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## **TRANSFORMATIONS AND DYNAMICS OF THE EU-CENTRAL ASIAN RELATIONS**

**Sh. Juraeva***Senior scientific researcher,  
Uzbekistan State World Languages University,  
Tashkent, Uzbekistan*

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**Abstract.** The present article deals with the analysis of relations between some EU and Central Asian countries. The collapse of Soviet Union is regarded as the main factor, which served as the accelerator for the relations between EU and Central Asian countries. Several stages of relations between the above mentioned areas are also discussed in the article. Relations of the discussed areas in the spheres of economy, energy and education are regarded as the main factors that increase the number of countries making relations with each other. The author of the article suggests that the relations between EU and Central Asian countries should continue in all spheres as they contribute to the maintenance and development of peace, stability, cooperation in the continents.

**Keywords:** disintegration; EU; Central Asia; political cooperation; intensification of political dialogue; Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation; Central Asian Republics.

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Disintegration of Soviet Union has resulted in creation of the condition for Central Asian republics and the EU establish bilateral and multilateral partnership. Since 1991 the EU's the main instrument in conducting strategy in CIS has been, the "Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation" which also signed with all the republics of the former Soviet Union. The EU initialed the Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in May 1996 and with Uzbekistan in June 1996. In July 1999 the agreement became fully operational after ratification by all the 15 EU member states and European Parliament. EU Tajikistan bilateral trade relations are governed by an Interim Agreement on trade and trade related matters, pending ratification of the PCA signed with Tajikistan in 2004. The PCA signed with Turkmenistan in 1998 has been ratified by the EU in 2009. All five Central Asian countries are beneficiaries of the EU's Generalized System of Preferences. These agreements do not extend any prospect for admission to the EU and simply serve to effect, on I bilateral, European interest in Central Asia.

The relations between the EU and Central Asian are important aspects for both sides in the national, regional and global level.

**Political cooperation.** From the beginning to present time the EU and Central Asia relations passed several stapes. *The first*, in the beginning and middle 1990<sup>th</sup>, period when the EU and Central Asia established partnership, but Europe was not interested in region and its policies had no clear vision and strategy. The EU expected for development of democratic and market institutes, while the new independent states needed to create all over again specific regimes to keep internal stability and external security'.

In second half 1990's in Europe it is especial in Germany, about to understand that in the geopolitical context the EU considerable lags behind other external players on Caspian Sea and in Central Asia. The most active member of the EU – Germany was occurred with the European problems, first of all expansion of the European Union and formation by common foreign and security policy.

From 2000 start *second stapes* in the EU-Central Asia relations, when Europe start to pay more attention on Central Asian the region laying in sphere of the its interests. Thus, in 2000 the tendency to growth of concern.

Of Europe by the various threads which are starting with Central Asia- drug trafficking, by illegal migration, growth of social

intensity, stopping democratic processes, growth in some republics of threads of a economic collapse, and last an exit on a stage radical and military Islam supported by interested forces from the outside and by internal instability and social despair.

According to some European scholars the EU interest to Central Asia is part of increasing Europe role in the international affairs. EU's interest in projecting its political model toward a politically and economically "emerging" actor in global affairs and as an important components of EU's global strategy.

After September 11, 2001 a serious search for alternative sources of energy has been initiated. 2001 crisis brought the issue of stopping Europe's dependence on Arab oil to the European agenda and Caspian oil seemed to bring good prospects for Europe in these respects. This factor will determine the development of relations between Central Asia nations and European states and with the EU in general as with political and economic entity. In November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2004 at the 1<sup>st</sup> EU, Caspia and Black Sea countries Energy Ministerial Conference in Baku, Azerbaijan, thought "Baku Initiative" enhanced energy and transport cooperation between the EU, Black Sea and Caspian region and in November 30, 2006 at the 2<sup>sd</sup> Energy Ministerial meeting in Astana, Kazakhstan was agreed on a new Energy Road Map and its implementation will pave the way for a comprehensive legal and regulatory governing an integrated EU-Black Sea-Caspian Sea common energy market based on the EU acquits. The Road map agreed by the European Commission and Governments of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and Russian Federation (as an observer). In December 2006 during President N. Nazarbaev visit to Brussels it was signed Memorandum on strategic energy cooperation between EU and Kazakhstan.

**Third** stapes in the EU and Central Asia start in 2007 the EU adopted a new strategy toward Central Asia in 2007-2013 with em-

phasizing on increasing political and economic partnership. At the EU presidency programme 2007 Germany initiated a new programme on increase political partnership with Central Asia. It was accepted new EU strategy toward Central Asia in 2007–2013 with emphasizing to increasing political and economic *partnership and the strategy was welcomed by Central Asian nations* [1, p. 329–332].

