

Project Name:

Developing and strengthening a joint approach Romania-Ukraine-Republic of Moldova on the policies promoted by the Russian Federation.

Project Organizers and Partners

Initiator of the project and Coordinator from the Republic of Moldova:

The Institute for Public Policy (IPP)

Partners:

1. Romania

Centre for Conflict Prevention and Early Warning (Bucharest).

2. Ukraine

Institute for Euro-Atlantic Cooperation (Kyiv)

Project Summary

The general objective of the present project is to identify domains and ways of cooperation between Romania, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine for developing and strengthening a joint approach on the policies promoted by the Russian Federation.

The events of August 2008 in Georgia have given rise to a series of questions and concerns regarding Russia's behavior towards different countries in Europe. These concerns include Romania, Moldova and Ukraine, since Russia is heavily involved in the issue of Transnistrian region, which is located between Ukraine and the rest of the territory of Moldova, and in the immediate vicinity of Romania, a member of EU and NATO.

In the aftermath of the Georgian conflict, Russian President Dmitrii Medvedev has laid down, on September 1st 2008, five principles that will guide Russian foreign policy. This step of the Kremlin administration only increased the degree of uncertainty regarding the behavior of Russia, because the five principles are incompatible.

The first principle states that: „Russia recognizes the primacy of the basic principles of international law, which define relations between civilized nations”. At the same time, the fourth principle says that: „Our unquestionable priority is to protect the life and dignity of our citizens, wherever they are. We will also proceed from this in pursuing our foreign policy. We will also protect the interest of our business community abroad. And it should be clear to everyone that if someone makes aggressive forays, he will get a response”. In the fifth principle Dmitrii Medvedev declares that „Russia, just like other countries in the world, has regions where it has its privileged interests. In these regions, there are countries with which we have traditionally had friendly cordial relations, historically special relations. We will work very attentively in these regions and develop these friendly relations with these states, with our close neighbors”.

The war in Georgia has shown that the „protection of life and dignity” of Russian citizens can be done by means absolutely incompatible with the norms of international law. At the same time, in a situation when Russia reserves the unilateral right to designate „regions where it has its privileged interests”, even though these „regions” include sovereign states, the possible repercussion of this policy on Romania, Moldova and Ukraine remains an open question. This question has a present value in a situation when Russia is trying to build in the post-Soviet space a so called „Ruskii Mir” („Russian World”), and manifests a negative attitude toward the GUAM and NATO, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine being members of GUAM and Romania - a member of NATO.

The Georgian war, followed by the war of the gases at the beginning of 2009, proved that Romania, Ukraine and especially the Republic of Moldova are confronting with a series of provocations in different domains as a result of the politics that is, or may be promoted by the Russian Federation and which threatens the regional stability and security of each of these countries. Even the experts from Romania, a country that is a NATO member, after the Georgian war, remarked that NATO is not ready to oppose military operations of this type.

The informational war that accompanied the armed conflict had a different impact in Romania, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova. At the same time, it is become obvious that the security of the informational field is a very up to date issue- for example: a barometer of public opinion made by the IPP in October 2008 shows that only 20 % of those questioned consider that the Russian Federation is responsible, the majority about 34 % blame Georgia, NATO, USA etc.

One of the reasons the Georgian war started was Georgia’s importance for the creating of alternative ways (a detour around the Russian territory) for the transporting of hydrocarbons to the EU from the Caspian Sea. After the visit of Vladimir Putin to the Republic of Moldova on the 14th of November 2008, the Moldavian government gave up due to the pressure from the Russian federation, accepting the control of the Moldavian energy infrastructures by Russia.

As a result, the Georgian war, as well as the war of gases proves the existence of new multiple provocations to the national security of Romania, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova that puts forward the necessity of the reevaluation of the policies of these countries.

The purpose of the present project is to assess the main threats to each country and to identify common approaches and specific solutions for Romania, Moldova and Ukraine regarding their relations with Russia.

The experience of the Common Council of experts Ukraine-Moldova-Romania was valued in the elaboration of the Trilateral Plan on Transnistrian issue (2005-2006), the trilateral solution for European and Euro-Atlantic issue (2006-2007) and the trilateral solution for the societal security (2007-2008). This experience and good trilateral cooperation will now be valued in tackling other critical issues.

- Detecting vulnerabilities of each state in regard to Russian policy;
- Assessing the ways Russian policy is perceived in each society;
- The elaboration of recommendations for each country;
- The elaboration of recommendations regarding the regional cooperation for prevention of potential risks in the new geo-political realities.

Project content

The project will consist of 3 stages, the first two stages will take place simultaneously in Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Romania..

- At the first stage the national group of experts will have to identify the basic fields to be tackled in terms of foreign policy and to put light on the existence of a rational background of regional countries interest in the enforcement of the national security after the August 2008. As well, the purpose will be to develop in details the situation and practices used by the three countries in ensuring the foreign policy and regional partnership.
- At the second stage a common approach in each country regarding their relations with Russia will be developed and the paper content will be drafted.
- Within the workshop in Chisinau it will be developed the final version of the paper that will identify and propose the suitable forms of cooperation between the three countries and other EU countries for ensuring the national and regional security after August 2008.

The final paper will be a Policy Paper with the basic assessment of the situation of the mechanisms in Republic of Moldova and Ukraine and the needed reforms and updates in terms of national security, the needed cooperation of Romania to help this process from the position of an EU member country and the recommendation for all 3 governments and for the EU bodies on this issue. The document will be printed in English, Romanian and Ukrainian and launched in the three countries in public presentations that will take place in September, 2010.

