agency said.

3.

Base shooting focuses attention on possible hazing in military

09.02.2010, EurasiaNet

READ MORE: <http://eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav020910.shtml>

A fatal shooting incident at a military base west of Baku is raising questions about the extent of hazing in Azerbaijan's armed forces. On the evening of January 28, two young soldiers - Pvt. Elkhan Azizov, 20, and Pvt. Sadig Mammadov, 19 -- entered the headquarters of the base where they were stationed and shot dead a lieutenant colonel, a captain, a lieutenant and a warrant officer.

IV. BULGARIA

1.

Large-scale corruption exposed as Bulgaria's president visits Brussels

24.02.2010, Euractiv

READ MORE: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/enlargement/large-scale-corruption-exposed-bulgaria-s-president-visits-brussels-news-282241>

Large-scale corruption cases in Bulgaria came into the open on 22-23 February, as the country's president, Georgi Parvanov, met with EU leaders in Brussels. Emilia Maslarova, a social affairs minister in the government of former Socialist Prime Minister Sergey Stanishev, was released on bail for 25,000 euros, an unusually high sum.

2.

Government forced down on Genetically Modified Crops

21.02.2010, IPS

READ MORE: <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=50411>

In January 2010, the Bulgarian parliament voted, on a first reading, legislation allowing the release of GM organisms into the environment. But as the law awaited final passage, the Environmental Parliamentary Committee came under public pressure to accept a five-year moratorium on GM cultivation and a ban on testing near organic fields and beehives.

3.

Bulgaria petrochemicals report 2010 - New Market report published

03.02.2010, Official wire

READ MORE: http://www.officialwire.com/main.php?action=posted_news&rid=90538

The Bulgarian petrochemicals industry suffered a collapse in output in 2009 from which it will take years to recover, scuppering hopes of securing investment in additional capacity over the medium term, according to our latest Bulgaria Petrochemicals Report.

V. GEORGIA

1.

Georgia foreign minister renouncing Russian citizenship

22.02.2010, Kyiv Post

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/russia/detail/60164/>

Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze, a dual Georgian-Russian citizen who announced in November 2009 that he had decided to renounce his Russian citizenship, on Monday submitted papers for abandoning his Russian nationality to the Russian authorities, the Georgian Foreign Ministry said.

2.

Holbrooke hails Georgian troops, says US studying transit offer

22.02.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE:

http://www.rferl.org/content/Holbrooke_Hails_Georgian_Troops_Says_US_Studying_Transit_Offer/1965243.html

A top U.S. official has praised Georgia for its contribution of nearly 1,000 troops to Afghanistan,

adding that Washington is considering Tbilisi's offer to use the small South Caucasus nation as part of an armaments supply route. Richard Holbrooke, the United States' special envoy to Afghanistan and Pakistan, made his comments while touring the Krtsanisi Military Training Center outside the Georgian capital with President Mikheil Saakashvili.

3.

South Ossetia to introduce new passports

19.02.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE:

http://www.rferl.org/content/South_Ossetia_To_Introduce_New_Passports/1963218.html

The leader of Georgia's breakaway region of South Ossetia, Eduard Kokoity, says that by the end of this year "citizens of South Ossetia" will be issued new internal passports, travel documents, birth certificates, diplomas, and other documents, RFE/RL's Echo of the Caucasus reports.

VI. GEORGIA-RUSSIA

1.

Abkhaz leader says Russians will be able to buy property

19.02.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: _

http://www.rferl.org/content/Abkhaz_Leader_Says_Russians_Will_Be_Able_To_Buy_Property/1963185.html

The leader of Georgia's breakaway region of Abkhazia, Sergei Bagapsh, said in Moscow that Russian citizens would soon be eligible to buy property in Abkhazia, RFE/RL's Echo of the Caucasus reports. Bagapsh, who was reelected in December to a second term as president of the breakaway region in Georgia, said Abkhaz officials are discussing a new law that would allow Russian citizens to buy only newly built house.

2.

