"The recent democratic opening presents Ukraine with an enormous opportunity to anchor democracy, stability and security in our country and Eastern Europe more broadly. For this to succeed, enhanced dialogue with our partners and neighbors in the region, in the European Union and in the United States will be critical."

Petro Poroshenko, Secretary, National Security and Defence Council, Ukraine

"In the fall of 2004, I witnessed the Orange Revolution in Ukraine. With my own eyes I saw young people protecting the ballot boxes with their bodies. In the peaceful demonstrations in Kyiv, Ukrainians both old and young stood together against corruption, longing for freedom and democracy. The Ukrainian democratic movement had to wait too long to get the world's attention and support for their struggle. That must not be the case again."

Urban Ahlin, Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Parliament of Sweden

"Ukraine’s successful Orange Revolution may be the next step in redrawing the map of Europe and, thus, will challenge and test the strategic imagination of the West in a profound way."

Ronald D. Asmus, Executive Director, Transatlantic Center Brussels, German Marshall Fund of the United States
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The history of every nation contains moments that become decisive for its future. The peaceful Orange Revolution in Ukraine at the end of 2004 was just such a historic turning point for my country. Ukrainians stood up for their dignity and their freedom. It was a battle that they won. They made a clear choice in favor of democratic civilization and for freely elected leaders to guide changes in their lives and in their society. To be sure, the new leaders of Ukraine have inherited a difficult legacy. Nonetheless, they have the political will to reform the country in line with European democratic standards.

Domestically, our main priorities will be to continue the democratization of Ukraine, ensuring freedom of speech, guaranteeing an independent judiciary, separating state power from business, eliminating corruption, implementing administrative reform, and expanding the rights of local self-government. Internationally, for Ukraine the period of the so-called “multi-vector” foreign policy – seeking a kind of half-way house between East and West – is now in the past. From now on, our policy priorities will be determined by a clear course towards integration with European and Euro-Atlantic structures.

The most important task for the new government is to bring the political, social, economic and defense systems of the state into compliance with Euro-Atlantic standards. We want every citizen of the country to see the advantages that adopting these standards will bring. We want to help Ukrainians to realize that the future of our country is inseparably linked with the institutions of European and transatlantic integration, most prominently the North-Atlantic Alliance and the European Union.

Borys Tarasyuk is Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine. He actively participated in the Strategic Dialogue on Ukraine and the Euro-Atlantic community.
Ukraine's future lies inside NATO. We already have a strong integrationist pillar in the partnership between Ukraine and NATO. Ukraine is an active participant in NATO's peacekeeping efforts in the Balkans. We will continue to support NATO troops in Afghanistan. Ukraine is ready to join the NATO-led anti-terrorist operation “Active Endeavor” in the Mediterranean. Although recently, Ukraine started the withdrawal of its troops from Iraq, we will retain a presence in that country, contributing to the training of the Iraqi military and police.

I believe that Ukraine's accession to NATO would provide a unique opportunity to expand the most powerful security system in the world far into the east of the European continent. In this pursuit, we intend to accelerate the implementation of defense reform in order to ensure the compatibility of the Ukrainian army with NATO forces. We will also strive to provide our citizens with better information about our cooperation with NATO. This will be crucial to overcoming old stereotypes about the Alliance and to achieving unity in understanding the importance of NATO for our country.

Of equal importance to the new political leadership of Ukraine are decisive efforts towards ever closer relationships and cooperation with the European Union. We welcomed the contribution of European Union leaders, as well as of individual European countries, to ensuring a peaceful political transition during the Orange Revolution. We are encouraged by recent European Union efforts to strengthen ties with Ukraine. For the new government, and no less for the citizens of Ukraine, these are signals that our country has a clear and equal place among the European family of democratic nations.

We understand that the Orange Revolution marks only the beginning of our path to Europe, and we are aware that there will be hurdles to be overcome both from within and from without. In Ukraine, we are committed to undertaking all the necessary political, economic and social reforms to bring our country closer to European standards. In Europe, we will need the support of many to succeed. Yet I am confident that together with our partners, not least in civil society and the media, we will be able to build a truly European Ukraine.
I welcome the commitment of the German Marshall Fund of the United States and its partners to Ukraine and to its European and transatlantic future. The strategic dialogue initiated on Ukraine and the Euro-Atlantic community has provided an important forum for discussion among politicians, experts and the broader public. This has been an important step towards a better understanding of the challenges ahead, and towards developing policies that can realize Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic ambitions. I very much hope that this and other initiatives will continue in the years to come.
CHRONOLOGY OF THE ORANGE REVOLUTION

October 31, 2004
First round of Ukrainian presidential elections to decide a successor to Leonid Kuchma.

November 1, 2004
The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe expresses concerns at conduct of first round voting.