Each national group of experts will start the activity with a brain-storming session, with the participation of 10-12 experts in the field of national and regional security, after which 4 experts will be selected as national authors of policy paper. The final workshop in Chisinau will last one day and a half.

Results and Evaluation of Results

The project will enable the think thank cooperation team to provide officials with recommendations for needed changes, reforms or negotiations in the national security area after the August 2008. Another result is to prove officials and administrative bodies that the trilateral cooperation and negotiation can work without any problem between the three parts and that the experience of the trilateral think thank is a vivid model. For the mid and long term, the results of the studies could be seen as bench marks for a project of regional partnership, building a common approach regarding Russian policy and improving relations between the three countries.

What will be the local impact of this project?

The project is related to the national and regional security and the most important form of this impact is due to structures of the three countries who could have an open agenda for improving their relations and a project for cooperation for their mutual security, not in abstract or political terms, but with a present and direct impact on their lives. At the presentation of the policy paper in Chisinau, to ensure competitiveness, an expert in regional security from Russian Federation will be invited. The participation of the Russian expert at the presentation in Chisinau will be the most useful, compared to Bucharest and Kyiv, because the problems Republic of Moldova is dealing with are far more serious than the problems of the other countries represented by the groups of experts.

What will be the international impact of this project?

At an international level, the project will proof the will of the citizens of the three neighbor countries, at the border of the EU and NATO, to act regional and coordinated for their own interest and for the security of both organizations. On the other hand, the address of such an issue is rising the problem of the commitment of all international bodies that claim solidarity

and allied relations in tackling the issue of national security as they are treating the hard military or political security of the countries in the new geopolitical context.

What methodology will the applicant use to evaluate this project?

The evaluation of the project will be reflected in achieving a common negotiated output on several key disputed issues after the final meeting, without separated opinion, covering all difficult subjects and presenting them to the respective authorities. Participation or meeting on the trilateral level with these authorities is also a part of the evaluation of achieving the term.

What indicators will the applicant use to measure the results of this project?

The indicators will be related to the presentation of all points of the agenda of national security in the new geopolitical context convene between the three parts (reflected in the final rapport), the absence of separate points of vie or reserves, the presentation of the results to responsible authorities to take the report in consideration and the eventual reactions.

What follow-up is planned to continue tracking this project’s impact after its completion?

Launching and presenting the results at the EU, NATO HQ. The theoretical part of the national and regional security understanding after August 2008, ad well as the applied results to the region, is also and added value to the improvement of the bases of discussions between these institutions and the neighbor states, both for NATO and the EU, and the results could be applied in policies to all the situations of neighbor countries, the Eastern Partnership Policy, Sinergy at the Black Sea, Barcelona Process for the Mediterranean countries of IPAP/PARP for the relations with NATO.

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Program of the final meeting

The meeting will be with the participation of 4 representatives of the guest countries, the participants of the host country (Republic of Moldova) and representatives of the civil society or invited specialist of the local countries.

Timeframe and location

Implementation period – 10 months (1 December 2009 – 30 September 2010)

Stage and Event	Implementation period	Country
National “brain-storming” round tables for estimation of the new challenges and risks after the Georgian events	1-18 December 2009	Moldova, Ukraine, Romania
Convening fundamental structure and activity directions. Elaborating and evaluating the vulnerability	09.12.2009 – 12.01.2010	

of each country relating the Russian policy.		
Elaboration of common approach to the priorities for developing and strengthening a joint approach on the policies promoted by the Russian Federation.	12.01.2010 – 19.01.2010	Moldova, Ukraine, Romania
Drafting the first version of the joint approach, missing aspects, consistence of internal provisions with international definitions and approach.	19.01-26.01. 2010	Moldova, Ukraine, Romania
Elaboration of common approach to the priorities for the common policy and specific solutions for Romania, Moldova and Ukraine regarding their relations with Russia.	26.01. – 22.02.2010	Moldova, Ukraine, Romania
Drafting the first version of the project of a realistic and feasible model of the common approach and specific solutions for Romania, Moldova and Ukraine regarding their relations with Russia.	22.02 – 25.03.2010	
Workshop, one day and a half Final form of the report up to date situation and projected model for common approach on the Russian policy. Needed cooperation and collaboration for improving the level of national security.	25.03.2010 – 26.03.2010	Chisinau, Moldova
Finalizing, translation and printing the developed Policy Paper	26.03-11.05.2010	
Presentation of the Policy Paper in Moldova, Ukraine and Romania Participation of 2 experts of each country at every launching in the other countries.	01.09.- 30.10. 2010	Moldova, Ukraine, Romania

Project Participants

Ukrainian group of experts:

Oleksandr Sushko, IEAC Research director

Natalia Belitser, Expert of Pylyp Orlyk Institute for Democracy

Dr. Oles Lisnychuk, Institute for Political and Ethno-National Studies, National Academy of Science of Ukraine

Volodymyr Horbach, Political Expert, IEAC

Sergiy Gerasymchuk, Security and Strategic Studies Group, expert

Olexia Basarab, Security and Strategic Studies Group, expert

Moldovan group of experts:

Oazu Nantoi, program director of the Institute for Public Policy

Eugen Revenco, Foreign Policy Association

Ion Preasca, independent expert

Radu Vrabie, Foreign Policy Association

Romanian group of experts:

Cornel Codita – project manager, Conflict Prevention and Early Warning Center

Iulian Chifu - director, Conflict Prevention and Early Warning Center

Vasile Secares – Foundation for European Studies and Governance

Hari Bucur - executive director NATO Studies Center

Fabian Nicolae - Conflict Prevention and Early Warning Center