The Strategy also calls for intensification of political dialogue with all five countries of Central Asia, including holding of regular meetings at Foreign Minister level and convening annual meetings of EU Heads of Mission in the region. Overall, progress on implementing the EU Central Asia Strategy has been encouraging. After the lapse of only one year, a new quality of cooperation has evolved between Central Asia and the EU. The new EU-Central Asia partnership for the 21<sup>st</sup> century is making a difference. On the side of the Central Asian countries there is a strongly increased interest in enhanced cooperation with the EU in all levels and areas of interests. Concrete actions have been mutually agreed upon and are being implemented or are under preparation, both bilaterally with the five Central Asian republics, and with all on key regional issues as education, Rule of Law, water and environment. All Central Asian states have agreed to engage in or continue a structured Human Rights Dialogue with the EU. National Coordinators for the Strategy have been appointed by all Central Asian states, demonstrating that Central Asian partners assume ownership and fully engage in cooperation. High-level political dialogue has visibly intensified.

In 27–28 November 2008 the EU-Central Asian Ministerial Conference, co-organised by the French Presidency and Germany, entitled "Rule of Law – Cornerstone of Development" was held in Brussel. High representatives from the judicial and political institutions of the EU and Central Asia expressed their determination to strengthen the rule of law through the support for and coop-

eration on the modernization of constitutional courts and other legal institutes, professional training for law students and young lawyers, and the overall progress in the legal, judicial and administrative reforms. The participants agreed to organize regional thematic conferences in Central Asia in the course of 2009 and to convene again in Central Asia in 2010 to discuss progress and shape future steps in the development of the EU's Rule of Law Initiative for Central Asia [2].

During the EU Presidency Czech republic devoted attention to the region through the energy security priority it has set and its aim to inject new life into the Nabucco gas transport project. Meanwhile, on a more modest scale, the EUCAM team has been in discussion with Prague about a meeting on EU-Central Asia relations and energy security, to take place in mid-April 2008.

Good impulse for the EU- Central Asia and the EU Uzbekistan relations in 2009 was abolishing by the EU its sanctions imposed against Uzbekistan after the 13 May 2005 Andijan tragic event. The sanction itself.

I Bused strong debates at the academic and political level on the sanction and it's unproductively for both side – the EU and Uzbekistan.

At the results, at present the EU is guided more by pragmatic interest **i if** mutually beneficiary economic cooperation with the states having good economic prospects and rich natural resources.

At the same time, there are many problems in Central Asia and EU mlations. There are critics from both sides. From EU bad human rights uicord of Central Asian countries, slow tempo of economic reforms and Others. From Central Asia absence clear strategy, ignoring of regional and local peculiarities, double standards approaches.

Although the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century finds a heightened interest ol Europe in Central Asia and the region to the EU, but still the EU does not yet have a unified strategy toward the region. The economic and

political interests of the large European states in Central Asia differ and diverge. This is both to the internal peculiarities of European politics and to the general geopolitical states situation, including the relations of the EU with the US and Russia. Central Asia also need developed more common regional approaches in the European policy.

The EU integration experience could very useful for future regional integration in Central Asia. In the interview and sociological survey author among experts and official from Central Asian republics, Russia, the UK, the majority of specialists (95 %) consider the EU and ASEAN as good models for regional integration in Central Asia but with local peculiarities. Resent interview in France and Germany supported this conclusion.

**Economic, energy and educational relations.** Together with Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation, another important EU policy instrument in the region, concerns the realizations of the programme of technical assistance (TACIS), which is aimed at supporting the implementation of economic reforms and economic and political reforms links between partner countries. TACIS is the main assistance instrument with the countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia and includes both national and regional programmes in areas such as nuclear safety, cross-border cooperation and regional cooperation. In October 2002 EU Commission adopted The Strategy Paper for Central Asia (SP) and provides the strategic framework within which EC assistance is provided for the period 2002–2006.

At present Central Asian republics - Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, as well as China, Iran, Pakistan, and the Caucasian republics – Georgia and Azerbaijan are involved in the process of organization and harmonization of the transport arteries and communications connecting Europe and Asia, the West and the East. Including famous Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia (TRACECA), it has received serious support from the European

Union in an effort to rebuilding sea, road and railway links.

From the point of view of the regions of Europe, South Asia and North-Asia, Central Asia is a crucial linkage area of interregional contact, why can either result in division and conflict, as in the Cold War and the h conflict in Afghanistan, or in a new series of connections which allow mo positive relationships.