November 21, 2004
Viktor Yushchenko and Viktor Yanukovych face off in second round election contest after neither candidate exceeds the 50 percent threshold necessary for outright victory in the first round.

November 22, 2004
Yanukovych hailed as victor by Russian President Vladimir Putin after early returns give him a strong lead. Yushchenko claims victory for himself, voting watchdogs speak of massive irregularities, and demonstrators begin to gather in the center of Kyiv.

November 24, 2004
Yanukovych declared winner by electoral commission a day after Yushchenko is “sworn in” as president in a symbolic ceremony of protest in the Ukrainian parliament.

November 25, 2004
Supreme court receives formal protest from Yushchenko and orders that election results not be published.

November 26, 2004
Yanukovych condemns protesters for attempting a coup d'état.
Chronology of the Orange Revolution

November 28, 2004
Fears of ethno-linguistic tensions reach new heights as regional leaders in eastern Ukraine call for referendum on relations with Kyiv.

November 29, 2004
President Kuchma accepts need for new elections.

November 30, 2004
Yanukovych offers to make Yushchenko his prime minister – an offer which is turned down.

December 1, 2004
Parliament fires Yanukovych’s government. Yanukovych refuses to step down.

December 3, 2004
The Supreme Court declares the elections null and void and sets December 26 as date for new run off between Yushchenko and Yanukovych.

December 6, 2004
The Kremlin backs away from outright support for Yanukovych with President Putin saying he will work with whomever the Ukrainian people choose to elect as their legitimate leader.

December 8, 2004
Changes are made in parliament to the electoral law to ensure fairer vote. Parliament simultaneously votes to reduce presidential powers.

December 11, 2004
Doctors in Austria say Yushchenko was poisoned with dioxin earlier in the campaign.

December 26, 2004
Voters turn out across Ukraine for re-run of second round of presidential elections. Yushchenko wins with 51.99 percent compared with 44.2 percent for Yanukovych.
Chronology of the Orange Revolution

December 31, 2004
Yanukovych resigns the premiership.

January 23, 2005
After the supreme court rejects final appeals by Yanukovych, Viktor Yushchenko takes the oath of office and is sworn in as Ukraine’s new president.

February 21, 2005
European Union and Ukraine sign Action Plan with 10 point addendum to forge closer ties.

February 23, 2005
President Yushchenko addresses European Parliament in Brussels saying he hopes Ukraine can begin EU membership negotiations in 2007.

April 4, 2005
President Yushchenko is received at the White House by George W. Bush. President Bush applauds the Orange Revolution as “an inspiration to all who love liberty.” He holds out the prospect of Ukraine joining NATO but says it is “not a given”. Ukraine must work hard to meet the entry criteria.

April 5, 2005
Ukrainian prosecutors say two policemen confess to taking part in the killing of opposition, investigative journalist Georgiy Gongadze in 2000. The killing of Gongadze was one of the most notorious events of former president Leonid Kuchma’s period in office and helped galvanize the democratic opposition into action.
INTRODUCTION

Joerg Forbrig and Robin Shepherd

“President Yushchenko was the first head of state I called after my inaugural address. I told him that the Orange Revolution was a powerful example – an example of democracy for people around the world.” United States President George W. Bush at a joint press conference with the new President of Ukraine, Viktor Yushchenko, in the White House, April 4, 2005.

This book comes out amid extraordinary times. Extraordinary, first and foremost, for the people of Ukraine who, in what was quickly dubbed as the Orange Revolution, fought heroically for freedom and democracy. The five dramatic weeks in late 2004, which swept Viktor Yushchenko to power, stunned the world, and Ukraine has even been credited by some with lighting the flame of democratic revolution as far afield as Lebanon and Kyrgyzstan. The democratic breakthrough in Ukraine has also forced strategists and policy makers from Moscow to Brussels and from Brussels to Washington to rethink some of their deepest assumptions about both Ukraine and the post-Cold War European order. A country which once seemed lost to some of the worst excesses of post-communist failure has jolted many into a state of strategic shock. How now to handle Ukraine? What of NATO and the European Union? What of Russia?

Few could have predicted this development, although many sensed that the 2004 presidential elections would be crucial to determining Ukraine’s future for many years to come. For this reason, the German Marshall Fund of the United States, the Heinrich Böll Foundation of Germany and the Center for European and International Studies in Kyiv launched a project in September 2004 that was aimed

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Introduction

at a strategic dialogue on Ukraine and the Euro-Atlantic community. This dialogue consisted of two conferences, both taking place in Kyiv – one before the Orange Revolution and one inside the Ukrainian parliament building, just a week after Viktor Yushchenko was sworn in as president in January 2005.

