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I. ALBANIA

1.

Political deadlock could hurt Albania bid: EU

28.03.2010, New Europe

READ MORE: <http://www.neurope.eu/articles/100011.php>

A senior European Union official urged Albanian political parties to resolve their political impasse which might endanger the country's EU membership bid, AENews reported. Albanian opposition Socialists say they will resume street protests unless parliament investigates allegations of fraud in general elections last June, and orders a partial re-count if required. Conservative Prime Minister Sali Berisha has ruled out a re-count. EU Enlargement Commissioner Stefan Fuele urged Albanian political leaders Friday to resolve the stalemate swiftly.

2.

Albania parties struggle to resolve poll crisis

24.03.2010, Hurriyet Daily

READ MORE: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=albania-parties-struggle-to-resolve-crisis-2010-03-24>

A new offer made by Prime Minister Sali Berisha over the ongoing dispute over the parliamentary elections has been rejected by the opposition, the Balkan Insight reported Tuesday on its Web page. The Socialist Party rejected on Tuesday a proposal from Berisha that a group of 100 prosecutors be formed to carry out the investigation of the June 28 parliamentary elections, which have been harshly contested by the Socialist opposition as marred by fraud.

3.

Albania, Serbia sign MoU

21.03.2010, New Europe

READ MORE: <http://www.neurope.eu/articles/99863.php>

Albanian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ilir Meta recently paid visit to Serbia. The visit took place on the invitation of Albanian Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia, Vuk Jeremic, AENews reported. The official visit of Meta in Belgrade, is a clear sign of the priority that the Albanian foreign policy gives to the development and to the strengthening of relations with the countries of the region, as part of the acceleration of the European perspective for our countries.

4.

OSCE Chairperson's Special envoy calls for increased efforts to resolve political impasse during visit to Tirana

15.03.2010, OSCE

READ MORE: <http://www.osce.org/item/43079.html>

Overcoming the political impasse is crucial for Albania to continue making progress in implementing its ambitious reform agenda, the Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Kazakhstan's Deputy Foreign Minister Konstantin Zhigalov, said today during a visit to Tirana.

II. ARMENIA

1.

IMF completes 3rd review under stand-by arrangement for Armenia, approves \$73.6 million disbursement

30.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44930>

The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) completed the third review of Armenia's economic performance under a program supported by a Stand-By Arrangement (SBA). The decision enables the immediate release of an amount equivalent to SDR 48.485 million (about

US\$73.6 million), bringing total disbursements so far an amount equivalent to SDR 350.425 million (about US\$532.2 million), the IMF said in a press release.

2.

Madrid Principles were adopted by Armenia as basis for talks two years ago

29.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44928>

Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs Edward Nalbandian met Monday with the Co-chairs of OSCE Minsk Group, Ambassadors Yuri Merzlyakov (Russia), Bernard Fassier (France) and Robert Bradtke (U.S.). The meeting was attended by a Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office Ambassador Andrzej Kasprzyk. At the beginning of the meeting the Foreign Minister of Armenia expressed condolences to the Russian mediator in connection with the explosions in the Moscow metro. The officials discussed latest developments in Karabakh talks and the possibility of rapprochement of the conflicting parties on the basis of Madrid Principles.

3.

OSCE MG co-chair: Armenia does not agree with updated Madrid principles' some points

29.03.2010, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/regions/scaucasus/armenia/1659622.html>

Armenia does not agree with some points of the updated Madrid principles, Russian co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group (MG) Yuri Merzlyakov was quoted as saying by the Armenia Today news agency. He said presently, recent suggestions made by the co-chairs are under consideration. Armenia has already expressed its disagreement on some points. "However, we do not exacerbate the situation, since a couple of years ago the same situation emerged in respect of the Madrid principles, which Armenia has accepted, but now appears not completely," he stressed. The co-chair also noted that the parties reached an agreement on the Madrid principles, except upon the four points.

4.

Armenia, Ukraine FMs meet on the sidelines of the CIS Ministerial

27.03.2010, Arm Radio

READ MORE: <http://www.armradio.am/news/?part=off&id=17121>

On March 26 the Foreign Minister of Armenia, Edward Nalbandian, participated in the recurrent sitting of the CIS Foreign Ministers in Moscow. The agenda of the sitting included more than twenty issues related to CIS activity - the implementation of the CIS development doctrine, promotion of cooperation in the humanitarian field, cooperation in the spheres of security and migration policy, intensification of cooperation between law-enforcement bodies, etc. Edward Nalbandian had a meeting with the newly appointed Foreign Minister of Ukraine Konstantin Grishenko.

5.

ADB to extend USD300 million to Armenia

26.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44813>

Yerevan Mayor Gagik Beglaryan met with Asian Development Bank delegation (ABD), Mayor's office reported. In June, ADB board plans to consider the issue of USD300 million crediting for Armenia. The funds will be allocated to large-scale subway construction works, and renewal of city transport. Specifically, USD85 million will be allocated to the construction of new subway entrance at Yeritasardakan station.

6.

WB to provide 35-40 million USD loan for road construction in Armenia

25.03.2010, Bsanna News

READ MORE: <http://bsanna-news.ukrinform.ua/newsitem.php?id=12688&lang=en>

Armenian Transport and Communication Minister Manuk Vardanyan received today director of the

Armenian Office of the World Bank Aristomene Varudakis, responsible for the transport programs in the South Caucasus Olivier l'Berry and other representatives of the bank. Transport and Communication Ministry press secretary Susanna Tonoyan told Armenpress that welcoming the guests the minister noted that the "Renovation of Roads of Vital Importance" program implemented by the World Bank has a crucial importance for the development of our country and increase of the living level of the population. M. Vardanyan highlighted also the programs implemented collaboratively by the World Bank and Asian Development Bank.

7.

EDB to establish branch in Yerevan

23.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44589>

The Eurasian Development Bank (EDB) will establish a branch in Yerevan in the near future in compliance with the decision taken by the RA government on March 11, 2010. "Presently, a relevant agreement is under discussion," deputy chairman of the EDB board of directors Gennady Zhuzhlev told a PanARMENIAN.Net reporter.

8.

Armenian politicians divided over council of Europe criticism

23.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/content/Armenian_Politicians_Divided_Over_Council_Of_Europe_Criticism/1991904.html

Senior pro-government Armenian lawmakers have offered differing assessments of the latest Council of Europe report criticizing an official probe into 2008 postelection violence, RFE/RL's Armenian Service reports. In the report, released on March 19, the council's Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) expressed concern about the reported ill treatment of dozens of opposition members arrested following the February 2008 presidential election. It said the authorities must make clear to security bodies that illegal practices "will be dealt with severely in the form of criminal prosecution."

9.

Armenia reports mounting economic growth

23.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/content/Armenia_Reports_Mounting_Economic_Growth/1991880.html

Armenia's economic recovery accelerated in February, with Gross Domestic Product increasing 3.1 percent year-on-year for the first two months of this year, RFE/RL's Armenian Service reports. That is up from 2.4 percent in January, as registered by the National Statistical Service (NSS) in January.

10.

EBRD provides Ameriabank with new \$ 10 million credit line

22.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44543>

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development EBRD provides Ameriabank with a new credit line for on-lending to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the amount of \$ 10 million, press office of the Bank reported.

11.

RA representative to CoE signs a number of protocols

22.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44531>

Armenia's permanent representative to the Council of Europe Zohrab Mnatsakanyan signed protocols to the European Charter of Local Self-Government and to European Framework Convention of Cross-Border Cooperation between Communities and Local Authorities. The

documents were signed during Yerevan Mayor Gagik Beglaryan's visit to Strasburg. Mr. Belgaryan's agenda also included a meeting with CoE Deputy Secretary General Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, RA MFA press office reported.

12.

EBRD to help rehabilitate Armenian transport

21.03.2010, New Europe

READ MORE: <http://www.neurope.eu/articles/99896.php>

Armenian Finance Minister Tigran Davtian recently signed a relevant agreement with the head of the Yerevan office of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). The agreement envisages that EBRD will allot €15 million to the Armenian government.

13.

Armenian economy slowly recovering

19.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44464>

Armenia's GDP volume increased by 3,1% in January-February 2010, compared with 2009, to comprise AMD 321,7 billion. According to RA National Statistic Service data, monthly increase in GDP volume amounts to 15,2%. 1,2% economic growth is stipulated in Armenia's budget for 2010.

14.

Shengen visa reception process facilitated for Armenian citizen

18.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44414>

After the commencement of July 13, 2009 resolution /EG/810/2009/ on new visa code of European community, European parliament and EC, to receive Shengen visa, starting April 5, 2010 Armenian citizens should submit 10 year validity passport with 2 free pages. The requirements above is also extend to foreigners, RA Foreign Ministry press service reported.

15.

Council of Europe wants Armenian election reforms by 2011

18.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/content/Council_of_Europe_Wants_Armenian_Election_Reforms_By_2011/1987256.html

The Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) has agreed to give Armenia until the end of this year to reform its electoral system, RFE/RL's Armenian Service reports. The Armenian government presented a timeline of reforms to PACE in Paris on March 17 and pledged to reform their electoral system by the end of 2010.

16.

Armenian economy not threatened with second wave of crisis

17.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44307>

Armenian economy is not threatened with the second wave of crisis, being on its way towards overcoming the downfall, according to economist Gagik Vardanyan. The expert characterized 1.2% economic growth index stipulated in state budget as a feasible figure, allowing for a possibility of 2-3% growth.

17.

Arman Melikian: in political terms Armenia needs radical changes

16.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44255>

Recently the Karabakh conflict settlement intensified due to external factors, NKR ex-minister of

foreign affairs Arman Melikyan told a news conference in Yerevan. According to Melikyan, since 2008 the Armenian authorities have not adopted a new policy on the Karabakh conflict and the negotiations continued the same way, like during the previous two presidents.

18.

Yerevan to host conference on "Armenia 2010" Armenia-NATO exercises

16.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44237>

Yerevan will host a conference between March 16 and 18 dedicated to Armenia - NATO exercises "Armenia 2010" in the framework of "Partnership for Peace". Official opening of the conference will be held on March 17. On the same day a Memorandum of Understanding will be signed between the RA ministry of emergency situations and the Euro-Atlantic Center for coordination of disaster response of the North Atlantic Treaty organization to conduct exercises. The event is aimed to refine organizational issues for international exercises "Armenia 2010" to be held between September 11 and 17, 2010 in the Kotayk region of Armenia.

19.

Armenian Community may not join peace talks'

16.03.2010 Bsanna News

READ MORE: <http://bsanna-news.ukrinform.ua/newsitem.php?id=12591&lang=en>

The Armenian community of Nagorno-Karabakh may not join peace talks, said Goran Lennmarker, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's special representative for the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. "There is the format of negotiations within the OSCE Minsk Group and the process must be continued on its basis.

20.

Germany to assign 117.5 euro for Armenian economy development

16.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44225>

Armenian Finance Minister Tigran Davtyan and German Ambassador to Armenia Hans-Jochen Schmidt are expected to sign an agreement on financial cooperation, the Embassy's press center said. According to the report, the funds will be spend for the welfare of the Armenian people and development of economy. The agreement envisages allocation of 105.5 million euro during the year of 2010. Besides, 12 million euro will be assigned in the framework of Caucasus Initiative.

II. AZERBAIJAN

1.

Tension between Azerbaijan and Armenia grows

29.03.2010, Today's Zaman

READ MORE: <http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/detaylar.do?load=detay&link=205730>

Tensions rose between Armenia and Azerbaijan yet again after the Armenian army shot and killed two Azerbaijani soldiers over the past 24 hours. Peace negotiations to find a lasting solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh problem have significantly damaged, with Azerbaijan having repeatedly vowed this month to use a military strike against Armenia. According to the Azerbaijani Ministry of Defense, the Armenian side shot dead one Azerbaijani soldier in the half-occupied Ağdam province on Sunday, infringing a cease-fire between the two countries. Another Azerbaijani soldier was shot and killed by the Armenian army in bordering Beylegan province.

2.

Azerbaijan-Romania ties reach a strategic level

28.03.2010, New Europe

READ MORE: <http://www.neurope.eu/articles/100035.php>

Azerbaijani Parliament Speaker Ogtay Asadov during recent talks with Romanian Foreign Minister Teodor Baconschi said that bilateral relations between Azerbaijan and Romania have reached the level of strategic partnership. The documents signed by the heads of both countries have created a solid legal basis for further development of ties between Azerbaijan and Romania, Trend news agency reported. Citing the role of parliaments in boosting ties, Asadov said that Azerbaijani and Romanian MPs enjoy common views on international events.

3.

Azerbaijan may face energy crisis, says World Bank

28.03.2010, New Europe

READ MORE: <http://www.neurope.eu/articles/100033.php>

Despite the current role of Central Asia as a major energy supplier for Western and Eastern Europe, World Bank under the Energy Outlook for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, forecast that Eastern Europe and Central Asia may soon face energy crisis, Trend news agency reported. If investments of more than €3 trillion are not made within next 20 years then Azerbaijan might face the energy crisis.