It is also grooving EU interest to Central Asia in the energy partnership at the same time Central Asian nations also try to found an alternative corridor for the export of energy resources and economic relations could be one of the important aspects of mutual cooperation in coming years. At the present the EU imported 50 % energy and after several years EU dependence on the import will increase on 70 %. Main provider of these energy is Russia, but after the Gas War between Russia and Ukraine, Brussels tries to decries dispenses on Russian delivery of energy and activ finding alternative sources and Central Asia and Caspian region have potential of it.

At the Joint Declaration of the Participants in the EU Central Asia Forum on Security Issues in Paris in 18 September 2008 was also confirmed the importance of active cooperation in the development of different hydrocarbon transport corridors that aim to ensure a guaranteed and reliable supply for European markets and other international markets [1]. In the coming years in the EU-Central Asia partnership in the energy field will be dominated.

In the EU-Central Asia relations special attention was given to educational partnership. Preventatives of universities and research institutes from Central Asian nations participated at the EU Tempus», «Erasmus Mundus», 'Erasmus Mundus/Outside window partnership and other programs.

The Tempus programme has provided substantial contribution to development of regional cooperation: four projects in Energy, Water Resource Management, Social Economics, and Tourism were successfully implemented together with HEIs and non-

academic organisations from Ukraine, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Mongolia [3, p. 8]. Tempus projects have contributed to: development of curricula for masters' and bachelors' programme, i.e. to introducing two level higher education system; Renovation and development of new training materials; Creating sustainable academic partnerships and others [3, p. 10].

The EU countries are active in Central Asia at national level, for instance German humanitarian foundation DAAD, Adenaur, Gate Institute, French Institute for Central Asian studies and others. German universities are very active in the intuitional partnership with the universities, research centers and governmental institutions. Among the successful projects could mentionseveral institutional projects on the EU and Central Asia educational partnership project funded by Volkswagen-Foundation. (*The projects "Security, Conflict Management, and Economic Cooperation in Central Asia" (2002–2005) and the professionalization projects for Central Asian academics "Germany, the European Union, and Central Asia (I)" (2005–2006), and "Germany, the European Union, and Central Asia (II)" (2007–2009) was conducted by Foreign Policy Studies at the Institute of Political Sciences of the Justus-Liebig-University Giessen/Germany and Within and in addition to these projects joint conferences/workshops, staff exchange, and Ph.D. projects on and with Central Asian scholars and academic institutions have been realized*). Within and in addition to these projects many academics, young scholars, public service from Central Asia have participated at joint conferences in Central Asia and in Germany, also number young scholar had opportunity visit to the University of Giessen and to know more on history and current of process in the EU, the EU-Central Asia relations.

It is well known that the majority of the Central Asian population represent the young generation and their education and professional development should be key priority of

the EU-Central Asian bilateral and multilateral partnership relations. In future the EU and member countries important to have more active educational partnership like Germany.

### **Conclusion.**

Central Asian partnership with the EU in the political, economic, energy, transport and educational should continue because it will contribute to the maintenance and development of peace, stability, cooperation and modernizations. The EU and Central Asia are important strong bilateral and multilateral cooperation in a new technology, which are needed for economic reform and attracting foreign aid and direct investment. At the same time the EU and Central Asia needs to develop a concrete long range partnership strategy.

Regional cooperation in Central Asia and Eurasia can become an important factor in the maintenance of peace and security in the region, which are necessary for a stable economic growth and development. Regional organizations need concentrate first of all on further regional integration in Central Asia itself and to be adequate to the increase processes of globalization. It is important study experience of EU, ASEAN and develops with them bilateral and multilateral relations. A well-developed regional transport system in Central Asia is potential for regional prosperity and good opportunity development regional and international transport network and substantial trade relations and will facilitate foreign investment from foreign countries.

Central Asian republics consider the development of alternative regional transport communications as important of the national, regional and international strategy and in results it was developed a new transport communication connection Asia and Europe. For

future the cooperation between Central Asia nations with EU and other international and regional organizations following could suggested:

Firstly, EU and Central Asian nation necessary continue partnership on the alternative transport corridors and pipelines and cooperation in the solving wind range problem, including ecological one;

Secondly, EU and Central Asian nation necessary continue partnership on the alternative transport corridors and pipelines and cooperation in the solving wind range problem, including ecological one; Afghanistan is international and regional factor of security and stabilization is important for the future of Central Asia.

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Forth, the EU, the NATO, the OSCE and need to have strong relations with CIS, SCO and other regional organizations.

Globalizations and security challenges require a broader partnership and cooperation. It is necessary enlarge of the Central Asian-the EU relations and future strong partnership would promote stability, and economic progress in Central Asia and Europe.

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