At both conferences, policy-makers and analysts from Ukraine, Europe and the United States came together for informal round table discussions that grappled with issues ranging from the future of democracy in Ukraine itself to the country’s prospects for integration in Euro-Atlantic political and security structures. In the course of this dialogue, it became increasingly clear that Ukraine was breaking new ground and that Ukrainian, as well as Western, politicians and analysts needed to keep up. Thus it was decided that the discussions in the two conferences and the contributions of some of the participants should be set down in print.

The book breaks down in the following manner. An introductory essay by Robin Shepherd of the Center for Strategic and International Studies provides a synopsis of the discussions at the two sessions. With Borys Tarasyuk, now Ukraine’s Foreign Minister, both listening and contributing, participants from the worlds of academia, think tanks, diplomacy and politics examined the twists and turns of recent events in Ukraine, setting them in the broader European and global context, and attempting to chart a course for the future.

Following on from this, experts from Ukraine, Europe and the United States scrutinize in four chapters the opportunities and challenges now arising for the new Ukraine. Hryhoriy Nemyria, Foreign Policy Advisor to the Ukrainian Prime Minister, charts the options for reinvigorating relationships between his country and the European Union. In contrast with many recent debates that reduce these relationships solely to actual EU membership, Nemyria uncovers a broad spectrum of potential relationships with the EU which could precede membership while still providing a strong impetus for domestic reform, and retaining the prospects of European integration.

In their contribution, two experts on democratic and market-economic transition in Eastern Europe, Olaf Hillenbrand and Iris Kempe of the Center for Applied
Policy Research in Munich, Germany, acknowledge that the recent democratic breakthrough in Ukraine opens avenues for a comprehensive reform process that will need to span politics, society, the economy and foreign policy. They urge us to be aware, however, that the reform process is not without difficulties but that it will need to be addressed systematically if the Orange Revolution is to truly succeed.

In returning to the European dimension of the Orange Revolution, Sascha Müller-Kraenner of the Heinrich Böll Foundation in Berlin, Germany, takes a closer look at the potential of the European Neighborhood Policy and other partnership programs to anchor Ukraine to the democratic community of European nations. No less importantly, he touches upon relationships with NATO, a further possible anchor of Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration.

The final contribution comes from Ron Asmus, a seasoned foreign policy expert at the German Marshall Fund of the United States, who offers an intriguing vision of the future of Ukraine based on an imagined future 10 years hence in which Ukraine has been invited to join NATO and is moving ever closer to integration in the European Union. What steps, both inside and outside Ukraine, would need to be taken to turn this vision into reality? Ukraine itself, the European Union, the United States and Russia emerge as key players, and the experiences of anchoring post-communist Central Europe to Euro-Atlantic institutions, he argues, provide invaluable insights.

While taking different angles on the many domestic and international challenges facing the new Ukraine, what unites these perspectives and what motivated the decision to publish them is the wish for Ukraine to become a strong, stable, democratic and prosperous member of the Euro-Atlantic community.

This hope, and the readiness to help our Ukrainian neighbors to achieve this aim, is also what united the many who lent their support and inspiration to this strategic dialogue and to the present book that resulted from it. A special word of thanks is due to the participants at the two Kyiv dialogue sessions who committed their time, experience and ideas to making the discussions intellectually challenging yet, at the
same time, optimistic, forward-looking and enjoyable. A list of seminar participants is attached at the end of this book.

Equally important for the success of this project was the strength of the partnership that emerged between several institutions. The Heinrich Böll Foundation of Germany provided co-funding, helped to shape the project conceptually and lent indispensable organizational support. Kurt Klotzle, Agnieszka Rochon and Marcin Starzewski of the Foundation’s Warsaw office were great partners who deserve our gratitude.

The Center for European and International Studies in Kyiv was a superb local host and a skilful organizer, navigating impressively the potential pitfalls inherent in the unpredictable political circumstances which surrounded this strategic dialogue. From the Center, Anya Akopyan deserves a special word of thanks for her tireless logistical help. The Ukrainian Parliament was a gracious host for the second session of this dialogue, and the closing event of the Pora campaign provided participants with an authentic flavor of the enthusiasm carrying the Orange Revolution in Ukraine to its conclusion.

Last but not least, the German Marshall Fund of the United States once again turned out to be an ideal initiator of a dialogue spanning European and American partners. A special word of thanks goes to our Craig Kennedy, GMF President, and Phillip Henderson, GMF Vice President. Their vision and encouragement to engage intensively in work on and in Ukraine were essential for the success of this project. Pavol Demes, GMF Director for Central and Eastern Europe, shaped this strategic dialogue with his experience and leadership. His photographs at the end of this book capture the atmosphere and spirit with which this project was conducted. Many other colleagues from our offices across Europe and in Washington, DC, remain unnamed but their role in making this undertaking successful was invaluable.
UKRAINE AND THE EURO-ATLANTIC COMMUNITY: A STRATEGIC DIALOGUE

Robin Shepherd

It was a reversal of fortune which few had dared to believe possible. Ukraine, one of the most corrupt and unreformed countries in post-communist eastern Europe, had voted in a pro-Western reformer as president. Elections on December 26, 2004, brought Viktor Yushchenko to power, riding a wave of popular support and carrying with him the hopes of a country which had long resigned itself to hopelessness. To paraphrase and then reverse the dry quip of long suffering dissidents under communism, someone had switched on the light at the end of the tunnel. There was a chance for something better. Ukraine had shown it was both ready and willing for democracy. The West was finally forced to sit up and take notice.