4.

Azerbaijani FM: Armenian president silent about updated Madrid Principles

23.03.2010, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/news/karabakh/1658076.html>

The uncensored rhetoric spread by political representatives in the Armenian media is surprising and disappointing because they try to misquote the position and comments of the Azerbaijani side, the Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry spokesman Elkhan Polukhov told Trend News on Saturday. "Voicing the call for concluding a treaty on the non-use of force, the Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan shamefully keeps silent about the first part of the phrase that is organically included in the updated Madrid Principles, which is respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan," Polukhov said. He said that the Azerbaijani side has spoken only about the part of the Madrid Principles, which the Armenian president refused to talk about.

5.

IMF supports CBA to maintain stable exchange rate

21.03.2010, New Europe

READ MORE: <http://www.neurope.eu/articles/99888.php>

During a recent visit to Baku, head of the IMF mission to Azerbaijan Nienke Oomes had a final meeting with the chairman of the Central Bank of Azerbaijan (CBA) Elman Rustamov, Trend news agency reported. In the course of talks, Oomes said that the global financial crisis was least effective on the economy of Azerbaijan. She commended the authorities for responding to the crisis successfully. Appreciating the anti-crisis activities of the Central Bank, Oomes said, Preservation of the stable exchange rate and ensure of the liquidity of the banking sector has allowed the Central Bank to ensure the country's financial stability.

6.

Romania 'keen' to expand cooperation with Azerbaijan

19.03.2010, Bsanna News

READ MORE: <http://bsanna-news.ukrinform.ua/newsitem.php?id=12639&lang=en>

Romania's foreign minister Teodor Baconschi has expressed his country's keenness to broaden cooperation with Azerbaijan. Baconschi spoke to a press conference following a meeting with his Azeri counterpart Elmar Mammadyarov as part of his Baku visit. "We, in particular, want to expand political and economic cooperation." Baconschi stressed the need to increase the bilateral trade. "Today trade between Azerbaijan and Romania falls behind our potential. Romania is interested in expanding the scope of its business in Azerbaijan."

7.

Azerbaijani FM: If Armenia accepts updated Madrid principles, it will be possible to work on peace agreement

18.03.2010, Trend News

[READ MORE:](#)

In order to solve the most important problem on the negotiating table it is necessary to withdraw Armenian troops from occupied Azerbaijani territories and return of IDPs there, Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov said at a joint press conference with Romanian Foreign Minister Teodor Baconsky. He said Baku hasn't received information from the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs on Yerevan's position regarding the updated variant of Madrid principles, offered to Armenia by the co-chairs.

8.

Romanian FM: Romania stands for stability and security in Black Sea and Caspian basins

18.03.2010, Trend News

[READ MORE: http://en.trend.az/news/politics/foreign/1656252.html](http://en.trend.az/news/politics/foreign/1656252.html)

Romania stands for stability and security in the Black Sea and Caspian basins, Romanian Foreign Minister Teodor Baconsky said in Baku today. Development of a strategic partnership with Azerbaijan is a priority for Romania, Romanian Foreign Minister said at a briefing after the talks with his Azerbaijani counterpart Elmar Mammadyarov.

9.

Azerbaijan wrecks OSCE monitoring

16.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

[READ MORE: http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44264](http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44264)

On March 16 the OSCE mission had to conduct scheduled monitoring of the NKR and Azerbaijani armed forces' contact-line in the Askeran direction according to the earlier achieved agreement with the Nagorno Karabakh Republic authorities. However, the monitoring was wrecked by Azerbaijan, which didn't lead the OSCE Mission members to the earlier agreed monitoring site. Earlier, the Karabakh party three times urged to hold monitoring just in this section of the contact-line, where gross violations of the cease-fire regime by the Azerbaijani armed forces had repeatedly taken place, NKR MFA press office reported.

10.

Azerbaijani Foreign Minister discloses details of 'Madrid Principles'

15.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

[READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/content/Azerbaijani_Foreign_Minister_Discloses_Details_Of_Madrid_Principles/1984485.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/Azerbaijani_Foreign_Minister_Discloses_Details_Of_Madrid_Principles/1984485.html)

Speaking at a press conference in Baku on March 15, Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov disclosed details of the most recent draft of the so-called Madrid Principles for resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The original Madrid Principles were presented by the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs to the Armenian and Azerbaijani foreign ministers in November 2007; they were updated last year at the urging of the presidents of France, Russia, and the United States, the three countries that jointly co-chair the Minsk Group. According to Mammadyarov, the most recent draft of the Madrid Principles envisages a phased, rather than a package solution to the conflict.

11.

EU, Azerbaijan to begin talks on association agreement

14.03.2010, New Europe

[READ MORE: http://www.neurope.eu/articles/99723.php](http://www.neurope.eu/articles/99723.php)

Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and Foreign Affairs Minister Elmar Mammadyarov recently

welcomed Miguel Angel Moratinos, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain, Trend news agency reported. Moratinos currently holds the European Union's rotating presidency. Moratinos' visit is EU's move to the South Caucasus region including Baku. Moratinos said the topic discussed was Association Agreement between the EU and Azerbaijan and this month official negotiations on the agreement would also begin. We are working over to demonstrate openly EU's interest to Azerbaijan, said Moratinos.

III. BULGARIA

1.

Bulgaria, Romania still failing EU on courts, crime reforms

28.03.2010, New Europe

READ MORE: <http://www.neurope.eu/articles/99977.php>

The sceptics who thought Bulgaria and Romania weren't ready to join the European Union in 2007 will find ammunition for that in a European Commission report which found that three years later, the two countries still have not met the bloc's standards for fighting corruption and organized crime. They were admitted into the EU in 2007 on the condition of being subjected to an unprecedented Cooperation and Verification Mechanism (CVM,) which was supposed to track reform efforts in weak areas identified by the Commission. But in its latest assessments, the EU executive highlighted the continuously poor results of the (Bulgarian) judicial system to investigate, prosecute and try cases of high-level corruption and organized crime.

2.

Bulgaria seeks Brussels' approval for re-directing EUR 1 Bln from operational programmes to road repairs

22.03.2010, Bsanna News

READ MORE: <http://bsanna-news.ukrinform.ua/newsitem.php?id=12655&lang=en>

Bulgaria plans to seek Brussels' approval for re-directing 1 billion euro from the EU-funded operational programmes (OPs) to road repairs, Regional Development and Public Works Minister Rosen Plevneliev said here Monday. He was speaking to the press after meeting with the Sofia-based EU ambassadors. The government is yet to make a final decision about that, the new government minister in charge of the EU funds is working on the matter, all competent ministries and OP managing authorities will analyze the fund absorption rate and see where and how much could be taken and rechannelled to the road repairs programme, Plevneliev explained.

3.

Bulgaria may mull Turkey's Armenian genocide

21.03.2010, New Europe

READ MORE: <http://www.neurope.eu/articles/99854.php>

First it was a US Congressional committee which passed a resolution declaring the killing of up to 1.5 million Armenians by Turks a century ago as genocide, drawing immediate rebukes from Ankara. Then earlier this month the Swedish Parliament did too by one vote, further angering Turkey. Now Bulgaria may join the ranks of condemnation. The country's conservative Order, Law, and Justice (RZS) party has submitted to Parliament an official declaration asking that Bulgaria declare the killings a genocide. The proposed resolution was in connection with the visit of Turkish Foreign Minister, Ahmet Davutoglu to Bulgaria and statements of Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan that the country is prepared to deport 100,000 Armenians from Turkey.

4.

Belgian company invests in Bulgarian biofuels plant

21.03.2010, New Europe

READ MORE: <http://www.neurope.eu/articles/99822.php>

Belgian company 4Energy Invest would be completing the construction of a new plant for biofuels production in Bulgaria's southern city of Kardzhali by the end of 2010, CEO of the company Yves Crits, recently announced. 4Energy Invest specialises in renewable energy by creating and managing a portfolio of small to middle-sized locally embedded projects that transform biomass into energy.

5.

Bulgaria sends a corrupt official to jail, sets up EU funds control

21.03.2010, New Europe

READ MORE: <http://www.neurope.eu/articles/99852.php>

Still hampered with a reputation for fierce corruption, Bulgaria has been cracking down hard recently, setting up a system to monitor where European Union funding goes and now with the sentencing of the former head of the state's agriculture fund to four years in prison for stealing millions of euros of EU money. In the first high-profile verdict of a public official, Asen Drumev was found guilty of signing harmful contracts to embezzle 48 million Bulgarian leva (25.13 million euros) from the funds the EU had earmarked to help Bulgarian agriculture.

5.

Bulgaria sets 2011 as Nabucco date

19.03.2010, UPI

READ MORE: http://www.upi.com/Science_News/Resource-Wars/2010/03/19/Bulgaria-sets-2011-as-Nabucco-date/UPI-91131269008883/

The Bulgarian section of the Nabucco natural gas pipeline for Europe is scheduled for completion by the end of 2011, Bulgarian executives said. Europe aims to break the Russian stranglehold on the regional energy sector with the Nabucco pipeline. The project would transfer non-Russian gas through Turkey and on to southern Europe, avoiding politically sensitive territory in Ukraine.

6.

Day one of Turkish Foreign Minister's Visit: Bulgaria and Turkey have many shared interests, no political problems

19.03.2010, Bsanna News

READ MORE: <http://bsanna-news.ukrinform.ua/newsitem.php?id=12640&lang=en>

Speaking at a news conference with Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, Foreign Minister Nickolay Mladenov said that Bulgaria and Turkey have many shared interests, including energy security, energy supplies diversification, cooperation in the Black Sea region and the Balkans. The sides are aware of the exceptional importance of the European perspective of the Western Balkans and of Turkey for the entire region's stabilization and development, Mladenov said. Davutoglu is on a two-day official visit to Bulgaria.

7.

Bulgaria: Energy Minister says some EUR 600 Mln were spent last on Belene N-Plant's site

16.03.2010, Bsanna News

READ MORE: <http://bsanna-news.ukrinform.ua/newsitem.php?id=12590&lang=en>

The documented expenditures on the last "spurt" of construction on the site of the Belene nuclear power plant are about 600 million euro, Economy, Energy and Tourism Minister Traicho Traikov told journalists on Tuesday. Traikov added that it was anybody's guess how much had been spent on this project since the 1980s. Asked who would be called to account for the outlays on the project which never really got off the ground, Traikov said that the authorities ought to find first that an offence had been committed and that the project ran aground.

8.

Bulgaria wins special prize at Moscow's INTOURMARKET 2010

15.03.2010, Bsanna News

READ MORE: <http://bsanna-news.ukrinform.ua/newsitem.php?id=12568&lang=en>

Bulgaria received a special prize at the INTOURMARKET (ITM)-2010 International Trade Fair for Travel and Tourism - one of the world's largest, which opened here on Saturday, the Bulgarian Economy, Energy and Tourism Ministry said in a press release. Bulgaria was distinguished for active participation and support of ITM Moscow. The prize was presented by UN World Tourism Organization Executive Director Zoltan Somogyi.

IV. GEORGIA

1.

Georgian opposition leaders meet with European parliamentary delegation

29.03.2010, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/news/politics/foreign/1659921.html>

Georgian opposition leaders have met today with the head of the delegation of the European Parliament for relations with the countries of the Caucasus Milan Cabrnokh and familiarized him on the political situation in the country. The Alliance for Georgia one of leaders Viktor Dolidze told media that Cabrnokh is a member of the European Parliament, which deals with issues of democracy and reforms. Representatives of the Georgian opposition familiarized him with the situation in Georgia in this direction. The electoral environment in Georgia was also discussed in the meeting,

2.

EBRD allocates € 180 million to Georgia

28.03.2010, New Europe

READ MORE: <http://www.neurope.eu/articles/100041.php>

The European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has allocated €180 million for two grand projects in Georgia. High-rank delegation of the bank led by President Thomas Mirow said that 80 million of the assistance will be spent on the construction 500 kilo-watt power transmission line - the Black Sea High Voltage line, which will interconnect Georgia and Turkey. The project is one of the largest infrastructure investments in Georgia.

3.

Economy may expand 11% in 2011, Saakashvili says

28.03.2010, New Europe

READ MORE: <http://www.neurope.eu/articles/100042.php>

Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili said that his country's economy may expand as much as 11% next year, the fastest pace since before a war with Russia in 2008, Bloomberg reported. He also raised his forecast for 2010 growth to 5% from 3%, as the former Soviet republic is set to emerge from recession.

4.

Saakashvili meets NATO Secretary General

25.03.2010, Civil

READ MORE: <http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=22120>

NATO Secretary General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, said on March 25 he had reiterated to President Saakashvili that the alliance's policy towards Georgia "has not changed". "We will continue to support Georgia in its Euro-Atlantic aspiration," Rasmussen said and reiterated NATO's open-door, merit-based admission policies. Speaking at a joint news conference with Rasmussen after the meeting in Brussels, President Saakashvili has declined to speculate about possible timeframe of Georgia's future membership.

