

GLOBAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNANCE

Tatiana Kastouéva-Jean, Research Fellow and Director of the Russia/NIS Center of Ifri

I have another common question for all of you about regional organizations and extra regional organizations because we see it is about the global governance and the regional governance, so it is very important to speak about the different regional and global organizations. Kazakhstan is part of almost all regional organizations, unlike Georgia and Moldova, so my questions will be different for Kazakhstan. Which regional organization will survive this war in Ukraine? The Eurasian Economic Union is very much affected by sanctions? The Collective Security Treaty Organization had a kind of moment of glory in January with the peacekeeping operation in Kazakhstan, but on the other hand it remains powerless in the conflict in Nagorno Karabakh and the conflict on the border between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. In mid October, Kyrgyzstan announced the cancellation of the military exercises planned with the Collective Security Treaty Organization. Also, what about the Community of Independent States? Is the war in Ukraine the last nail in the coffin of this organization? On the other hand, the organizations that go beyond the region seem to be doing quite well, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Conference for Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia. How do you see things? Then I will formulate questions for Georgia and Moldova.

Roman Vassilenko, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan, being the largest landlocked country, and being the country that neighbors Russia and China, has ever since its independence pursued a multi vector foreign policy, a balanced approach to our foreign policy, which, among other things, prioritizes the internationalization of our international relations, meaning the establishment of the relevant and needed international organizations. That is why Kazakhstan has been the founder of many of the organizations you mentioned, or the initiator even, such as the Conference for Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia, which is an OSC type of organization for Asia that we initiated 30 years ago.

However, I will perhaps highlight the example of the Eurasian Economic Union, also a brainchild of Kazakhstan's leadership, established in Kazakhstan in 2014. For us, that is, first and foremost, an economic organization because we want to have closer ties to the outside world and that union helped remove the customs borders within the union. That is why it was one of the major reasons for the success of the China to Europe land based transportation across Kazakhstan over the past 10 years, before this war began. We will continue to support these organizations. We will continue to pursue our own national interests, and you may have seen our President Tokayev addressing the Eurasian Economic Union leadership just yesterday in neighboring Kyrgyzstan, where he prioritized economic cooperation, first and foremost. We will, therefore, support these institutions. We think each and every one of them plays their own role.



I do not think it is a matter of which one survives. Each and every one of them has their own challenges indeed. CSTO played a role in helping Kazakhstan overcome its own internal turmoil in January and, yes, within this institution there are some ongoing challenges and discussions about its future direction or its future meaning, but we believe they have a role to play. We do should not forget of course that Afghanistan is not far away from Central Asia and from Kazakhstan and that is a top priority for several institutions which you mentioned, including CSTO and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. However tragic that war is, there are numerous challenges outside of Ukraine, Afghanistan being one of them, and illegal migration being another one. Climate change is another one. We will, therefore, continue to strengthen and participate in all institutions, as long as it is on our national interest.

Tatiana Kastouéva-Jean

Thank you very much. I will reformulate the question for Moldova and Georgia. For you the main question today is the relationship with the European Union and NATO. Moldova is now the candidate. How do you see the path towards membership? What are you doing for that now and how much time could it take?

Olga Rosca, Chief of staff of the Deputy Prime-Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of Moldova

Indeed, European integration and European membership is an absolute priority for the current government. This is also the mandate that the government got from the citizens, so we spare no effort to press on with the reforms despite all the challenges that I have described before. We are aware that there are no shortcuts. We are committed to hard work. We are committed to reforms. When the European Union granted us the candidate status, the Commission recommended nine steps that we need to take. We are currently implementing this action plan. About one third of this work is done. We have created a National Commission for European Integration, which is chaired by the president, which includes civil society, and it oversees the progress of reforms that pave the way to European Union membership.

Now, these are wide ranging steps that we need to take. Most of them are in the justice sector, also tackling the influence of oligarchs in the media sphere, in political life and in the economy. We are also building up administrative capacity to deliver on these reforms. Just last week, we were recruiting about 24 new positions at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and obviously preparing for accession negotiations, just preparing the ground, creating working groups and creating coordination mechanisms for that.

Tatiana Kastouéva-Jean

Thank you very much, Olga. Mr. Darsalia, I will put it bluntly: are you disappointed not to have been accepted as a candidate when you expressed your European orientation very early? How do you see the relationship with the European Union in the mid and long term?

Lasha Darsalia, First Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Georgia

We very clearly said, first of all, that we already made one step, which is granting Georgia the European perspective. This is the first step. I will not lie. The expectations were higher considering Georgia's achievements over the last two to three decades, and we really hope that



when the decision is made next year it will be a merit based decision and Georgia will make it there as well. From our side, we are very committed to continue on this path of reform. We started these reforms not only because of our goal of membership. It is, first of all, for our nation. The whole political class in Georgia is committed to continue on this path and we really are hoping that during the next decision Georgia will get to take the next step on this path.

Generally talking about the European and the Euro Atlantic perspective, I want to say that Georgia has two red lines. This is the territorial integrity and the European and Euro Atlantic integration. This is very clear and this is really a red line. This is not pink or any other color. There is even conventionally agreement about this in Georgia. I say conventional because we have it in our constitution, Georgia's European and Euro Atlantic integration, as well as territorial integrity, which is existential for any country. I am saying European and Euro Atlantic together because this is not just a choice of welfare or security for us. This is, first of all, a choice of values and to which part of the world, to which civilization, we belong to. That is why it is a red line for Georgians as well.

Generally speaking, I want to say a few words about the international organizations. Georgia strongly supports multilateralism, and I really hope that when we are back to establishing European security architecture or when we are back to correcting all this damage that was done by the invasion of Ukraine to the international system that multilateralism as a principle will be even more strengthened. If we are talking about which organization Georgia supports, Georgia generally supports multilateralism, and we hope that the organizations that are part of multilateralism will survive.

Tatiana Kastouéva-Jean

Thank you very much, Mr. Darsalia, because you built a perfect bridge to my next question.