Behind that dramatic, not to say idealized, representation of recent events in Ukraine there is both truth and distortion, both over-simplification and understatement – as the participants in two conferences straddling the period before and after Mr. Yushchenko’s election were only too aware.

Organized jointly by the German Marshall Fund of the United States and the Heinrich Böll Foundation of Germany, and in cooperation with Ukraine’s Center for European and International Studies, academics, analysts, journalists and politicians – including a man who just days after the second meeting was named as Ukraine’s foreign minister – gathered from around the world to try and understand the nature of the extraordinary developments in Ukraine. They also came to find answers to a question with a certain resonance in this part of the world: What is to be done?

Robin Shepherd is an Adjunct Fellow of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, DC. He is based in Bratislava, Slovakia.
To get a sense of the momentous nature of what is now going on in Ukraine it is helpful to consider the context. For one thing, the figurehead of what became known around the world as the “Orange Revolution” is lucky, in a perverse sense, to have held on to his life. Poisoned with dioxin in the middle of the election campaign, Viktor Yushchenko served as a potent symbol of what that revolution was all about. The facial disfigurement his poisoning led to merely underlined the ugliness of the people who had tried to assassinate him, rallying his supporters and reinvigorating them with a sense of the urgency of their task. Against such a backdrop, the bravery of hundreds of thousands of mainly young people massing night after freezing night in Kyiv’s central square is difficult to overstate. It was always possible that the people who had tried to kill Mr. Yushchenko himself might move against his supporters too. The gruesome fate of Georgiy Gongadze – the opposition journalist whose headless corpse was found in a forest outside Kyiv in 2000 – may have been just another story in the newspapers to people in the West. But to the men and women gathered in Independence Square it was an ever present reminder of just what some of their opponents were capable of. They knew that the order to move against the crowd could be given at any time. And still they came.

And yet, as participants at both conferences were acutely aware, that is only part of the story. The Orange Revolution is justly celebrated for the heroism of its participants. But more prosaic realities can only be ignored at the risk of misunderstanding the complex and precarious nature of contemporary Ukrainian society. Most pressing among them is the sharp divide splitting the country in half. Overall, Mr. Yushchenko only beat his opponent, former Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovych, by a margin of 52 percent to 44. Central and western Ukraine may have voted overwhelmingly for him and with him for a reorientation of politics to the West. But eastern and southern parts of the country – broadly pro-Moscow and dominated by people whose first language is Russian not Ukrainian – were equally emphatic in opposing him. In Crimea, Mr. Yushchenko took just 15 percent of the vote.

Optimists in the new president’s camp rightly point out that media bias, especially pronounced in Mr. Yanukovych’s heartland, may have seriously distorted Mr. Yushchenko’s message. But there is no getting away from the fact that vast numbers
of Ukrainians remain anything but enthusiastic about the direction Viktor Yushchenko wishes to take them in.

This and many other domestic issues were discussed in detail at both conferences. No less important and no less central to the discussions, of course, was the international context. To say that Vladimir Putin, and the nationalists which flank his increasingly authoritarian administration on both left and right, did not welcome the recent turn of events in Ukraine would be an understatement. President Putin himself openly backed Mr. Yanukovych while having the temerity to warn the West against interfering in Ukraine's internal affairs. Nationalist leader Vladimir Zhirinovsky welcomed Mr. Yushchenko's victory in characteristic fashion. He led a demonstration at the Ukrainian embassy in Moscow at which he described Kyiv as a Russian city and said Ukraine should be run by a Russian governor. Managing his country’s relationship with Russia will be a task of gargantuan proportions for President Yushchenko, particularly as he attempts to bring his country closer to the European Union and NATO.

The complexities of this delicate balancing act animated discussions throughout the two conferences. Among all the diverse opinions brought forward by the participants, one theme remained common to all: there is now real hope of establishing democracy in Ukraine but the process will be fraught with difficulties. Only by understanding the nature of Ukrainian society and the regional and international context against which events in that country will be played out, can we keep alive and nurture the prospects for success. It was in that spirit that the discussions described in what follows took place.