5.

Georgia's foreign trade turnover hits \$815 million

25.03.2010, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/capital/macro/1658612.html>

In January-February 2010, Georgia's foreign trade turnover reached \$815 million. The figure is higher by 9 percent compared to the same period of 2009, the Georgian Statistics Committee (Gruzstat) told Trend Capital. In January-February, the country's export was \$216 million (58 percent increase over the same period of 2009) and import - \$599 million, or 2 percent lower.

6.

Saakashvili to participate in nuclear security summit in Washington

23.03.2010, Civil

READ MORE: <http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=22113>

President Saakashvili will visit the United States next month to take part in an international conference on nuclear security, President's spokesperson said on Tuesday. President Obama will host Nuclear Security Summit in Washington on April 12-13. "An informal meeting between President Obama and President Saakashvili is not ruled out on the sideline of the summit; it will become known during the summit itself," Manana Manjgaladze, the Georgian President's spokesperson, said.

7.

Foreign Ministry: Georgia made significant progress in fulfilling obligations before CE

22.03.2010, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/news/politics/foreign/1657825.html>

Georgia has made significant progress in fulfilling the obligations before Council of Europe, Deputy Foreign Minister Nino Kalandadze said at a press briefing today. She assessed Co-rapporteurs of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) Monitoring Committee Matyas Eorsi and Kastriot Islami's visit to Georgia as an important event, noting that this committee oversees implementation of the obligations. "All of the obligations we have fulfilled, although there are minor shortcomings, to which the Georgian side shows responsibility," Kalandadze said. She said that complete and objective information will be provided during the planned meetings of the co-rapporteurs of the Council of Europe.

8.

Saakashvili intends to discuss Georgia's accession to NATO with Rasmussen

22.03.2010, KyivPost

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/russia/detail/62256/>

Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili intends to visit Brussels on March 25 to take part in the European People's Party congress, Georgian Deputy Foreign Minister Nino Kalandadze told a briefing on Monday. According to her information, leaders of 15 countries plan to take part in the congress. During his visit to Brussels, Saakashvili plans to meet with NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, Kalandadze said. The meeting will address the speeding up of Georgia's accession to NATO.

9.

Ambassador: U.S. provides assistance to Georgia in military sphere in two directions

22.03.2010, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/news/politics/foreign/1657775.html>

The U.S. assistance to Georgia in the military sphere is carried out in two main directions, the U.S. Ambassador to Georgia John Bass said in an interview to Kahetis hma "(Voice of Kakheti) newspaper. "The first direction is training of the battalion, to be sent to Afghanistan to conduct international peacemaking mission. Our marines, who take part in training of Georgian military, believe that the Georgian soldiers are the best and they are ready to become proficient in their profession," the ambassador said. He believes that everyone should trust in the marines, as they trained military men not only in the one region of the world.

10.

PM: Georgia considers opportunities to invest in Ukraine

22.03.2010, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/capital/entrepreneurship/1657772.html>

Georgia considers opportunities to invest in Ukraine. "We are interested in the banking sector and metallurgy in Ukraine," - Prime Minister Nika Gilauri said at a conference of Ukrainian investment companies. According to him, Ukrainian market for investment is attractive. Nika Gilauri also stressed that Georgia is going to keep intensive export-import relations with Ukraine. According to official information, export amounted to 8.6 percent, and import to 10.7 percent in 2008.

11.

Georgia could sign EU visa deal in June

21.03.2010, New Europe

READ MORE: <http://www.neurope.eu/articles/99894.php>

Georgia could sign in June an agreement that would give its citizens easier visa access to the European Union, the bloc's president Herman Van Rompuy said on 16 March. The deal, to be accompanied by a parallel agreement on repatriation of Georgians caught staying illegally on EU territory, would speed up procedures and drop visa prices from €60 to €35. We hope that we can soon fix a date for signature, possibly early June, Van Rompuy said in Brussels after meeting with Georgia's Prime Minister Nika Gilauri.

12.

OSCE pledges to monitor elections in Georgia

21.03.2010, New Europe

READ MORE: <http://www.neurope.eu/articles/99895.php>

During a recent visit to Georgia, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Joao Soares, met with Deputy Chairman of Parliament Gigi Tsereteli and Vice Premier Giorgi Baramidze, the Messenger reported. The issues discussed include Russian-Georgian relations, the occupied regions of Georgia and the forthcoming local elections. In separate talks with Deputy Chairman of Parliament Tsereteli, the OSCE envoy said that the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly may adopt a special resolution on the occupied territories of Georgia at its summer session in Oslo.

13.

Georgia to present state strategy on South Ossetia and Abkhazia to OSCE

19.03.2010, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/news/politics/foreign/1656626.html>

Georgian State Minister for Reintegration Temur Yakobashvili will submit the country's national strategy on South Ossetia and Abkhazia in Vienna to the OSCE headquarters. "We will present our strategy, which has already been successfully tested in the U.N., United States and the EU," minister said. He stressed that both politicians and representatives of academic circles consider this document a sound tool for resolving conflicts.

14.

In EU, Frustration with Georgia now evident

18.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE:

http://www.rferl.org/content/In_EU_Frustration_With_Georgia_Now_Evident/1987346.html

The European Union has fired a warning shot across Georgia's bow, with the president of the European Commission telling Georgia's visiting prime minister that further democratic reforms are essential if Tbilisi's ties with Brussels are to grow closer. The EU has hinted in the past at frustration with Georgia's democratic progress under President Mikheil Saakashvili.

15.

Van Rompuy: EU-Georgia ties 'strengthening rapidly'

17.03.2010, Civil

READ MORE: <http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=22097>

President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, said after meeting with Georgia's PM Nika Gilauri in Brussels on March 16, that relations between EU and Georgia were "strengthening rapidly". He said Georgia was "the only South Caucasus country to have successfully negotiated" visa facilitation and readmission agreements, whose signing and entry into force were now undergoing through EU's internal decision-making procedures. "We hope that we can soon fix a date for signature, possibly early June," he said

16.

Europe sweep nets Georgia mafioso

15.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE:

http://www.rferl.org/content/Europe_Mafia_Sweep_Nets_Georgians_Russians/1984215.html

Authorities in Spain have announced that 69 suspected members of a Georgian organized crime ring have been arrested in a Europe-wide operation. Spanish police said 24 of the suspects were detained in Spain, mainly in Barcelona and Valencia, as part of Operation Java. Other arrests took place in Austria, Germany, Switzerland, France, and Italy. Those arrested are suspected members of a Georgian mafia network accused of money-laundering, extortion, drugs trafficking and possessing weapons. Spanish national radio said the suspects were mostly Georgian and Russian nationals.

17.

High Representative of the union for foreign affairs and security policy, Ms. Catherine Ashton's Declaration on behalf of the EU on the Georgian strategy on Abkhazia and South Ossetia

12.03.2010, EUMM

READ MORE: http://eumm.eu/en/press_and_public_information/features/2040/

The European Union takes note of Georgia's "State Strategy on Occupied Territories: Engagement through Cooperation", endorsed by the Georgian government on 27 January. The EU welcomes Georgia's commitment to solving the conflict only through peaceful means and diplomatic efforts. The EU welcomes the spirit of the initiative as a constructive step towards easing tensions, building confidence and reaching out to the residents of the Abkhaz and South Ossetian regions.

V. GEORGIA-RUSSIA

1.

Russia allows georgian airways charter flights

26.03.2010, Civil

READ MORE: <http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=22122>

Russian Transport Ministry said it had approved a request from the Georgian air carrier to conduct six charter flights to Moscow over Orthodox Easter holidays in April, the Russian news agencies reported on March 26. The Georgian Airways said that it would conduct charter flights on April 1, 2 and 3 and then on April 10, 12 and 14. "Neither the Georgian government, nor any political party was involved in obtaining this permission to conduct the charter flights," Nino Giorgobiani, a spokesperson for the Georgian Airways, said.

2.

MPs in dispute over regular flights with Russia

26.03.2010, Civil

READ MORE: <http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=22121>

Lawmakers briefly debated on March 26 about what Tbilisi's stance should be on resumption of

regular direct flights with Moscow. A lawmaker from Christian-Democratic Movement (CDM), Nika Laliashvili, asked ruling party MPs why the Georgian transport administration was not sending a request to the Russian counterpart agency on resumption of direct flights between the two countries. CDM, a leading party in the parliamentary minority, called on the authorities earlier this month to use the same practice of talks with Russia via the Swiss mediation, which was used in case of reopening border crossing point between the two countries and engage in talks on resumption of direct flights.

3.

Russian customs union may undermine Georgia embargo

24.03.2010, Hurriyet Daily

READ MORE: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=russian-customs-union-may-undermine-georgia-embargo-2010-03-24>

Russia's customs union with Belarus and Kazakhstan may provide a loophole that will allow Georgian goods to enter Russia for the first time since an embargo was imposed in 2006, Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili said, according to Bloomberg. "Georgian products may return to Russia via Belarus and Kazakhstan" when trade borders are removed within the customs union on July 1, Saakashvili's spokeswoman Manana Manjgaladze told reporters in the capital Tbilisi on Tuesday, citing the president. Georgia won't rely on regaining access to the Russian market, since Russia created the customs union and will dictate its policies, Manjgaladze said. The issue of trade with Russia has been "politicized" since it banned imports of Georgian wine and water in March 2006, claiming the beverages were unfit for consumption, she said.

4.

Georgia's FM: Only ICAO can assign international code to Sukhumi airport

24.03.2010, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/capital/transport/1658323.html>

The Georgian Foreign Ministry issued a statement about rumors that Russia will assign an international code to the central airport in Sukhumi. De facto Abkhazian Prime Minister Sergei Shamba recently said the airport would receive a Russian code, Georgia's Foreign Ministry said. The ministry stressed that Russia has no jurisdiction to assign a four-alpha beta code to any airport instead of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). The ICAO has exclusive competence to make such decisions. Such codes are published in the document ICAO 7910: Location Indicators. "Thus, the statement by Shamba is another attempt to mislead people," the ministry said.

5.

Georgian FM: talks on resuming trade relations with Russia not on the agenda

22.03.2010, Trend News

READ MORE:

A common customs area between Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus will not change trade relations between Georgia and Russia, Georgian Foreign Minister Nino Kalandadzesaid said. She said that trade relations with Russia are possible on a certain level and if there is interest Georgia will not interfere. Regarding bilateral relations, talks of resuming trade relations are not on the agenda. "This issue will not be on the agenda until we have diplomatic relations," Kalandadze said. Regarding the possible entry of Georgian wine and the Borjomi water to the Russian market, she said that Russia put an embargo on these products. "The decision was taken by Moscow unilaterally and the removal of the embargo is possible if Moscow has such a desire.

6.

Georgian Minister rules out probe into incriminating tapes

20.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/content/Georgian_Minister_

[Rules_Out_Probe_Into_Incriminating_Tapes/1989195.html](http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=22106)

The Georgian authorities have rejected calls by opposition parties for an investigation into the authenticity of two tape-recordings of telephone conversations that suggest that President Mikheil Saakashvili may have been behind the screening on March 13 by the privately owned but pro-government television channel Imedi of a mock television news program chronicling a new Russian invasion of Georgia that opposition politicians sought to take advantage of to seize power with the Kremlin's backing.

7.

Moscow says ready for talks with Tbilisi on some trade rules
20.03.2010, Civil

READ MORE: <http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=22106>

Moscow said on March 19 it was ready to engage in talks with Tbilisi to fill the gaps in legal framework for bilateral trade, which emerged after Georgia withdraw from Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Rules of origin of goods applicable within CIS was also an element to the 1994 Russia-Georgia free trade agreement providing basis for preferential tariff treatment. Russia banned import of Georgia's major export commodities in 2006, more than two years before Georgia decided to pull out from CIS following the 2008, August war.

8.

EU urges Georgia not to aggravate regional tensions
17.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/content/EU_Urges_Georgia_Not_To_Aggravate_Regional_Tensions/1986808.html

The European Union has urged Georgia's government to avoid exacerbating regional tensions after a Georgian television station broadcast a fake news report about Russian forces heading for the capital, Tbilisi. On March 13, Georgia's pro-government Imedi TV aired a 20-minute primetime report saying Russian tanks were advancing on Tbilisi after former allies of President Mikheil Saakashvili called on Moscow to intervene in political unrest.

VI. GREECE

1.

Greek bond issue to test EU rescue deal

30.03.2010 Euractiv

READ MORE: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/euro/greek-bond-issue-test-eu-rescue-deal-news-393069>

Debt-stricken Greece returned to capital markets on Monday (29 March) for the first time since eurozone leaders agreed to give it a financial safety net. The country hopes to raise €5 billion from the issue while borrowing costs remain high. The bond issue is being managed by five banks to sell seven-year notes, according to the country's Public Debt Management Agency (PDMA) - the first market test after the 16-nation single currency area last week decided to establish a European-IMF support mechanism as a last resort (EurActiv 26/03/10).