Abkhazia hopes for oil find

19.02.2010, IWPR

READ MORE: <http://www.iwpr.net/EN-crs-f-360391>

Abkhazian officials hope exploration by Russian petroleum firm Rosneft will help diversify the local economy, but there are fears oil discoveries might harm the environment and the tourism the territory relies on. The government of Abkhazia, which broke free of Georgian control in a 1992-3 war and is recognised as independent by Russia, signed an agreement with Rosneft in December last year.

3.

Russia to build military base in occupied Georgia

18.02.2010, Euractiv

READ MORE: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/russia-build-military-base-occupied-georgia-territory-news-260175>

Russia secured on 17 February the right to maintain a large, long-term military presence in the Georgian rebel region of Abkhazia, signing a deal for a military base that was condemned by Tbilisi and the West. Georgia's president sees EU, NATO hopes vanish. With Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and Abkhazia's leader Sergei Bagapsh looking on, their defence chiefs signed an agreement allowing Moscow to build a military base in the breakaway territory on the Black Sea.

4.

Georgia: Russia bets on ex-Georgian prime minister as Saakashvili alternative

10.02.2010, EurasiaNet

READ MORE: <http://eurasianet.org/departments/insightb/articles/eav021010b.shtml>

With chances for reconciliation with Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili close to non-existent, Russia appears to be trying to gain political currency with ordinary Georgians via a cooperation pact with Georgia's former-premier-turned-opposition leader Zurab Noghaideli. Bucking the general Tbilisi consensus that there can be no diplomacy with Moscow until Russia withdraws from the disputed territories of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, Noghaideli, the leader of the Justice for Georgia Party, signed a cooperation agreement on February 9 with Russian Duma Speaker Boris Gryzlov.

VII. GREECE

1.

Greece's total debt is estimated to be roughly €300 billion

22.02.2010, EU Observer

READ MORE: <http://euobserver.com/9/29520>

As the largest eurozone member, Germany would contribute nearly 20 percent of the potential aid package, likely to take the shape of loans and guarantees. The aid would be tied to strict conditions, with loan tranches only to be paid out once these are met. German officials denied the "speculation" however, according to other news sources, with the country's politicians sensitive to national doubts on the merit of the move.

VIII. MOLDOVA

1.

Measures against Moldova eased

22.02.2010, Interlic

READ MORE: <http://en.interlic.md/2010-02-22/measures-against-moldova-eased-14698.html>

French defense officials say France has agreed to sell Russia a technologically advanced battleship and is considering a request to sell Moscow three more. If the sale is completed, it would be the first such arms sale between Russia and a member of NATO. News of the sale has raised concern among other NATO members and some of Russia's neighbors, especially Georgia, which fought a war with Russia in 2008.

IX. ROMANIA

1.

Missile shield is not aimed at Russia, presidential adviser says

22.02.2010, Nine O'clock

READ MORE:

<http://www.nineoclock.ro/index.php?issue=4625&page=detalii&categorie=politics&id=20100222-511768>

Iulian Fota reaffirmed that the increased security we obtain is big enough to justify the eventual expenses. "I would bring to your attention a statement of the Russian ambassador to NATO, Rogozin, dating back from 2008, when Russia objected to installing the shield in the Czech Republic and Poland, but - through the voice of its ambassador to NATO - said it would have nothing against placing the shield in Romania or Bulgaria," the adviser of President Basescu said.

X. RUSSIA

1.

Putin reveals future of Russian energy market

24.02.2010, RIA NOVOSTI

READ MORE: <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20100224/157985199.html>

Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin signed a resolution on Wednesday setting out the principles of the work of the country's long-term energy market. Speaking in East Siberia at a meeting on energy investment, Putin said that energy companies would be guaranteed conditions for stable and profitable work. However, he also pointed out that the guarantee came with certain conditions.

2.