**The Dialogue**

Barely a week after Borys Tarasyuk opened proceedings as the first speaker in the second conference in a series on Ukraine, he was appointed as the country's foreign minister.

Thinktankers, analysts and academics familiar with the accusation that they spend too much time in ivory towers far removed from the realities of politics could not
have been handed a more powerful riposte. Closing off discussions at the end of the conference with an ironic aside, Mr. Tarasyuk promised his colleagues that he would pass on their thoughts and advice to the next foreign minister of Ukraine!

Mr. Tarasyuk outlined the Ukrainian perspective on recent events and future prospects with a list of challenges. First among them would be the need for the government to justify the expectations of the Ukrainian people fired up by weeks of domestic upheaval and international attention. Simultaneously, the government would need to “settle the atmosphere of division” between Yanukovych’s core supporters in the east and south of the country, and between the new government and its supporters. The consolidation of democracy in the longer term was also a key priority, with elections set for March 2006 setting the immediate timetable. The economy would need close attention particularly as the government moves to root out corruption and to end the rule of clans and families associated with the previous regime. Among the challenges for foreign policy, Mr. Tarasyuk noted the need to remove tensions with Russia and to resolve border issues with neighbors – not least in Trans-Dniester. Favorable conditions would need to be created for foreign investors while diversification of energy supplies, and suppliers, was also a top priority.

Hryhoriy Nemyria, Director at the Center for European and International Studies in Kyiv, opened his remarks with a bold and dramatic statement of hope for the new Ukraine: “Ukraine is no more a sleeping beauty,” he said. “Homo Sovieticus died peacefully in Ukraine.”

Building on the set of challenges outlined by Mr. Tarasyuk, Mr. Nemyria described the strategic problem for Ukraine in terms of managing “overlapping integration spaces” involving: 1) an enlarging EU and NATO; 2) Russia, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Single Economic Space; 3) the redefinition of the Black Sea Region. Noting that dealings with the EU would be “at the forefront of President Yushchenko’s foreign policy agenda” Mr. Nemyria suggested that relations with Brussels should not just be about the content of that relationship but also about the timing and order in which steps forward should be taken. But the vision from Brussels and some important European capitals was also vital. Paris and Berlin, he
said, had tended to view Ukraine negatively, seeing the country through the prism of relations with Russia. A great Russia is fine, noted Mr. Nemyria. As long as ‘greatness’ does not include a foreign policy veto over Russia’s neighbors.

Another speaker, from Moscow, tackled the Russia question head on. Russia views Ukraine as a sister nation, he said. Setting his comments in the context of recent moves towards democratization in both Georgia and Ukraine, he asked: “Will Russia be a permanent opponent of what is happening outside? Will Russia be a bastion for those forces opposed to democratic reform in the post-Soviet space?” Russia was undergoing a period of turmoil itself, despite the outward image of stability, he said, referring to the tragedy of Beslan and Chechnya, the increasingly tense relationship with big business amid the conflict with Yukos, events in Ukraine and Georgia, and forthcoming Russian parliamentary and presidential elections in 2007 and 2008 respectively.

A senior analyst from France took that line of thinking a stage further: “Developments in Ukraine have shed new light on Russia,” where the ruling elite was taken by surprise, she suggested. “One of Putin’s strengths was to have the image of a strong modernizer. Kuchma’s Ukraine was seen as lagging behind a modernizing Russia. In a few weeks, all those perceptions were proved wrong.” The speaker continued with an elaboration of how and why the Putin administration miscalculated so badly. His advisers, she said, operated under a number of assumptions: 1) That the people are always behind (i.e. more backward than) the elite in terms of their attitude to political modernization. Ukraine, with an important part of the population still living in rural areas, was assumed to be the same as Russia in this respect if not even more illustrative of the trend. 2) That countries of the CIS have only weak sovereignty. His advisers had also fallen into the trap of believing their own disinformation about Ukraine and had misperceived the attitude of the West. The speaker noted that the latter misperception was perhaps understandable given the confused and often contradictory voices emanating from the west of Europe and the United States.

In the subsequent discussion, Toomas Ilves, Vice President of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament, offered a rebuke against the complacency
apparent in some parts of the West. Ukraine’s great challenge, he said, was to show that the perception that people actually like living under kleptocratic oligarchies is just plain wrong! In a similar vein, Iris Kempe, Senior Research Fellow at the Center for Applied Policy Research in Germany noted: “Most of us here are in favor of integrating Ukraine into Euro-Atlantic structures but important forces in the EU do not necessarily share those sentiments.”

Istvan Gyarmati, Director of the Institute for Euro-Atlanticism and Democracy in Hungary, issued a plea which was to resonate through much of the conference: We must, he said, “avoid looking at Ukraine through the prism of Russia.” He offered praise for Mr. Yushchenko in making his first foreign visit to Russia, describing the Ukrainian president’s talk about a strategic partnership with Russia as a “nice gesture”. However, he added: “This is impossible. No one has ever had a strategic partnership with Russia because Russia thinks in terms of subordination and this has not changed.”