2.

Greece rescue plan a step toward historic change: minister

28.03.2010, EUBusiness

READ MORE: <http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/greece-finance.3x5>

Greece's finance minister said in an interview Sunday an EU rescue plan for his country agreed last week was a step toward historic change and new economic management for nations using the euro. "I think that the decision taken, under the pretext of Greece, is a step in the direction of a new model of economic governance in the eurozone ... a historic evolution," George Papaconstantinou told Eleftherotypia newspaper.

3.

Pangalos against nuclear plants, supports renewables

21.03.2010, New Europe

READ MORE: <http://www.neurope.eu/articles/99848.php>

Greek Government vice-president Theodoros Pangalos on 19 March expressed opposition to the construction of a nuclear energy plant in Greece and emphasized instead the exploitation of the country's rich renewable energy sources for the production of electricity. Pangalos noted, however, the need for vigilance because our neighboring countries, such as Turkey and Bulgaria, are active in that area.

4.

GNTO tourist pavilion opens in Moscow

21.03.2010, New Europe

READ MORE:

Greek Deputy Culture and Tourism Minister Angela Gerekou carried out the inauguration of the big Moscow tourist exhibition MITT-2010 on 17 March, in which Greece is the theme country, together with representatives of the federal government and the Municipality of Moscow. We are aiming at making Greece a destination for the whole year and not only for the summer months.

VII. MOLDOVA

1.

Moldovan, Romanian prime ministers have telephone conversation

29.03.2010, Bsanna News

READ MORE: <http://bsanna-news.ukrinform.ua/newsitem.php?id=12718&lang=en>

Prime Minister Vlad Filat had a telephone conversation with his Romanian counterpart, Emil Boc, in the evening of 26 March, the government's press service has said. The two officials discussed the implementation of previously reached understandings as all as those agreed upon during the meeting of the Consultative Group - Partnership for Moldova Forum held recently in Brussels. Filat thanked Romania for the support offered to Moldova during the meeting of the Consultative Group, noting that the amount of 102 million euros that Romania had decided to give Moldova comes as important aid given the current situation in the country. The two prime ministers expressed satisfaction with the latest dynamic of the bilateral dialogue and pointed out that reached agreements have been quickly fulfilled in due time. At the same time, Vlad Filat and Emil Boc voiced conviction that there are more possibilities of developing bilateral relations and spoke in favour of continuing permanent dialogue.

2.

EU to back Moldova to diversify energy resources

26.03.2010, Bsanna News

READ MORE: <http://bsanna-news.ukrinform.ua/newsitem.php?id=12704&lang=en>

Prime Minister Vlad Filat today met EU Commissioner for Energy Gunter Oettinger and EU Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs Olli Rehn, the government's press service has said. The prime minister thanked for the efforts made at the meeting of the Consultative Group - Partnership for Moldova Forum, held on 24 March. He said that Moldova highly appreciated the donors' openness. Filat also said that the recent accession to the Energy Community Treaty is very important for Moldova. "This step will contribute to diversifying energy resources, liberalizing the energy market in Moldova, will optimize the capacity of their stocking, will diminish their negative impact on the environment, as well as will facilitate the enforcement of the EU acquis in the energy field," the prime minister said.

3.

Official says Moldova frustrated with EU 'waiting room'

26.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

[READ MORE:](#)

http://www.rferl.org/content/Official_Says_Moldova_Frustrated_With_EU_Waiting_Room/1993989.html

Moldovan Economy Minister Valeriu Lazar said his government is unhappy with the degree of integration offered to the country by the European Union. Lazar, who is also the country's deputy prime minister, warned in an interview with website hotnews.ro that unless Moldova is given a clear perspective of becoming a full-fledged member of the EU, it could opt to deepen its integration with the Russian-dominated Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Lazar said the EU's Eastern Partnership -- which offers closer ties with six former Soviet states without promising them EU membership -- is not enough for Moldova and is "just talk," while Russia has a "clear idea" of transforming the CIS into a functioning union of states.

4.

Moldovan Premier denies 'secret' conditions behind donor aid

26.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

[READ MORE:](#) http://www.rferl.org/content/Moldovan_Premier_Denies_Secret_Conditions_Behind_Donor_Aid_/1994202.html

Moldovan Prime Minister Vlad Filat says there are no "secret political clauses" behind a multibillion dollar aid-package that was earmarked for his country at an international donors conference, RFE/RL's Moldovan Service reports. But Filat told RFE/RL on March 25 that the \$2.6 billion package promised at the EU- and World Bank-sponsored event in Brussels on March 24 does oblige Moldova to continue with its democratic and economic reforms.

5.

Moldovan government, development partners sign 1.936-billion-euro assistance programme

25.03.2010, Bsanna News

[READ MORE:](#)

The Moldovan government and the development partners have signed the 2011-2013 assistance programme for Moldova worth 1.936 billion euros (2.6 billion dollars), the government's press service has said. Prime Minister Vlad Filat and EU Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy Stefan Fule signed the document in Brussels today. The programme for Moldova was signed at a meeting of the Consultative Group - Partnership for Moldova Forum, co-chaired and hosted by the European Commission and the World Bank.

6.

Moldova impresses EU with reform agenda, receives \$2.6 billion in pledges

24.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

[READ MORE:](#)

http://www.rferl.org/content/Moldova_Impresses_EU_With_Reform_Agenda/1992926.html

Moldova's quiet reinvention of itself after reformist parties ousted the country's communist government in July 2009 became official today as Prime Minister Vlad Filat won full backing in Brussels for his reform program. Although Moldova is nominally Europe's least developed country, its reformist government has been able to persuade Western supporters in a remarkably short period of time that it is capable of turning its fortunes around. The European Union's enlargement and neighborhood commissioner, Stefan Fule, today described Filat's administration as a "reliable partner" with a coherent strategy of reforms and clear targets.

7.

Moldova likely to become semi-presidential republic

22.03.2010, Bsanna News

READ MORE: <http://bsanna-news.ukrinform.ua/newsitem.php?id=12648&lang=en>

Moldova is likely to become a semi-presidential republic, under a draft new Constitution considered at a today's meeting of the commission for constitutional reform. Parliament Speaker and acting President Mihai Ghimpu has told journalists that "the present draft sees that the head of state be elected directly by the citizens. At the same time, the current parliament will exercise its mandate till the end, just as the voters gave it on 29 July." The speaker specified that a final decision on the president's election is to be taken by the members of the Alliance for European Integration.

8.

Moldova leaders invite communists to resolve stalemate

22.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE:

http://www.rferl.org/content/Moldova_Leaders_Invite_Communist_To_Resolve_Stalemate/1990820.html

Moldova's ruling coalition has asked the opposition Communist Party to help it change the way the country's president is elected and end a political stalemate that has been dragging on for months, RFE/RL's Moldovan Service reports. The four pro-Western parties in the ruling coalition said today the Communists are welcome to send their representatives to a new commission that will try to rewrite an article in the country's constitution that requires the president to be elected in the 101-member parliament by a three-fifths majority. The ruling coalition wants a direct election of the president by Moldovan voters.

9.

Moldovan Premier says early elections 'unavoidable'

18.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE:

http://www.rferl.org/content/Moldovan_Premier_Says_Early_Elections_Unavoidable/1986994.html

Moldovan Prime Minister Vlad Filat has warned that early elections are "unavoidable" despite his government's attempts to prolong its six-month tenure, RFE/RL's Moldovan Service reports. The country's parliament has already failed to elect a new head of state twice and is bound by the constitution to be dissolved by mid-June and for new elections to be called.

VIII. ROMANIA

1.

Romania's planned jet purchase draws fire

29.03.2010, Financial Times

READ MORE: <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/5b017b74-3a93-11df-b6d5-00144feabdc0.html>

European aerospace manufacturers have cried foul over Romania's proposed \$1.3bn purchase of secondhand US F-16 fighter jets after they claimed Bucharest had announced the decision without a proper tender process. The proposal also triggered questions about how Romania can afford such aircraft as the recession-hit eastern European nation battles to cut public spending to comply with an International Monetary Fund programme. Romania's Supreme Defence Council announced last week an intention to purchase 24 used F-16 aircraft from the US to replace a rapidly ageing fleet of Soviet-made MiG-21 aircraft.

2.

Romanian FM: elements of U.S. missile defense system in Romania not to be directed against other countries

18.03.2010, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/news/politics/foreign/1656276.html>

Romania has decided to place some elements of the defense system the United States in its territory, Foreign Minister of Romania Teodor Bakonsky said today at a press conference in Baku.

3.

FM: Romania supports implementation of Nabucco and gas transportation via Azerbaijan-Georgia-Romania route

18.03.2010, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/capital/pengineering/1656262.html>

Romania as a member of the European Union is a supporter of introduction of free-market system, and in this context it supports the Nabucco gas pipeline project and transportation of gas from Azerbaijan through Georgiaç Black Sea to Romania, Romanian Foreign Minister Teodor Bakonsky today at a joint press conference with Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov in Baku. He said Romania would like the sides to use a system of free market during implementation of these projects.

4.

Transylvania to host new Romania nuclear power plant

13.03.2010, Space War

READ MORE: <http://www.spacewar.com/afp/100313172829.xxp614mv.html>

Romania's second nuclear power station will be built in Transylvania, but its precise location hinges on the technology chosen for it, Economy Minister Adrieian Videanu said on Saturday. Complementing the Cernavoda facility in southeast Romania, the new power plant in the heart of the country has been forecast to start operations in 2020 -- although delays could put the opening back by 10 years.

IX. RUSSIA

1.

Russia, IAEA agree to establish world's first nuclear fuel bank

30.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/content/Russia_IAEA_Agree_To_Establish_Worlds_First_Nuclear_Fuel_Bank/1997174.html

Russia has signed a deal with the UN's nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), to set up the world's first nuclear fuel bank of low-enriched uranium for countries that need fuel for civilian purposes, including nuclear power plants. Russia's atomic energy chief, Sergei Kiriyenko, signed the deal with IAEA head Yukiya Amano in Vienna on March 29. The IAEA says the bank will eventually hold a stockpile of 120 tons of low-enriched uranium. Kiriyenko, who heads Russia's state-owned nuclear company Rosatom, said the bank will be located in the southern Siberian city of Angarsk. Russia and Kazakhstan have had a uranium enrichment facility there since 2007.

2.

Russia to discuss gas price reduction for Ukraine - Putin

25.03.2010, Ria Novosti

READ MORE: <http://en.rian.ru/business/20100325/158313770.html>

Russia and Ukraine will discuss a possible reduction in the price that Kiev pays for Russian gas, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin said Thursday. Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich, who came to power in February after narrowly winning a presidential runoff against then premier Yulia Tymoshenko, has been seeking to revise a long-term gas deal signed by Tymoshenko and Putin in early 2009. "We agreed that there are no topics closed to discussion," Putin told journalists after talks with his Ukrainian counterpart Mykola Azarov in the Moscow Region. Putin disagreed with a journalist who called the gas contracts "unfair."

3.

Russian warship to take part in Blackseafor naval drills

25.03.2010, Ria Novosti

READ MORE: <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20100325/158306879.html>

The Caesar Kunikov large amphibious landing ship from Russia's Black Sea Fleet will take part in regular Blackseafor naval drills in April, the fleet's press office said on Thursday. Blackseafor was formally established in 2001 on Turkey's initiative and comprises Turkey, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Romania, Georgia and Russia. It conducts search and rescue operations and environmental monitoring, and organizes goodwill visits to Black Sea countries.

4.

Putin offers U.S. hints of support

20.03.2010, REUTERS

READ MORE: [http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE62J00T20100320?](http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE62J00T20100320?feedType=RSS&feedName=politicsNews&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed:+Reuters/PoliticsNews+(News+US+Politics+News))

[feedType=RSS&feedName=politicsNews&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed:+Reuters/PoliticsNews+\(News+US+Politics+News\)](http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE62J00T20100320?feedType=RSS&feedName=politicsNews&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed:+Reuters/PoliticsNews+(News+US+Politics+News))

Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin offered hints he could support the United States on two key issues -- an arms pact and Iran -- after a meeting on Friday with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. An aide to Putin said a major nuclear weapons reduction pact between Russia and the United States could be signed in April, and suggested Russia might back new sanctions on Iran despite misgivings, Russian news agencies reported.

5.

Moscow's 'nuclear doctrine' under fire

18.03.2010, Financial Times

READ MORE: <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/a61edf40-32bc-11df-a767-00144feabdc0.html>

A top Pentagon official has expressed concern at what she describes as Russia's increasing reliance on nuclear weapons, a trend the US says is at odds with President Barack Obama's arms control agenda. "There are aspects to their nuclear doctrine, their military activities that we find very troubling," said Michèle Flournoy, the defence department undersecretary for policy. In an interview with the Financial Times, she said that while Mr Obama had stressed "the importance of reducing the role of nuclear weapons . . . if you read recent Russian military doctrine they are going in the other direction, they are actually increasing their reliance on nuclear weapons, the role in nuclear weapons in their strategy". Her comments came as Hillary Clinton, secretary of state, visited Russia to help reach a deal on an overdue arms pact.