New protest against prices in Russia

22.02.2010, Hurriyet Daily News

READ MORE: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=new-protest-against-prices-in-russia-2010-02-22>

More than 1,500 people took to the streets Sunday in Russia's north to protest living costs - the first of a new series of challenges to the Kremlin in coming weeks, organizers said. Despite freezing temperatures, protesters gathered in the port of Arkhangelsk to decry increasing prices. Some called for Prime Minister Vladimir Putin to step down, said a member of an opposition movement that helped organize the protest.

3.

Russia receives Afghanistan's bid for weapons supplies

19.02.2010, Itar Tass

READ MORE: <http://www.itar-tass.com/eng/level2.html?NewsID=14844901&PageNum=0>

Russia received Afghanistan's bid for the supplies of weapons and military hardware and is considering the bid, Russian Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov told a press conference after the negotiations with his Finnish counterpart Jyri Hakamies on Friday.

4.

Strasbourg Court fines Russia for disappearances in Chechnya

19.02.2010, Caucasian Knot

READ MORE: <http://rf.eng.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/12543/>

The Russian Federation has lost two more cases at the European Court on Human Rights (ECtHR) on complaints of residents of Chechnya on disappearances of their relatives. The statement of the ECtHR prescribes that Moscow shall pay out 120,000 to the applicants, plus legal costs.

5.

Kumyks stage protest in Dagestan

17.02.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/content/Kumyks_Stage_Protest_In_Dagestan/1960893.html

Just eight days after Russian President Dmitry Medvedev named Magomedsalam Magomedov to succeed Mukhu Aliyev as president of Dagestan, that republic's third-largest ethnic group has taken to the streets to protest the violation of the unwritten agreement on the distribution between the various nationalities of the three top leadership posts.

XI. TURKEY

1.

Turkey arrests military officers in alleged 2003 plot

23.02.2010, Wall Street Journal

READ MORE:

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703494404575081721745445404.html?mod=WSJEUROPE_hpp_MIDDLESecondNews

Turkish anti-terrorism police Monday arrested more than a dozen senior retired and serving military officers in a sweep linked to a massive case against the country's so-called "deep state," which for

decades wielded power over elected governments. Chief of the General Staff, Ilker Basbug, delayed a visit to Egypt in response to the arrests, according to Turkish news-agency reports.

2.

Iraq-Turkey railway link re-opens

16.02.2010, BBC

READ MORE: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/8518109.stm

The first train service in decades has set off from northern Iraq to Turkey. Both countries hope the re-opening of the historic rail link will contribute to the fast-growing trade between them. Germany began building the Berlin to Baghdad railway a century ago, hoping to open a route through Turkey to the Gulf. It took three decades to finish.

XII. TURKEY-ARMENIA

1.

Armenian oppositionist expects Turkey-Armenia pacts to pass committee

19.02.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE:

http://www.rferl.org/content/Armenian_Oppositionist_Expects_TurkeyArmenia_Pacts_To_Pass_Committee/1963221.html

A senior member of the opposition Armenian Revolutionary Federation--Dashnaktsutyun (HHD) expects the parliamentary committee he chairs to approve the protocols signed between Armenia and Turkey in October, RFE/RL's Armenian Service reports. Armen Rustamian said in Yerevan on February 18 that "as things stand now" -- with the Foreign Relations Committee dominated by progovernment lawmakers, including representatives of President Serzh Sarkisian's Republican Party -- the committee is likely to vote in favor of the protocols.

XIII. UKRAINE

1.

Ukrainian authorities hindering cargo transportation of Russian Black Sea Fleet

23.02.2010, Kyiv Post

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/60236/>

The Ukrainian police are hindering the transportation of special freight of the Russia Black Sea Fleet, which is based in Sevastopol, an official representative of the Black Sea Fleet told Interfax on Saturday. "There is a problem with the freedom of cargo transportation around Sevastopol and beyond the city. This issue must be urgently resolved, as it influences the fleet's battle readiness and its daily activities," the fleet's representative said.

2.

Ukraine to join customs union with Russia

18.02.2010, Euractiv

READ MORE: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/east-mediterranean/moscow-daily-ukraine-join-customs-union-russia-news-260388>

Ukrainian President-elect Viktor Yanukovich is prepared to start talks on his country's entry into a customs union with Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan, a Russian business daily reported on 17 February.