An official familiar with the thinking of the U.S. State Department said he did not believe the United States, at least, did look at Ukraine through the prism of Moscow. Another speaker suggested that what was needed was a “paradigm shift” in which the interests of Ukraine, rather than the power blocs which surround it, were put at the center of Western thinking.

Toomas Ilves opened the second session focusing on European integration with a blunt statement of the urgency of Ukraine’s task. “Ukraine has a year or a year and a half as a window to make the case to Europe,” he argued. Ukraine had to be aware that some of the major players in the European Union were not at all enthusiastic about Ukraine’s ambitions to integrate with the West. Following the accession of 10 new countries to the European Union in May 2004, yet another large scale project has given some people “cold feet”. However, he added: “We who are your friends can help you if you give us the tools.” Ukraine must show the European Union that it has something to offer, that it can help solve European problems. He offered several thoughts on how Ukraine should proceed. First up, it could help solve the Trans-Dniester problem by setting up an EU style border with it. This could lead to Trans-Dniester’s collapse and would also have the effect of creating a “fact on the ground”
to be potentially replicated on other Ukrainian borders. Ukraine should also abolish visas for EU and U.S. citizens and forget, at this stage, about reciprocity. This would help Westerners to forge personal relationships with Ukrainians and would facilitate foreign investment. He invited Ukraine to “do a few things well rather than a lot of things done half well”. Drawing on his own experience as former Estonian foreign minister, Mr. Ilves also advised Ukrainian policy makers to ask for expertise from the new EU members. He suggested the creation of a Europe Ministry arguing that all the successful ministries in central and eastern Europe started from scratch with new blood. Sponsors help, he said. “Use Poland. You actually do have a sponsor.”

 Appropriately enough, the next speaker suggested that Ukraine would also do well to use Mr. Ilves’ own institution – the European Parliament – in the search for allies. He said it was probably the European institution most supportive of Ukraine’s aspirations. Returning to concerns about Russia he insisted that “we should not look at Ukraine through the prism of Russia but still, Russia is there.”

 An analyst who follows European Union issues closely said the EU did view Ukraine as a key partner. But, in the words of EU foreign policy supremo Javier Solana, he said: “The quality of Ukraine’s relationship with the EU will depend on the quality of Ukraine’s relationship with democracy.” The EU’s Action Plan for Ukraine was a good start, he added.

 In the discussions which followed, one contributor argued that the EU needed to realize that what had happened in Ukraine was not just a challenge, but a chance to expand the zone of democracy and stability further east. “The European Union needs Ukraine to succeed,” he said.

 Iris Kempe opined that “if Ukraine were to apply for EU membership today, they would say unfortunately ‘no’.” The West, she said, had to overcome the “strategic shock” of what had happened in Ukraine. She also argued that Ukraine was a great bridge for transatlantic relations, offering an opportunity for both the European Union and the United States to help heal past differences by working together on a project where their interests could and should coalesce. A French speaker familiar with foreign policy issues offered the examples of Slovakia and Bulgaria as
evidence of how a successful approach to the European Union could be made from unexpected beginnings. Slovakia, which was initially shunned by the EU due to the undemocratic practices of former Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar, gave itself a fighting chance for EU membership after the election of a pro-Western government in 1998. “Slovakia was not initially invited. But when Slovakia did everything to be invited, the country was accepted,” he noted. Slovakia joined the EU in May 2004.

Turning to Bulgaria, he asked rhetorically: “Who could have imagined 10 years ago that Bulgaria would now be on the verge of EU membership?”

Borys Tarasyuk wondered aloud whether the EU really had a strategy for a democratic Ukraine. Current strategy was anachronistic, he suggested and designed around a “no answer concept” for Ukraine. Another Ukrainian speaker said bluntly: “We are still awaiting a clear signal from the European Union.” A contributor familiar with European Union issues responded by saying the EU was “there for Ukraine and will be.” But, he cautioned, the EU’s strategic vision was built “out of reality”.

Opening the third session on Ukraine in the transatlantic framework, Bruce Jackson, President of the Project on Transitional Democracies in the United States, said that Ukraine had had its revolutionary moment. The question was how to consolidate the democratic breakthrough, and that required a clear strategy. In philosophical terms the point was clear: “Consciousness precedes being.” But how long does it precede being? he asked.