6.

Ukraine, Russia MFAs sign cooperation plan for 2010

17.03.2010, Bsanna News

READ MORE: <http://bsanna-news.ukrinform.ua/newsitem.php?id=12596&lang=en>

At the level of Ministries of Foreign Affairs a mechanism was launched that actually complies with interests of the two peoples of the two countries, Foreign Minister Kostiantyn Hryshchenko has said while commenting on a Plan of Cooperation between the Ukrainian MFA and Russian MFA for 2010, signed in Moscow yesterday, UKRINFORM's own correspondent in Russia reports.

7.

Yuri Merzlyakov's replacement won't affect Russia's position in OSCE MG

16.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44261>

Replacement of Russian OSCE MG Co-Chair Yuri Merzlyakov won't affect Russia's position in the Minsk Group, according to Russian Foreign Ministry's spokesman Andrei Nesterenko. "Russia's position in the MG is not determined by its representatives, but rather by the Russian President, with

Foreign Ministry acting upon it," Mr. Nesterenko emphasized.

8.

Polls close in Russia amid fraud allegations

14.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE:

http://www.rferl.org/content/Polls_Close_In_Russia_Amid_Fraud_Allegations/1983493.html

Polls have closed in Russia's regional elections with the ruling United Russia and the opposition accusing each other of fraud. Russians went to the polls in 76 of the country's 83 regions on March 14 to elect mayors and town councils in a vote that was seen as a test of President Dmitry Medvedev's commitment to open up the country's political system. Shortly after the polls closed, Vyacheslav Timchenko, a lawmaker from United Russia, issued a statement decrying the "shockingly large number of violations" committed by the Communists, the right-wing Liberal Democrats and A Just Russia, a left-leaning party that is generally supportive of the Kremlin.

9.

Berezovsky says Azerbaijan and Armenia should not trust Russia

12.03.2010,

READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/content/Berezovsky_Says_Azerbaijan_And_Armenia_Should_Not_Trust_Russia/1981522.html/

Former Russian oligarch Boris Berezovsky has told RFE/RL's Azerbaijani Service that Armenia and Azerbaijan should not look to Moscow to help solve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Berezovsky, who lives in self-imposed exile in Britain, said Russia will always impede efforts to resolve the conflict. "It is in Russia's interest to make the conflict even more complicated in order to divide and rule," he said. Berezovsky said Russia's current leaders are neither experienced nor adequately educated.

X. TURKEY

1.

Turkey snubs Merkel over EU bid

27.03.2010, EUBusiness

READ MORE: <http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/turkey-germany.3wm>

Turkey on Saturday snubbed German Chancellor Angela Merkel's proposal for its "privileged partnership" with the EU, saying such a status was non-existent in the bloc it is trying to join. "The privileged partnership just does not exist," European Affairs Minister Egemen Bagis said. "This does not have any legal basis in the European Union," he added. Merkel flies into Turkey on Monday for a delicate two-day visit against a backdrop of deep differences with leaders of the mainly Muslim country over its limping EU accession bid.

2.

Erdogan: privileged partnership is unknown to EU treaties

25.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44724>

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Ankara will settle for nothing less than full membership in the European Union – a stance putting himself on a collision course with German Chancellor Merkel, who only supports a "privileged partnership" for Turkey. Germany's objections that the sizeable mainly Muslim country is not fit for membership are backed by another EU heavyweight, France, but Ankara points out that it has already opened negotiations aimed at becoming a proper member of the bloc. "A privileged partnership is unknown to EU treaties," Erdogan told Die Zeit.

3.

WB approves 931 mln euro loan for Turkey

25.03.2010, Bsanna News

[READ MORE:](#)

The World Bank approved on Wednesday 931 million Euro of loan for Turkey for equitable growth. A World Bank statement said the World Bank Board of Executive directors approved a Restoring Equitable Growth and Employment Programmatic Development Policy Loan (REGE-DPL) for Turkey in the amount of 931 million Euro (equivalent 1.3 billion USD).

4.

Germany offers Turkey “alternatives” instead of full EU membership

25.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

[READ MORE: http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44598](http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44598)

Germany’s chancellor said she will offer Turkey “alternatives” instead of full European Union membership during a visit to Turkey later this month. “I am of the opinion that we should rather aim for a privileged partnership, in other words a very close affiliation of Turkey to the European Union,” Angela Merkel said in an interview with Deutschlandfunk radio on Sunday. Privileged partnership, which falls short of full membership, is the term coined by Merkel’s conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU), for their model of the future relations between Turkey and the EU.

5.

Turkey unveils strategic energy plan

24.03.2010, Hurriyet Daily

[READ MORE: http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=turkey-unveils-strategic-energy-plan-2010-03-24](http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=turkey-unveils-strategic-energy-plan-2010-03-24)

Energy import-dependent Turkey hopes to increase domestic power generation within the next five years, according to a recent report prepared by the country’s Energy Ministry. In a new energy plan for 2010-2014, Turkey plans to generate more of its own power, diversify natural gas suppliers, increase the amount of oil pumped to Turkey’s oil hub of Ceyhan and begin the construction of a nuclear power plant.

6.

Turkey calls for more active EU foreign policy

13.03.2010, EUOBSERVER

[READ MORE: http://euobserver.com/9/29674](http://euobserver.com/9/29674)

Turkey has urged the European Union to seek more influence in the South Caucasus and the Middle East, regions where Ankara already considers itself to be a major player. Speaking on Saturday (13 March) ahead of an informal meeting with seven of his EU counterparts in Lapland, Finland, 250 kilometres north of the Arctic Circle, Turkish foreign minister Ahmet Davutoglu said the EU should be “much more active than it is today” in foreign policy terms:

XI. TURKEY-ARMENIA

1.

Turkey presses US to stop 'genocide' resolution

29.03.2010, Hurriyet Daily

[READ MORE: http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=turkey-presses-us-to-stop-genocide-resolution-2010-03-29](http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=turkey-presses-us-to-stop-genocide-resolution-2010-03-29)

Turkey has urged the United States to block a bill branding the World War I killings of Armenians as “genocide,” saying this was “critical” to their relationship, the Foreign Ministry said Monday. Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu pressed his U.S. counterpart, Hillary Clinton, in a telephone call Sunday to stop the resolution from advancing to a full vote at the House of Representatives, a

ministry spokesman said. Davutoğlu said that blocking the resolution would be "of critical importance to eliminate the negative impact it has had" on Turkish-U.S. ties and on peace efforts between Turkey and Armenia, spokesman Burak Özügergin said.

2.

Erdogan once again threatens illegal Armenian workers in Turkey with deportation

29.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44919>

“So far, we have not considered the question of deportation, but if Armenian Diaspora continues to exert pressure, we could imagine ourselves capable of doing that,” Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan said in a SPIEGEL interview. “When a journalist uses the word Genocide, he should take a careful look at the issue first. There can be no talk of Genocide against the Armenians. Genocide is a legal term,” the Prime Minister noted.

3.

Poll Finds Minority Of Armenians Support Rapprochement With Turkey

29.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/content/Poll_Finds_Minority_Of_Armenians_Support_Rapprochement_With_Turkey/1997110.html

Around one in three Armenians supports rapprochement with Turkey and the possible opening of the border between the two estranged countries, RFE/RL's Armenian Service reports on the basis of a new opinion poll. The poll, conducted by the Armenian Marketing Association (AMA), is reportedly the most comprehensive survey to date of Armenian public opinion on the dramatic thaw in Turkish-Armenian relations. Its findings were made public today. The nongovernmental group interviewed some 2,500 randomly chosen residents across the country in late January and February.

4.

Turkey, Armenia at political deadlock on protocols

27.03.2010, Hurriyet Daily

READ MORE: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=turkey-and-armenia-at-deadlock-to-ratify-normalization-protocols-2010-03-26>

Turkish and Armenian parliaments have yet to ratify the normalization protocols signed last October. 'The normalization process between Turkey and Armenia has turned into a game of chess. Each side waits for next move to develop new tactics,' a high-ranking AKP official says. Nonetheless, there is hope in the air for social projects between the two neighbors. Despite deadlock on the political aspects of the normalization process between Armenia and Turkey, there are glimmers of hope for a breakthrough in social relations between the two, a Turkish government spokesman said Friday.

5.

Turkey preparing alternatives in response to Armenian Genocide resolution

24.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44701>

Turkey is preparing alternatives in response to passage of Armenian Genocide resolution in foreign parliaments. According to Turkish Foreign Affairs Ministry spokesman Burak Ozugergin, in future Turkey might resort to the standards of international law. As he noted, parliament is not the right place to discuss historic issues.

6.

Turkish FM: Ambassadors to return to Sweden and United States when time comes

24.03.2010, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/regions/met/turkey/1658383.html>

The Turkish ambassadors will return to Sweden and the United States when the time is right,

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu was quoted as saying by CNN Turk. "Our ambassadors to the United States and Sweden will go back when the time comes," Davutoglu said. He said that Turkey will take advantage of the international law regarding the issue of the recognition of the so-called Armenian genocide.

7.

Armenia issue dogs Turkey-Azerbaijan gas talks

23.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE:

http://www.rferl.org/content/Armenia_Issue_Dogs_TurkeyAzeri_Gas_Talks/1991612.html

Talks between Turkey and Azerbaijan over securing the Nabucco gas pipeline have stalled due to disagreements over Turkey's attempts to normalize relations with Armenia. Turkey's Energy Minister Taner Yildiz today said that Turkish officials "have not talked with the Azerbaijanis for between a month and a month and a half, the fundamental issue here is politics." Turkey signed protocols late last year with Armenia which agreed to establish diplomatic relations.

8.

LDP: Armenian-Turkish protocols frozen

23.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44619>

The protocols on normalization of the Armenian-Turkish relations are frozen, according to Cem Toker, the leader of Liberal Democrat Party (LDP) of Turkey. "Ankara is unlikely to ratify the protocols. Linkage to the Karabakh process, Armenian Constitutional Court's ruling and the resolutions adopted recently by the US House panel and Swedish parliament almost nullified the possibility of ratification," the Turkish politician said, adding that despite possible failure of the protocols, the process of normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations should not be suspended.

9.

Erdogan's statement constitutes serious violation of human rights, French socialists say

22.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44561>

The Socialist Party of France has slammed Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's threat to evict nearly 100 000 undocumented Armenian workers in retaliation for a vote in Parliament Swedish recognizing the Armenian Genocide of 1915. "If executed, the threat would constitute a serious violation of human rights and is contrary to humanist values of the European Union that Turkey's ambition to join," said Jean-Christophe Cambadellis, National Secretary for Europe and International Relations. "The Socialist Party, originally a law in France, recognized the Armenian Genocide and strongly condemns the statement of the Prime Minister of Turkey. If the Democratic Turkey is not responsible for the crimes committed by the Ottoman Empire, so recognition of Genocide is a moral requirement," he said.

10.

29th conference US-Turkey relations postponed due to passage of Armenian Genocide resolution

21.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44520>

The 29th Annual Conference on United States-Turkey Relations, which is organized by Turkish-American Business Council, or TAIK, and American-Turkish Council, or ATC, every year in April, has been postponed. Foreign Economic Relations Board of Turkey, or DEIK, stated that the conference, which was planned to be held in Washington between April 11 and 14, was postponed due to approval of an Armenian Genocide resolution by the US House Foreign Affairs Committee and the following developments.

11.

Turkish PM says media distorted remarks on deporting Armenians

19.03.2010, Hurriyet Daily

READ MORE: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=erdogan-criticizes-media-apologizes-to-turkeys-roma-people-2010-03-19>

Turkey's prime minister on Friday defended his statements about deporting undocumented Armenian workers and criticized the media for misinterpreting his remarks. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said the media was wrong to compare Roma and Armenian citizens to illegal immigrants, saying his comments in London were distorted. Erdoğan said Tuesday in an interview with the BBC Turkish service that illegal immigrants from Armenia would be expelled, sparking outrage among the opposition and media.

12.

Washington again signals Ankara on soonest ratification of Protocols

18.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44354>

Turkey's work with Armenia to normalize relations demonstrates both the promise and the difficulty of this enterprise, a US senior official said. "It holds out the prospect of positive transformative change in the region. The steps taken so far by both countries have shown vision and courage. Last October, in the presence of Secretary Clinton, the foreign ministers of France, Russia, and Switzerland, and the EU High Representative, the Turkish and Armenian Foreign Ministers signed protocols on normalizing and developing their relations," Mr. Philip H. Gordon Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, said during his sixth annual Sakip Sabanci Lecture.

13.

Armenian FM: Turkish Prime-Minister's statements about deportation of Armenians are unacceptable

18.03.2010, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/regions/scaucasus/armenia/1656234.html>

Statements by Turkish Prime-Minister about the deportation of Armenians from Turkey are not acceptable. They do not promote the Armenian-Turkish relations, Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian said in a briefing with Slovakian counterpart Miroslav Laychek, "News-Armenia" agency reported.