3.

Timoshenko is not resigning premiership

16.02.2010, Itar Tass

READ MORE: <http://www.itar-tass.com/eng/level2.html?NewsID=14829188&PageNum=1>

Yulia Tymoshenko is not going to resign the position of Ukraine's prime minister, parliament deputy Roman Zvarych said at a meeting with Our Ukraine – People's Self-Defense bloc on Tuesday. "We have heard from the prime minister that she is not going to resign the post," he said. He quoted her as saying that "the presidential election has nothing to do with the parliament or with the situation in the government."

4.

Yanukovich yet to decide on possible South Ossetia recognition

15.02.2010, Kyiv Post

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/59549/>

Ukrainian President-Elect Victor Yanukovich will be cautious about possible recognition of independent South Ossetia, Chairman of the State Duma International Affairs Committee Konstantin Kosachyov said on Feb. 15. He is paying a working visit to Tskhinvali. "We realize that election campaigns always differ from real politics," he said in answer to the question whether Ukraine might recognize South Ossetia.

XIV. EASTERN PARTNERSHIP

1.

EU issues call for proposals for EAST-INVEST project for Eastern Partnership countries

21.02.2010, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/capital/macro/1642902.html>

The European Commission has issued a call for proposals for new regional investment and trade facilitation project EAST-INVEST for Eastern Partnership countries, Interfax-Ukraine reported according to the press service of the Delegation of the European Union to Ukraine. EAST-INVEST with a budget of EUR 7 million is intended to contribute to the economic development of the Eastern Neighborhood region and to the improvement of its business environment by facilitating networks between EU and Eastern Neighborhood region public and private organizations.

2.

EU ambassador: Eastern Partnership to help Azerbaijan solve more than economic issues

18.02.2010, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/news/politics/foreign/1641464.html>

EU Ambassador to Azerbaijan Roland Kobia believes that the Eastern Partnership Program will bring to Azerbaijan not only economic benefits, but also will help start a dialogue with its neighbors, which is a key aspect of solving any conflict. "The best way of solving any conflict is the willingness to negotiate with opponents. The Eastern Partnership contributes to this dialogue," Kobia said at the debates organized at the Center for Strategic Studies.

XV. ENERGY

1.

Transgaz's interest to South Stream does not afraid Nabucco

24.02.2010, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/capital/pengineering/1644477.html>

Possible joining of Romanian company Transgaz, which is one of six shareholders of the Nabucco Gas Pipeline International consortium, to the South Stream gas pipeline project does not impacts the Nabucco project, believes Christian Dolezal, representative of international projects and Nabucco at the OMV company, operating the project.

2.

Show me the rubles: Putin, Papandreou push pipelines

21.02.2010, New Europe

READ MORE: <http://www.neurope.eu/articles/99147.php>

When Greece and Russia were making plans for Burgas-Alexandroupolis they forgot to tell the Bulgarians. The Bulgarian government has repeatedly said it would not take position on the oil pipeline project at all until a qualitative Environmental Impact Assessment is made. Now no documents on this issue have been tabled so far, they said. Sofia's attitude is perceived as one of delay. "The new government in Bulgaria was not so quick or not so friendly in terms of its public comments.

3.

Gazprom's South Stream: Romania in, Bulgaria out?

19.02.2010, Euractiv

READ MORE: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/energy/gazprom-s-south-stream-romania-bulgaria-out-news-263855>

Bucharest has given Russian gas monopoly Gazprom all the documentation relevant for building the South Stream pipeline through Romanian territory, it was announced yesterday (18 February). The move appears to give flesh to a recent Russian threat to eliminate Bulgaria from the project. Bulgaria is key to the planned Gazprom-ENI South Steam gas pipeline project, which would run from the Black Sea's Northern Caucasus shore to the Bulgarian port city of Varna. The South Stream project is seen as a rival to Nabucco and its commissioning term is also nearly identical to the EU-favoured project.