Ron Asmus, of the German Marshall Fund, said Ukraine's revolution was potentially a “win, win, win” situation for Europe and the U.S., Ukraine itself and even Russia. “Will this kind of revolutionary event lead to a revolutionary Western response?” he asked. Looking back at the experience of central and eastern Europe, he asserted that almost every country in that region had started out by thinking they would join the EU first but in fact they joined NATO first. One reason for this was that the U.S., the leading country in NATO, was strong enough to stand up to Russian objections on its own while the EU was still wrestling with a whole host of questions about its identity tied up with enlargement. The U.S.-NATO combination did not face such problems. Mr. Asmus suggested there were three issues to confront: 1) Is the NATO-first pattern of central and eastern Europe the right pattern for Ukraine or not?
2) How does Ukraine want the U.S. to help? 3) What of Russia? He suggested that there is no necessary contradiction here. A successful Ukraine could help democratic forces in Russia. Staying on the Russia angle, he argued that there was a consensus in the U.S. that the Russia policy of the last 10 years had failed. However, there was no new policy. Pointedly remarking that there were forces in Ukraine, Russia and even the West that do not necessarily want Ukraine to succeed, he suggested that speed was now of the essence: ”Go fast,” he said. The Baltic states, he added, were instructive for Ukraine because they had changed conventional wisdom which at one time had had it that former Soviet republics could not be members of the EU or NATO. Ukraine could change conventional wisdom as well he said: “Just get on and do it.”

A participant who follows NATO issues closely said: “NATO’s door remained open,” but Ukraine must be aware that “there is a transformed NATO out there.” The key dynamic, he argued, was domestic. Much would be determined by the decisions Ukrainians now make about the kind of society they want to live in. The ball is in your court, he said, but Ukraine must have a realistic time horizon as far as NATO accession is concerned. Ukrainian officials could not “go knock on the door in Brussels and expect an immediate positive response.” A Ukrainian analyst said he was confident Ukraine would “move to NATO earlier than the EU.” Istvan Gyarmati said he was among those who thought NATO should be first mainly because it was easier to get into NATO than the EU. The problem was that Ukrainian accession to the EU was as big a problem for the EU as it was for Ukraine itself. It was very difficult to predict what the EU would look like in the event of Turkish and Ukrainian membership in the middle of the next decade.

Bruce Jackson noted that multiple accession processes could in fact be easier for all concerned than single accession processes. That was because the accession hopeful had the advantage of not having all its eggs in one basket and simultaneously because the “heat is taken off one single institution” being asked to accommodate that accession hopeful.

Toomas Ilves suggested a “don’t ask don’t tell strategy”. Don’t ask institutions like the EU and NATO questions they are going to have to say “no” to. That sets an unfavorable tone for future discussions. Referring back to the Baltics, former
Estonian Foreign Minister Ilves said that now that NATO had moved up to the Russian border with Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia’s accession to NATO in 2004, “we’ve crossed the red line” about NATO never standing on former Soviet soil. In that respect, at least, Ukraine had it easier than the Soviet Union’s former Baltic republics.

James Sherr, Fellow of the Conflict Studies Research Center at the UK Defence Academy, raised the problem of the Black Sea Fleet and the attendant border and military issues with Russia. “This could be a limiting factor whether we like it or not,” he said.

A contributor familiar with the thinking of the U.S. State Department noted that the West had been saying for some time that free and fair elections in Ukraine represented a “critical threshold”. Now that Ukraine had crossed that threshold it was important to be fair and not to complicate matters for the country.

Borys Tarasyuk remarked that by the end of 2007 or 2008 Ukraine had to have done enough to be eligible for NATO membership and to get an agreement with the EU on a “fixed perspective”. Another contributor said of NATO: “Membership is not just a simple check-the-box kind of thing.” There are wider questions to be addressed, he said, such as the direction of NATO itself. Using the analogy of a parent pushing a child to study hard for the undefined objective of future success, he suggested it was possible for Western institutions to encourage Ukraine in the right direction without immediately having a clear idea of how to accommodate them if they get there.

Referring back to the key issue of Russia, Ron Asmus said the first and second rounds of NATO enlargement had been achieved when the U.S. made it clear to Russia that Russia would lose out by continuing to oppose it. The third round of expansion would need very strong EU/NATO cooperation, he concluded.

The atmosphere surrounding this second in the two part series of conferences on Ukraine – which concluded with suggestions to Foreign Minister Tarasyuk (see below) – contrasted markedly with the first conference, also in Kyiv, in September
2004. At that time, no one could have foretold the extraordinary catalogue of events that was about to unfold – a reality that was reflected in the tentative and hypothetical manner in which so many contributors made their remarks. This did not mean that there was no hope however.

Setting his remarks in the context of the successes of central and eastern Europe, the Baltics, Romania and Bulgaria, Ron Asmus said: “Ukraine is the next logical step and we need to rethink maybe the idea that there is a ‘third wave’ of Euro-Atlantic integration which Ukraine would be at the core of.” But there was much skepticism about the attitude at that time of the EU. One Ukrainian speaker even referred to the EU as seeing Ukraine as a “peril neighbor”. However, even at that stage, before the elections had begun, he was hopeful that the new members of the EU could be “instrumental” in forging a strategic dialogue between Ukraine on the one hand and the EU and NATO on the other.