14.

Turkey threatens to expel 100,000 Armenians

17.03.2010, BBC News

READ MORE: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8572934.stm>

Turkey's prime minister has threatened to deport 100,000 Armenian migrants, amid renewed tensions over Turkish mass killings of Armenians in World War I. Recent resolutions in the US and Sweden have called the killings "genocide". Recep Tayyip Erdogan told the BBC that of 170,000 Armenians living in Turkey "70,000 are Turkish citizens". "We are turning a blind eye to the remaining 100,000... Tomorrow, I may tell these 100,000 to go back to their country, if it becomes necessary." Thousands of Armenians, many of them women, work illegally in Turkey.

15.

Turkish official: Armenia-Turkey Protocols will be ratified only after Nagorno-Karabakh conflict resolution

17.03.2010, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/regions/met/turkey/1655648.html>

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict must be resolved before the ratification of the Armenian-Turkish

Protocols on the normalization of relations between Yerevan and Ankara, Suat Kiniklioglu, Justice and Development Party (AKP) External Affairs deputy chairman, said. "Just as the Turks, Azerbaijanis and Armenians stand for the peace in the region, which requires first and foremost the solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem," Kiniklioglu was quoted as saying by the Cihan news agency. "The process of normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations may be continued after the conflict resolution."

16.

Ambassador Tan may return to US if Congress rejects Genocide resolution, Turkish MFA say
17.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44294>

Turkey demands written guarantees from US to send its Ambassador back to Washington. "Ankara should have written guarantees that the resolution will not be put on the House floor. Only in this case Ambassador Tan will return to Washington," Taraf daily quoted a source speaking on condition of anonymity. Turkey recalled its Ambassador to the US, Tamik Tan, minutes after the adoption of the Armenian Genocide resolution by the House Committee on Foreign Relations.

17.

Turkish Official: ratifying Armenia Protocols currently 'almost impossible'

11.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/content/Turkish_Official_Ratifying_Armenia_Protocols_Currently_Almost_Impossible/1981217.html

An official in Turkey's ruling party says Ankara is extremely unlikely to ratify its fence-mending protocols with Armenia at this juncture, RFE/RL's Armenian Service reports. Justice and Development Party Deputy Chairman Suat Kiniklioglu was speaking today on the sidelines of an international seminar organized by the NATO Parliamentary Assembly in Yerevan. He told RFE/RL that Ankara continues to peg the normalization of Turkish-Armenian relations to a settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

XII. UKRAINE

1.

Putin interested in Ukraine's gas network

29.03.2010, UPI

READ MORE: http://www.upi.com/Science_News/Resource-Wars/2010/03/29/Putin-interested-in-Ukraines-gas-network/UPI-66161269871288/

Moscow is interested in helping Ukraine upgrade its natural gas network despite two rival projects for European customers, the Russian prime minister said. European energy security was upended in 2009 when Russian gas monopoly Gazprom cut gas supplies to Ukraine briefly because of a dispute with Kiev over contracts and debt. About 80 percent of all Russian gas bound for Europe runs through Soviet-era pipelines in Ukraine currently.

2.

Embassy: Ukraine is satisfied with economic cooperation with Azerbaijan

29.03.2010, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/capital/macro/1659835.html>

Ukraine is satisfied with success in trade and economic relations with Azerbaijan, Miroslav Blashuk, the head of the trade representation of Ukraine in Azerbaijan said. According to Azerbaijani State Statistics Committee, in January 2010, trade turnover between the countries amounted to about \$72 million. "Azerbaijan, which is economically developed even in the difficult times, has done much in this direction," Blashuk said at a press conference in Ukraine Embassy to Azerbaijan. Blashuk stressed the fruitful cooperation with Azerbaijan in the field of oil supplies to Ukraine.

3.

Hryshchenko names key priorities of Ukraine's foreign policy

28.03.2010, KyivPost

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/62677/>

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Kostiantyn Hryshchenko has said that the key priorities of the Ukrainian foreign policy include the effective realization of the Ukrainian course for European integration, the provision of friendly and partner relations with Russia, and strategic partnership with the United States. Ukrainian News learned this from a statement by the press service of the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

4.

Semynozhenko wants discussion of idea of union of Ukraine, Russia, Belarus

28.03.2010, KyivPost

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/62662/>

Ukrainian Humanitarian Vice Prime Minister Volodymyr Semynozhenko invites discussions of the idea of creation of the union of three states - Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus. Volodymyr Semynozhenko gave his position during a political talk show on the Ukraina television channel on Friday evening. The talk show anchorman suggested discussing an idea by Russian Duma deputy Yevgeny Fedorov, who heads the Duma committee for economic policy and entrepreneurship, concerning the creation of a union state of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus with the capital city in Kyiv.

5.

Yanukovych, European Parliament discuss measures to speed up cancellation of visa regime

27.03.2010 KyivPost

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/62599/>

Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych has met a group of visiting MEPs to discuss measures to speed up the cancellation of the visa regime between Ukraine and European Union countries, the presidential press service reported on Friday. A meeting between Yanukovych and the European Parliament delegation headed by Vice-President of the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats Adrian Severin took place at the Presidential Administration on Friday.

6.

Ukraine signs plan of cooperation between CIS foreign ministries for 2010

27.03.2010, KyivPost

READ MORE:

Ukraine has signed a plan of cooperation between the Foreign Ministries of the CIS countries for 2010. Ukrainian Foreign Minister Kostiantyn Hryshchenko signed 16 out of 21 documents put forward during a meeting of the Council of the CIS Foreign Ministers in Moscow on March 26, the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry's press service said.

7.

Kolesnikov: Ukraine, Russia will sign agreement on joint customs controls

25.03.2010, KyivPost

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/62521/>

The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine is planning to sign an inter-governmental agreement with Russia on joint customs controls that will help halve customs clearance times. Ukrainian Vice Premier Borys Kolesnikov said this while visiting the Uspenka checkpoint on the border of Donetsk and Rostov regions on Thursday. "In April-May, we should draw up the respective agreements. It is necessary to introduce amendments to the law, and we'll introduce them. The border and customs clearance time will be halved," Kolesnikov said.

8.

Ukraine-European Union committee offers to enlarge category of Ukrainians for simplified visa

issuing

25.03.2010, KyivPost

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/62503/>

The committee for parliamentary cooperation between Ukraine and the European Union has proposed to widen the number of Ukrainian citizens to whom the advantages of agreements on a simplified procedure for issuing visas would apply. Head of the parliament committee for European integration, Borys Tarasiuk, said this in Kyiv on Wednesday.

9.

Parliament of Ukraine rejected a proposal to denounce the ferry agreement with Bulgaria and Georgia

24.03.2010, Bsanna News

READ MORE: <http://bsanna-news.ukrinform.ua/newsitem.php?id=12675&lang=en>

The new Parliament of Ukraine rejected a proposal to denounce an agreement with Bulgaria and Georgia on joint operation of a train ferry service linking Varna, Bulgaria, with Poti and Batumi, Georgia and Ilyichevsk, Ukraine.

10.

Poll: Most Ukrainians see Russia as Ukraine's main ally

23.03.2010, KyivPost

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/62355/>

Sixty-one percent of Ukrainians questioned in a recent opinion poll supported the idea that Russia is their country's main ally, 19% credited the European Union with that role, and only 3% attributed it to the United States. Nine percent told the Research & Branding Group (R&B), an opinion studies company, that they did not see any country as a serious ally of Ukraine while 8% were undecided, R&B said at a news conference in Kyiv.

11.

Parliament speaker calls for visa facilitation agreement with Ireland to be signed this year

23.03.2010, KyivPost

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/62356/>

Verkhovna Rada Chairman Volodymyr Lytvyn has said that a Ukrainian-Irish inter-governmental agreement on the simplified registration of visas for Ukrainians should be signed this year.

12.

EU ready to help Ukraine implement internal reforms

23.03.2010, KyivPost

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/62373/>

The European Union has emphasized that it will render concrete and overall assistance to Ukraine "in return for implementing internal reforms." This is stipulated in the decision passed by the Council of the European Union on Foreign Affairs and the speech delivered by European Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighborhood Policy Stefan Fule, which were made available to Interfax-Ukraine in Brussels on

13.

Ukraine, EU in talks on common airspace

23.03.2010, Bsanna News

READ MORE: <http://bsanna-news.ukrinform.ua/newsitem.php?id=12663&lang=en>

The Transport and Communications Ministry has launched the fifth round of talks between Ukraine and the European Union on a common aviation area agreement, the ministry's press service has reported. The Ukrainian delegation at the talks is headed by Deputy Transport Minister and Chairman of the State Aviation Administration Oleksandr Davydov, while the delegation of the European Union is headed by a representative of the EU Directorate General for Energy and

Transport.

14.

New perspective for EU and Ukraine

21.03.2010, New Europe

READ MORE: <http://www.neurope.eu/articles/99786.php>

The recent developments in Ukrainian foreign politics by newly-elected President Viktor Yanukovich are hardly pleasant for those who said that under his leadership Ukraine would immediately go into the Russian zone of interests. His initial initiatives vividly demonstrate that he is likely to become a responsible Ukrainian leader, supported by the citizens and enjoying international respect.

15.

Ukraine wants EU, Russian help to upgrade gas pipeline network

19.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/content/Ukraine_Wants_EU_Russian_Help_To_Upgrade_Gas_Pipeline_Network/1988765.html

Ukraine's First Deputy Prime Minister Andriy Klyuyev said today his country wants a joint Russian-EU consortium to be created to help upgrade and modernize Ukraine's natural-gas pipeline network.

16.

Ukraine's Yanukovych dismisses presidential envoy to Crimea

19.03.2010 Ria Novosti

READ MORE: <http://en.rian.ru/exsoviet/20100319/158245972.html>

New Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych has dismissed the presidential envoy to the Crimea, the predominantly Russian-speaking Black Sea autonomous republic, as part of his plans to shake up his predecessor Viktor Yushchenko's pro-Western establishment. A presidential order dismissing Leonid Zhunko is published on the Ukrainian president's official website.

17.

Ukraine to stay out of military alliances

18.03.2010 EurActiv

READ MORE: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/east-mediterranean/ukraine-stay-out-military-alliances-news-354666>

Viktor Yanukovich, Ukraine's newly-elected president, urged the country's governing coalition to push a new law that would prevent the country from joining any military alliances, according to reports in the national press. Ukraine's newly-elected President Viktor Yanukovich, who is labelled by the Western press as pro-Russian, decided to make his first foreign trip to Brussels (EurActiv 02/03/10). There, Yanukovich said that the key priority for his country is European integration. Yanukovich received strong support from EU leaders and neglected to call in at NATO headquarters.

18.

Yanukovych not giving up on official status of Russian in Ukraine

17.03.2010, Ria Novosti

READ MORE: <http://en.rian.ru/exsoviet/20100317/158229155.html>

Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych has not abandoned his intention to grant Russian the official status of a second national language in Ukraine, the deputy chief of the presidential administration said on Wednesday. "We can't speak about a second national language at the moment, because it requires a change to the constitution. We have never been people who throw words into the wind. Right now, we don't have the demanded constitutional majority, so there is no way we can do this," Anna German said. "However, the charter for regional languages will be enacted in Ukraine. If the Russian-speaking people have complaints, we will do everything we can to forge a constitutional majority and amend the constitution," she added.

19.

Ukraine gives positive appraisal of new-model EU

15.03.2010. EUOBSERVER

READ MORE: <http://euobserver.com/18/29680>

Ukraine's ambassador to the EU, Andriy Veselovsky, has given an upbeat appraisal of the EU's new institutional set-up. Fresh from chaperoning Ukraine's recently-elected president, Viktor Yanukovich, through a long series of meetings on his first official visit to Brussels last month, the diplomat told reporters in Brussels that the post-Lisbon Treaty union has a clear division of labour. At the top tier, European Commission chief Jose Manuel Barroso speaks as the EU's "government," while EU Council head Herman Van Rompuy is a "strategist," Mr Veselovsky explained. Moving down the ladder, EU top diplomat Catherine Ashton is a specialist in "bilateral relations," such as Ukraine-Belarus or Ukraine-Romania ties.

20.

Ukrainian Slavutych ship to participate in BLACKSEAFOR

15.03.2010, Kyiv Post

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/61773/>

The Ukrainian navy's Slavutych ship is to take part in the future activation of the Black Sea naval cooperation task group, BLACKSEAFOR. The BLACKSEAFOR panning group has gathered for a meeting in the Bulgarian city of Varna on Monday. A representative of the Ukrainian naval command is taking part in the meeting, the Ukrainian Defense Ministry's press service reported.

XI. BSEC

1.