4.

Ashgabat lobbies for energy security

18.02.2010, UPI

READ MORE: http://www.upi.com/Science_News/Resource-Wars/2010/02/18/Ashgabat-lobbies-for-energy-security/UPI-22261266506681/

Turkmenistan is working on developing an international mechanism to secure the global infrastructure for oil and gas, the government said Thursday. The European energy sector was upended in 2009 when Russian energy monopoly Gazprom cut gas supplies to Ukraine because of contract disputes. Europe gets around 20 percent of its gas from Russia, though 80 percent of that travels through Soviet-era pipelines in Ukraine.

XVI. EUROPEAN UNION

1.

Lavrov, Ashton to discuss prep' of RF-EU new accord

24.02.2010, Itar-Tass

READ MORE: <http://www.itar-tass.com/eng/level2.html?NewsID=14853605&PageNum=0>

Sergei Lavrov, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Catherine Ashton, the European Union (EU) High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, meet here on Wednesday to discuss the preparation of a new basic agreement between Russia and the EU, as well as prospects for the abrogation of visas. This will be the EU High Representative's first visit to the Russian capital.

2.

Europe aims to cut 60 billion euros of oil, gas imports

23.02.2010, Reuters

READ MORE: <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE61M3XJ20100223>

The European Union's energy strategy could cut a total 60 billion euros (\$81.5 billion) off the bloc's oil and gas imports over the next decade, a leaked document from the EU executive shows.

3.

EU ponders "what to offer" to Ukraine

22.02.2010, Euractiv

READ MORE: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/east-mediterranean/eu-ponders-what-offer-ukraine-news-275127>

EU foreign affairs ministers will discuss today (22 February) in Brussels "what to offer" to Ukraine, as the country's new president-elect, Viktor Yanukovich, appears to be considering moving towards a customs union with Russia. Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan agreed in June 2009 to form a customs bloc and seek joint accession to the WTO. The move was opposed by the European Union and the United States. WTO officials warned that the joint bid would delay Russia's own WTO bid.

4.

Spanish EU presidency to push Turkish accession bid

22.02.2010, EU Business

READ MORE: <http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/turkey-spain.2tn>

Spain on Monday said it hopes to advance Turkey's bid to join the European Union during its six-month presidency of the bloc by opening the "maximum number" of policy chapters. "Spain is firmly on the side of Turkey's entry into the European Union," Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero told a joint news conference with his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

5.

EUBAM inaugurates office in Chisinau

19.02.2010, Euro Dialogue

READ MORE: <http://eurodialogue.org/EUBAM-inaugurates-office-inChisinau>

The EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM) opened a field office in Chisinau in order to better assist Moldova's Customs Service and Border Guard Service in securing the border and facilitating trade and contacts over the Moldovan-Ukrainian border. "The new field office shows the mission's readiness to support our partners in their efforts to ensure border and customs services of a high quality," EUBAM Acting Head Udo Burkholder told a news conference held to open the office on February 4.

XVII. PROTRACTED CONFLICTS

1.

Is South Ossetia on the verge of an internal conflict?

22.02.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE:

http://www.rferl.org/content/Is_South_Ossetia_On_The_Verge_Of_An_Internal_Conflict/1965273.html

The Coordinating Council of Social and Political Organizations of South Ossetia has released a statement warning that tensions within the unrecognized republic are increasing and could lead to an armed conflict. The Russian agency Regnum posted the statement on February 20. The statement accuses the republic's leadership under Eduard Kokoity of having failed totally to comply with plans for the reconstruction of homes and other infrastructure destroyed during the August 2008 war.

2.

Nagorno-Karabakh forces "committed" to cease-fire

20.02.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE:

http://www.rferl.org/content/NagornoKarabakh_Forces_Committed_To_CeaseFire/1963820.html

Military officials in Nagorno-Karabakh have denied violating a cease-fire following a report of casualties by Azerbaijan on February 18, RFE/RL's Armenian Service reports. Military spokesman

Senor Hasratian said on February 19 that Stepanakert remains committed to the cease-fire regime along the line of contact with Azerbaijani armed forces.

