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We will start our plenary session on ‘Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia Facing the Ukrainian War’. I am really happy to moderate this session because I think it is the first time we have had participants from post Soviet countries at the WPC. I will come back to this definition of post Soviet countries. I am very glad to introduce Olga Rosca, Chief of Staff of the Deputy Prime Minister and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of Moldova; Roman Vassilenko, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan – thank you for being here in person – and Lasha Darsalia, by video, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia.

Ukraine is the first victim of Russian aggression, but other neighboring countries are also suffering from shocks at different levels. I think about the flood of migrants, and I think about energy pressures from Russia. It should be noted that the great part of Kazakhstan’s gas passes by Caspian Pipeline consortiums (CPC) through Russian territory. There are unresolved conflicts in Transnistria in Moldova, in Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia and there are many Russian speakers in the north of Kazakhstan. As is noticeable, we did not put ‘post Soviet states’ in the title of this panel. We preferred the long version ‘Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia’, with three countries each represented here from these three geographical areas, because three decades after the fall of the Soviet Union the question arises about the coherence of this space.