BSEC council to promote, facilitate regional business

20.03.2010 Hurriyet Daily

READ MORE: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=promoting-and-facilitating-regional-business-2010-03-18>

According to the Black Sea Economic Cooperation's Business Council's general secretary, the expansion of trade and foreign direct investment during the last 15 years has become the locomotive for economic growth and development in the wider Black Sea area. But due to the impact of the recent global economic crisis the economic growth seems to be threatened, says Eftychia Bacopoulou "Greener" economic cooperation is top among the list of priorities for a Black Sea regional bloc, according to the council's general secretary. "The main objectives of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation's Business Council [BSEC BC] are to promote and facilitate the business communities of the BSEC Member States, as well as contribute to the improvement of the region's investment climate," Eftychia Bacopoulou told the Hürriyet Daily News and Economic Review.

XIII. EASTERN PARTNERSHIP

1.

Eastern Partnership Glossary of 27 commonly used terms released

23.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44654>

A glossary comprising 27 terms commonly used in the framework of the EU's Eastern Partnership has been produced by the ENPI Info Centre, with the support of DG RELEX and EuropeAid. The six-page 'Eastern Partnership glossary' is available in English and Russian, as well as in the official languages of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. All the translations have been approved by the European Commission. The aim of this publication - handbook is to assist people understand the terms and expressions used when referring to the Eastern Partnership, a policy that

seeks to bring closer the EU and its six neighbours in the East, namely Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

2.

The European Commission launches environmental flagship project under the Eastern Partnership
23.03.2010, EUROPA

READ MORE: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/341&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

The flagship project aims to strengthen environmental governance and develop a regional Shared Environmental Information System to strengthen the collection, storage and monitoring of reliable data. It was unveiled at the first meeting of the Eastern Partnership's (EaP) Panel on the Environment and Climate Change. The meeting was attended by representatives from the six partner countries – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, EU Member States, as well as representatives from EU institutions and civil society. The project has received EU funding of around €13 million.

XIV. ENERGY

1.

Nabucco: first gas will flow in 2014

28.03.2010, New Europe

READ MORE: <http://www.neurope.eu/articles/99908.php>

Nabucco Managing Director Reinhard Mitschek on 25 March again confirmed the current Nabucco Timeline. “We are aiming to start with the construction at the end of 2011 and we’ll expect first gas to flow at the end of 2014. The Nabucco Consortium has no indication to shift the current timeline.” Mitschek also stressed, that the gas pipeline will be filled step wise.

2.

Gas talks resume between Kiev, Moscow

28.03.2010, New Europe

READ MORE: <http://www.neurope.eu/articles/99912.php>

Russian gas monopoly Gazprom links the natural gas price for Ukraine with the volumes of imports to Ukraine, Ukrainian News reported, citing a statement by the press service of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine concerning the results of a meeting between Prime Minister Mykola Azarov and Gazprom CEO Aleksei Miller. “Aleksey Miller noted in particular that the gas price for Ukraine will depend, among other things, upon the volumes of imported gas,” the statement read.

3.

New talk of South Stream -- Nabucco link

26.03.2010, UPI

READ MORE: http://www.upi.com/Science_News/Resource-Wars/2010/03/26/New-talk-of-South-Stream-Nabucco-link/UPI-91221269609352/

The rival Nabucco and South Stream natural gas pipelines could join in Bulgaria to save costs, a Russian gas advocate said in Moscow. Paolo Scaroni, the chief executive at Italian energy giant ENI, said in early March that operating costs would drop by linking rival pipeline projects Nabucco and South Stream. ENI is a partner in the South Stream consortium. Europe is lobbying potential non-Russia gas suppliers for Nabucco to break the Russian grip on the regional energy sector.

4.

Nabucco on schedule, EU says

26.03.2010, UPI

READ MORE: http://www.upi.com/Science_News/Resource-Wars/2010/03/26/Nabucco-on-

[schedule-EU-says/UPI-43391269611147/](http://www.upi.com/Science_News/Resource-Wars/2010/03/17/Gazprom-hails-Nord-Stream-financing/UPI-51301268831960/)

The Nabucco gas pipeline for Europe will move forward along time line outlined by the project consortium, the European energy commissioner said. Statements by European Energy Commissioner Gunther Oettinger in the German newspaper Sueddeutsche Zeitung on Nabucco were seen as an indication that the gas pipeline was facing a four-year delay. He said in the interview that first gas from Nabucco would flow "probably in 2018" rather than the 2014 deadline outlined by the project consortium. Oettinger clarified his stance, however, in a statement released by his office in Brussels.

5.

Gazprom hails Nord Stream financing

17.03.2010, UPI

READ MORE: http://www.upi.com/Science_News/Resource-Wars/2010/03/17/Gazprom-hails-Nord-Stream-financing/UPI-51301268831960/

A financial package backing the Nord Stream natural gas pipeline is a "landmark" paving the way to project reality, Gazprom officials said in Moscow. There were 26 banks that fell in line with credit agencies to fund the development of the Nord Stream natural gas pipeline through the Baltic Sea.

6.

Hopes raised anew about future of Nabucco Gas Pipeline project

16.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/content/Hopes_Raised_Anew_About_Future_Of_Nabucco_Gas_Pipeline_Project/1985194.html

After a long, cold winter for the Nabucco pipeline project, March has brought a fresh wave of energy to the long-stalled Western plan to diversify Europe's natural gas supplies. Nabucco, which aims to bring some 31 billion cubic meters (bcm) of Caspian and Middle Eastern natural gas to Southern and Central Europe, has long been seen as an opportunity for the EU to break a dangerous dependence on Russian gas and pipelines. The project has stumbled so frequently on funding and supply issues that some have dismissed it as unfeasible. But it now appears on track to meet its target date for first deliveries in 2014.

7.

Draft EU gas regulation under Parliament scrutiny

18.03.2010 EurACTIV

READ MORE: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/energy/draft-eu-gas-regulation-under-parliament-scrutiny-news-353888>

A European Commission proposal to improve security of gas supplies following last year's price dispute between Russia and Ukraine has inspired 614 amendments from members of the European Parliament. In response to the Russian-Ukrainian gas crisis in January 2009, which caused unprecedented disruption of gas supplies to the EU via Ukraine, member states and the European Parliament called for the accelerated revision of existing legislation.

8.

Nord Stream funded for April construction

16.03.2010, UPI

READ MORE: http://www.upi.com/Science_News/Resource-Wars/2010/03/16/Nord-Stream-funded-for-April-construction/UPI-41731268745415/

Financing from banks and credit agencies gives the Nord Stream gas pipeline consortium the revenue it needs to start April construction, executives said. Paul Corcoran, the chief financial officer of the Nord Stream consortium, told the Financial Times that the financial crisis that gripped world markets in 2009 prompted a radical shift in the way the project was funded. The consortium won \$5.2 billion from 26 banks and guarantees from credit agencies to start building the natural gas pipeline through the Baltic Sea in April.

9.

South Stream project focus of Sofia talks

15.03.2010, UPI

READ MORE: http://www.upi.com/Science_News/Resource-Wars/2010/03/15/South-Stream-project-focus-of-Sofia-talks/UPI-30001268661716/

Russia and Bulgaria aim to create a design company to start work on the South Stream natural gas pipeline, the Russian energy minister said Monday. Russian energy giant Gazprom is courting Bulgaria for the South Stream natural gas pipeline through the Balkans. Moscow aims to diversify its energy transit options with South Stream and the Nord Stream gas pipeline through the Baltic Sea.

XV. EUROPEAN UNION

1.

EU to help Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia implement border management system

26.03.2010, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/news/politics/foreign/1658948.html>

The new program of the European Union will assist the governments of the Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia in the implementation of border management system, which will make them both open and safe. Programme with a budget of 6.3 million euros will be implemented the UN Development Programme (UNDP) in collaboration with the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD). Official opening of the program will be held March 29 at a conference in Tbilisi, which will be attended by representatives of the governments of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, international organizations and member states.

2.

Eastern parliamentary assembly delayed but on track

26.03.2010 EurACTIV

READ MORE: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/east-mediterranean/eastern-parliamentary-assembly-delayed-track-news-376713>

Members of the European Parliament are determined to have the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly fully operational by the end of the year, said centre-left Bulgarian MEP Kristian Vigenin at a press conference in Brussels. The Euronest Parliamentary Assembly, which brings together the European Parliament and the parliaments of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, postponed its first meeting, which was due to take place in Brussels on Wednesday (24 March).

XVI. PROTRACTED CONFLICTS

1.

Andrzej Kasprzyk: Karabakh conflict cannot be considered "frozen"

27.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44862>

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict cannot be considered "frozen". In fact, only the solution is frozen, Personal Representative of OSCE Chairman-in-Office Andrzej Kasprzyk said. "Since last year we have seen the most intensive phase of the negotiation process to date: the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan met six times in 2009, three times in expanded format with President Medvedev, and once so far in 2010, again in the presence of President Medvedev. The personal involvement of President Medvedev resulted in the first-ever statement on Nagorno-Karabakh signed by the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan - the so-called Moscow Declaration of November 2008. If this conflict were in fact to become "hot" and hostilities to resume, obviously the international community would be involved even to a greater extent."

2.

Seyran Ohanyan: Baku impedes Karabakh conflict settlement

27.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44847>

On March 27, RA Minister of Defense Seyran Ohanyan met with US Co-Chair of OSCE MG Robert Bradtke. Seyran Ohanyan gave high assessment to his activities within OSCE MG framework. Presenting Armenia's position on Karabakh conflict settlement, the Minister noted that Armenia adheres to the principle of peaceful settlement of the conflict, while Azerbaijan's aggressive statements impede the process, creating strained atmosphere in the region. Seyran Ohanyan expressed a hope that mutually acceptable solution to Karabakh issue will be found. Both sides agreed that linking Karabakh conflict settlement to Armenia-Turkey relations is unacceptable.

3.

Duma endorses border deals with Georgian rebel regions

26.03.2010, Hurriyet Daily

READ MORE: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=russia-ratifies-border-agreements-with-abkhazia-s.-ossetia-2010-03-26>

The State Duma, lower house of the Russian parliament, ratified the agreements with Abkhazia and South Ossetia on joint efforts to protect the borders of these two Georgian rebel regions, The Voice of Russia's Web site reported Friday. The agreements were signed in Kremlin on April 30, 2009. They envisage that Russia will help the regions' authorities to train personnel of their border guards. In their turn Abkhazia and South Ossetia grant Russia the right to freely use their air and water space. The documents stressed that the joint efforts on borders protection are not aimed against third countries. Both agreements are valid for 5 years and can be automatically extended by another 5 years if none of the parties informs the other about not prolonging them. Russia will also set aside 10 billion rubles for aid to Abkhazia in 2010-2012.

4.

Abkhazian leader voices concerns about military mobilization

25.03.2010, Hurriyet Daily

READ MORE: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=abkhazian-legal-govt.-head-worried-about-military-mobilization-2010-03-25>

The head of the Abkhazian legal government, Gia Baramia, is concerned about military mobilization in the occupied region of Georgia, the broadcasting company Rustavi 2 reported Monday. Nine armored tanks and 11 other tanks have appeared in the Gali district, controlling the construction of a new military base there, Baramia said at a briefing Monday, adding that 450 other military vehicles, 500 to 600 soldiers and more than 150 armory units have been mobilized in the occupied region as well. More than 4,000 soldiers are currently stationed in the contested region, he said.

5.

David Shahnazaryan: Armenia, Azerbaijan swap places

24.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44684>

A new situation emerged in Karabakh the process lately, according to David Shahnazaryan, representatives of the Armenian National Congress. "It's rather strange that the Armenian authorities somehow uphold other negotiation formats while Azerbaijan behaves quite the opposite way. Armenia and Azerbaijan seem to have swapped places. Baku is not in a hurry to announce that Yerevan rejected revised Madrid Principles," Mr. Shahnazaryan told reporters on Wednesday. At that, he emphasized that the resolution of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict depends on Russia and the United States.

6.

OSCE looks to set meeting between Armenia and Azerbaijan in Astana

26.03.2010, Trend News

READ MORE: <http://en.trend.az/news/karabakh/1658886.html>

Kazakhstan is ready to hold a meeting between Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan in Astana 2010 to help resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, OSCE Chairman-In-Office, Kazakh Secretary of State and Foreign Minister Kanat Saudabayev was quoted as saying by KazTAG. "As part of the peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict on the basis of the Madrid Principles, we will give every assistance to the activities of the OSCE Minsk Group and are ready to hold a meeting between Azerbaijani and Armenian presidents in Astana in 2010," he said at a meeting of the CIS Council of Foreign Ministers March 26.

7.

Alexander Iskandaryan: Karabakh conflict not to be resolved over next five years

23.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44614>

The OSCE MG co-chair Bernard Fassier did spoke in Yerevan about impossibility of Azerbaijan' victory in the war, Alexander Iskandaryan , director of the Caucasus Institute said. "The same thing I told to the Azerbaijani Vesti.Az web portal: the OSCE Minsk Group is unable to resolve the conflict instead of the conflict parties. As long as the parties block the possibility of the solution, the solution wouldn' be achieved. The positions of the conflict parties are so incompatible, that one cannot speak about a compromise.