3.

Russians to stay in Moldova region until final deal reached

19.02.2010, Today's Zaman

READ MORE: <http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/detaylar.do?load=detay&link=201914>

The leader of a separatist region in Moldova said Moscow has given him assurances that Russian troops will stay in the region until a final solution is reached in a 20-year-old dispute in the former Soviet republic.

4.

Three Azerbaijani soldiers killed near Nagorno-Karabakh

18.02.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE:

http://www.rferl.org/content/Three_Azerbaijani_Soldiers_Killed_Near_NagornoKarabakh/1962175.html

Three Azerbaijani soldiers were killed today after exchanging fire with Armenian armed forces near the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region, RFE/RL's Azerbaijani Service reports. Azerbaijan's Defense Ministry confirmed the deaths and said another soldier was wounded as a result of the shooting, which is a violation of a ceasefire agreement between the two forces.

5.

OSCE is for withdrawing snipers from the Armenian-Azerbaijani contact line

16.02.2010, BSANNA News

READ MORE: <http://bsanna-news.ukrinform.ua/newsitem.php?id=12361&lang=en>

OSCE is for withdrawing snipers from the Armenian-Azerbaijani contact line, Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan, OSCE Chairman-in-Office Kanat Saudabayev said today at a joint press conference with his Armenian counterpart Edward Nalbandyan, adding that they defend any step which is directed toward establishment of peace.

6.

Ingushetia operation against militants "kills 20"

12.02.2010, BBC

READ MORE: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8512367.stm>

At least 20 insurgents have been killed in an operation by Russian security forces in the restive republic of Ingushetia, officials say. Fighting erupted after troops surrounded a group of militants in a mountain forest near Chechnya's border. Russia's interior and defence ministries and the Federal Security Service launched the sweep on Thursday.

XVIII. SECURITY

1.

Clinton urges closer cooperation between NATO and Russia

23.02.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE:

http://www.rferl.org/content/Clinton_Urges_Closer_Cooperation_Between_NATO_And_Russia/1965571.html

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has said Russia and NATO should cooperate more closely to combat growing transnational threats like nuclear proliferation, terrorism, piracy, and cyber security. In a speech late on February 22 in Washington on the future of the trans-Atlantic military alliance, Clinton rejected Moscow's push a new European security treaty -- which Washington believes would

reduce NATO's influence around the world -- and proposed instead that Russia move closer to NATO.

2.

Saakashvili bigger threat in Black Sea than Mistral ship – Rogozin

19.02.2010, RIA NOVOSTI

READ MORE: <http://en.rian.ru/world/20100219/157947267.html>

Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili is a greater threat to security in the Black Sea region than the Mistral-class helicopter carrier Russia intends to buy from France, Moscow's envoy to NATO said on Friday. "The real threat in the Black Sea basin is no longer the notorious Mistral that Russia might buy, but Saakashvili himself," Dmitry Rogozin told RIA Novosti on Friday.

3.

Romania, Moldova start talks on U.S. anti-missile shield plans

18.02.2010, Global Security

READ MORE: <http://www.globalsecurity.org/space/library/news/2010/space-100218-rianovosti02.htm>

Romania and Moldova began bilateral talks on U.S. missile defense plans in Europe in the Moldavian capital on Thursday, Moldova's Foreign Minister said. Romanian President Traian Basescu said last week his country could host U.S. medium-range interceptor missiles as part of revamped shield after U.S. President Barack Obama scrapped Bush administration plans for a radar and interceptor missiles in the Czech Republic and Poland last year.

4.

OSCE Chairperson meets Armenian leadership, says dialogue between neighbours key to peaceful settlement, stability

16.02.2010, OSCE Press Release

READ MORE: <http://www.osce.org/item/42732.html>

The OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Secretary of State and Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan Kanat Saudabayev, during his visit to Armenia today emphasized the importance of building trust between the sides of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and praised steps towards normalization of relations with Turkey.

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