8.

RA MFA: Azerbaijan, signing truce with NKR, actually recognizes Nagorno Karabakh's independence

21.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44515>

Statements by the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev are direct evidence that Baku is not ready to a constructive dialogue over the Karabakh conflict resolution, Shavarsh Kocharyan , Armenian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs said, commenting on the recent statement by the President of Azerbaijan on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict settlement. "Azerbaijan continues to inflate a bubble of illusions, sitting on the oil needle, this is a "bubble" of continuous distortion of the essence of the conflict, its causes and the negotiation process. The flow of militaristic rhetoric has not been stopped so far. Azerbaijan has the opportunity to withdraw its troops from the occupied territories of Nagorno Karabakh and begin negotiations with the Republic of Artsakh, before this bubble bursts, " Deputy Foreign Minister of Armenia said.

9.

RA President appeals to Azerbaijan to sign agreement not to use force

20.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44490>

Nagorno Karabakh was not a part of independent Azerbaijan, the Armenian President stated. "It was the Caucasus Bureau of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union which attached Nagorno Karabakh to Azerbaijan. History is well-known... The international community does not have a different vision," Serzh Sargsyan said in an interview with Euronews.

10.

RA MFA: Refusing to negotiate with Nagorno Karabakh, Azerbaijan hinders talks

19.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44443>

The latest statement of the Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry is another failed attempt of Baku to justify

through Azerbaijani constitution an aggression against the people of Artsakh (NKR), which is a flagrant violation of the UN Charter, RA Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Shavarsh Kocharyan said, commenting on the statement by the Azerbaijan's Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov on the Karabakh conflict resolution. Shavarsh Kocharyan reminded that the Constitution of Azerbaijan was adopted after the conclusion of a cease-fire with the NKR and has nothing to do with the Republic of Artsakh, having its own constitution.

11.

Sergey Lebedev: CIS states are interested in soonest settlement of Karabakh conflict
17.03.2010, PanARMENIAN

READ MORE: <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=44318>

I haven't the least doubt about all CIS states being interested in the soonest settlement of Karabakh conflict, CIS executive secretary Sergey Lebedev said. "As CIS Executive Committee chairman, I would be glad if Armenia and Azerbaijan achieved peaceful and fair settlement of the issue," he said, adding that though executive committee and other structures of CIS do not show direct participation, nevertheless they actively support efforts to find mutually acceptable solution.

12.

EU hinders economic development in Abkhazia – president

12.03.2010 RT

READ MORE: http://rt.com/Top_News/2010-03-12/bagapsh-abkhazia-georgia-eu.html?fullstory

The republic's president, Sergey Bagapsh, calls the attitude of the EU towards his country illogical. He expressed his concerns at a meeting with EU Ambassador for Southern Caucasus Peter Semneby. Bagapsh pointed out that Europe contradicts its own proclaimed principle of distinguishing political issues from economic ones. As an example, Bagapsh drew on the incident when Finland's Foreign Ministry banned the company Nokia from buying mobile communication equipment for Abkhazia.

13.

Former UN Mediator, EU Special Representative visit Abkhazia

12.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE: http://www.rferl.org/content/Former_UN_Mediator_EU_Special_Representative_Visit_Abkhazia/1982237.html

Ambassador Dieter Boden, who served from 1999-2002 as the UN secretary-general's special representative for the Abkhaz conflict, returned to Sukhumi this week after a seven-year hiatus for talks with Abkhaz leaders, including Sergei Bagapsh, the breakaway Georgian region's de facto president. He will travel to Tbilisi on March 17. EU special representative for the South Caucasus Peter Semneby was scheduled to arrive in Abkhazia on March 11. Boden is quoted as having argued during his meetings in Sukhumi that it is in Abkhazia's interest to continue participating in the talks in Geneva on security and stability in the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in the wake of the August 2008 war between Georgia and Russia that precipitated their formal recognition by Moscow as independent states.

14.

HR Declaration on behalf of the EU on the Georgian strategy on Abkhazia and South Ossetia

12.03.2010, EU2010

READ MORE:

http://www.eu2010.es/en/documentosynoticias/declaracionespsc/mar12_pescgeorgia.html

The European Union takes note of Georgia's "State Strategy on Occupied Territories: Engagement through Cooperation", endorsed by the Georgian government on 27 January. The EU welcomes Georgia's commitment to solving the conflict only through peaceful means and diplomatic efforts. The EU welcomes the spirit of the initiative as a constructive step towards easing tensions, building confidence and reaching out to the residents of the Abkhaz and South Ossetian regions.

XVII. SECURITY

1.

Ukrainian sailors ready to cooperate with Black Sea Fleet

29.03.2010, KyivPost

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/62719/>

The Ukrainian Navy are preparing for the Fairway of Peace 2010 bilateral exercise with Russia's Black Sea Fleet and a joint parade in Sevastopol on May 9, Ukrainian Navy commander Vice Admiral Viktor Maksymov said. "At a recent meeting with Canadian Ambassador to Ukraine Daniel Caron the commander informed him that preparations were under way for the Ukrainian-Russian command post computerized exercise, "Fairway of Peace - 2010" scheduled for June," a Navy Command spokesperson told Interfax.

2.

NATO urges Russia to help create 'security roof'

27.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE:

http://www.rferl.org/content/NATO_Urges_Russia_To_Help_Create_Security_Roof_/1995267.html

The head of NATO has called on Russia to help create a vast "security roof" aimed at countering the growing nuclear threat posed by rogue nations such as Iran. "We need a missile defense system that includes not just all countries of NATO but Russia, too," Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen said today at a NATO conference in Brussels. "One security roof that we build together, that we support together, and that we operate together. One security roof that protects us all." Rasmussen said the Western security alliance needed a "radical change" in the way it conceives both missile defense and Russia if it wanted to protect its population from potential attacks. He said nuclear proliferation, in addition to terrorist attacks, was a rapidly mounting threat. "Up to now, that threat has remained largely abstract. But a look at current trends shows that the proliferation threat is real, and it is growing," he said.

3.

NATO chief urges EU to bring Turkey into defence arm

27.03.2010 EUbusiness

READ MORE: <http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/nato-defence-turkey.3wk>

NATO chief Anders Fogh Rasmussen on Saturday urged the European Union to bring Turkey into the bloc's defence development arm and security structures "Why doesn't the EU grant such an arrangement to Turkey?" said Rasmussen, in a pointed demand for Ankara, which provides NATO with one its biggest armed forces, to join the European Defence Agency (EDA), a mainly research and development arm. His call, delivered to top policymakers attending a transatlantic security conference in Brussels, was directed squarely at listening EU parliament head Jerzy Buzek.

4.

Obama, Medvedev agree on landmark nuclear arms reduction pact

26.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE:

http://www.rferl.org/content/Obama_To_Call_Medvedev_To_Finalize_New_Arms_Pact/1994636.html

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and his U.S. counterpart, Barack Obama, today spoke by telephone to conclude almost a year of negotiations on a new nuclear arms reduction treaty. During a televised news briefing at the White House, Obama said the agreement, which will see both countries slash the number of deployed nuclear warheads by more than a quarter, achieves one of his primary goals as president. "Since taking office, one of my highest national security priorities has been addressing the threat posed by nuclear weapons to the American people," Obama said. "And that's why last April in Prague I stated America's intention to pursue the peace and security of a world without

nuclear weapons, a goal that has been embraced by presidents like John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan." Obama said he and Medvedev will meet to sign the treaty in the Czech capital on April 8, almost a year to the day since the speech.

5.

Yanukovich: Ukraine should reconsider military doctrine

25.03.2010, KyivPost

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/62528/>

Kyiv needs to reconsider its attitude toward threats to its military security, said President Viktor Yanukovich. "Growing instability and conflicts in international relations have brought the problem of the country's defense capability to the foreground. First of all we need to adjust and possibly reconsider our view on threats to our military security," Yanukovich said at a ceremony marking the 18th anniversary of the Ukrainian Security Service at Ukraina Palace in Kyiv.

6.

NATO Reassures Georgia on 'open-door policy'

25.03.2010, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

READ MORE:

http://www.rferl.org/content/NATO_Reassures_Georgia_On_Open_Door_Policy/1993932.html

Secretary-General Anders Rasmussen told Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili in Brussels today that the promise of eventual membership for Georgia in NATO made in April 2008 still stands. "NATO's policy toward Georgia has not changed. We will continue to support Georgia in its Euro-Atlantic aspirations," Rasmussen said. Along with Ukraine, Georgia has aspired to NATO membership for years. Rasmussen said the brakes that new Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich appears to have applied to his country's NATO aspirations will not affect Georgia's progress.

7.

Russia says no arms reduction deal without missile defense clause

23.03.2010, Global Security

READ MORE: <http://www.globalsecurity.org/space/library/news/2010/space-100323-rianovosti03.htm>

Russia insists on the inclusion of U.S. missile defenses in Europe in a new strategic arms reduction treaty between the two countries in order to ensure nuclear parity, Russia's top military commander said. Russia and the United States have been negotiating a replacement to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty since presidents Dmitry Medvedev and Barack Obama met in April last year, but finalizing a document has dragged on, with U.S. plans for missile defense in Europe a particular sticking point. START 1, the cornerstone of post-Cold War arms control, expired on December 5. "The treaty is some 95% ready, but we still have to resolve some issues, including getting the U.S. agreement to include the missile defense issues in the treaty," General Nikolai Makarov said in an interview with the Rossiyskaya Gazeta daily published on Tuesday.

8.

Kyiv, Moscow soon to consider extending lease for Russian fleet in Sevastopol

23.03.2010, Kyiv Post

READ MORE: <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/62357/>

The Ukrainian and Russian leaders will soon raise the issue of extending the lease for the Russian Black Sea Fleet stationed in Sevastopol, Director of the Ukrainian Branch of the CIS Institute Volodymyr Kornilov has said. "I'm sure that the agenda will already include the issue of prolonging the agreement and extending the lease for Russia's Black Sea Fleet in Crimea," he said at a press conference in Kyiv on Tuesday. He said that there were grounds to believe that Ukraine and Russia will agree to extend the Russian fleet's presence in Sevastopol for a longer period, without waiting until 2017, by mutual consent and under beneficial terms. Kornilov said that conditions for such a

decision could be economic. He said that this could be a rise in the cost of the fleet's lease in Crimea, some preferences related to the price for energy resources for Ukraine, as well as a number of other economic issues. He expressed hope that these issues would be considered during Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's visit to Kyiv, which is planned for May 17-18.

9.

Russia may reduce gas price for Ukraine if Black Sea fleet remains in Crimea

22.03.2010, Kyiv Post

READ MORE: http://www.kyivpost.com/news/business/bus_general/detail/62252/

Russia's main requirement for reducing the price of Russian gas delivered to Ukraine may be the prolongation of the deployment of Russia's Black Sea fleet in Crimea, Konstantin Zatulin, a Russian State Duma deputy, told reporters in Donetsk on Friday. "Roughly speaking: you leave the Black Sea fleet, and we are ready to reduce [the price for the Russian gas] for this," Zatulin said, the Ostrov Internet publication reported. Zatulin explained why it is not profitable for Russia to make concessions to Ukraine regarding the issue of prices for natural gas: "Industry [in Ukraine] which sells in Russia is a competitor to the industry functioning [in Russia]... If we do this [reduce the price for gas for Ukraine], we must understand that we give some competitive advantages to Ukrainian industry by depriving Russian industry of [these advantages]," Zatulin said.

10.

Black Sea Fleet future in Ukraine may become clear in few years

21.03.2010, Global Security

READ MORE: <http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news/russia/2010/russia-100321-rianovosti02.htm>

Russia and Ukraine could agree on the extension of the Black Sea Fleet's presence in the Crimea while Viktor Yanukovich serves his first term as Ukrainian president, a Russian lawmaker said. Russia's lease on the Black Sea Fleet's base of Sevastopol is due to expire in 2017, but the new president may look to step back from his predecessor Viktor Yushchenko's strict insistence that the foreign forces leave. "I do not see why we would not be able to agree and sign documents during Viktor Yanukovich's first term [as president] on the extension of the Black Sea Fleet's presence in Ukraine, in the Crimea and Sevastopol after 2017," Ukraine's UNIAN news agency quoted Russian MP Konstantin Zatulin as saying on Saturday.

11.

U.S., Russian negotiators 'at the finish line' on new START nuclear pact

19.03.2010, The Washington Post

READ MORE: http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/03/18/AR2010031801805.html?wprss=rss_world/europe

U.S. and Russian negotiators are "at the finish line" in negotiating a major agreement to cut the number of nuclear warheads each side has deployed against the other, with just one or two issues left to resolve, officials said Thursday. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and the Russian foreign minister said after talks here that they awaited word soon from negotiators in Geneva who have been working 18-hour days to wrap up the agreement. The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) is a top priority of President Obama, who initially had pledged to finish it by last year.

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