Borys Tarasyuk continued on this theme expressing the hope that “our traditional partners and friends, the countries of central and eastern Europe and the Baltic states” could “create a kind of pro-Ukrainian lobby inside of both the EU and NATO.” The drama of how things looked at this stage was also set forth by Mr. Tarasyuk who, of course, had no idea at that stage that in a matter of months he would be Ukraine’s foreign minister. “Ukrainian society and the whole world is becoming witness to the numerous violations of law and democratic standards”, he said. The forthcoming elections, he added, were a litmus test for Ukraine and its chances of integrating with the West. Even at that stage, many contributors were aware that in the event of success for the reformists there would still be a long way to go.

Hryhoriy Nemyria reminded his audience that the 2006 parliamentary elections would also be crucial in consolidating democracy in the country. Another contributor argued that the big problem for Ukraine was that the eastern part of Europe was not high up on the agenda in Brussels or in Washington. The EU was busy with Turkey, he said, while the United States was preoccupied with Iraq. He also argued that events in Russia itself had been improperly downgraded on the Western agenda citing what he described as the somewhat muted reaction in some important European capitals to Russia’s response to the Beslan siege in which more
than 300 people, half children, died, and also to Russia’s broader move away from
democratic principles. He said that Poland was pushing Brussels to think about
Ukraine and the post-Soviet space generally in a different way but acknowledged
just how frustrating a task that was.

James Sherr characterized the relationship between the EU and Ukraine prior
to Yushchenko’s victory as a “dialogue of the deaf”. He also repeated concerns
expressed by other contributors that the United States was preoccupied with other
issues. “Real reform in Ukraine means challenging relationships of power. To do this
one needs allies,” he said.

Within a matter of weeks those power relationships in Ukraine had been challenged.
Hundreds of thousands of demonstrators on the streets of Kyiv and voters across
the country had swept reformist Viktor Yushchenko to power. So what of Ukraine’s
allies?

In the final session of the second conference, contributors were invited to give
succinct suggestions to Borys Tarasyuk, now Ukraine’s foreign minister, on where
Ukraine should go from here and how the country could harness the support of the
West. Proceedings were chaired by GMF Director for Central and Eastern Europe
Pavol Demes. James Sherr opened the session with a suggestion that: “Ukraine’s
main foreign policy priority should be success in internal policy. It is essential that
the March 2006 parliamentary elections be a referendum about the performance of
parliament and not about the performance of Yushchenko,” he said.

Ron Asmus told Mr. Tarasyuk: “If your goal truly is NATO membership you should
set for yourself the goal of MAP (Membership Action Plan) at the next summit and
membership at the summit after that. That puts you in a time frame of being in
NATO within five years, Yushchenko’s first term.” Sascha Müller-Kraenner of the
Heinrich Böll Foundation suggested Ukraine send its best diplomats to Brussels,
and students as well.

Bruce Jackson said Ukraine must be careful not to raise expectations too high at
home by overpromising but be “as unreasonable as hell with any institution that
tells you ‘no.’ Another speaker said: “Reforms, reforms, reforms!” A strengthened Ukraine with a clear idea of her own national interests would be a better partner to do business with, he added, and expressed the hope that we could “get rid of the era of geo-politics” in Ukraine and the region it is situated in.

A contributor who follows NATO affairs closely said: “My advice would be to make clear to partners that the paradigm has changed. That Ukraine will take on real commitments for internal change but also expects its partners to provide real support.”

Istvan Gyarmati suggested to Mr. Tarasyuk that he “be selective. Seek advice not only from those who know how to operate a functioning market economy and democracy but also from those who have made the transition”, that is to say the countries of central and eastern Europe that have just joined NATO and the EU.

Another contributor cautioned that “right now Ukrainian leaders are rock stars in the international community and that’s not going to last.” Ukraine should be aware that events in the country will not remain high on the agenda for long. Toomas Ilves suggested the Nike slogan: “Just do it!” He said it was important not just to focus entirely on Brussels but to put good people in the important European capitals too. Influence in the European Union is still wielded by the national governments. They should not be neglected in favor of the bureaucracy in Brussels, he argued.

A speaker from the United States pointed out that the timetable was short and that concrete steps forward must be taken soon, well ahead of the March 2006 parliamentary elections. He said Ukraine should do its best to smooth relations with Moscow so that “if they’re going to be difficult at least make it clear that it’s the Russians’ fault.”

A French contributor said Ukraine could also help the West understand what is going wrong in Russia at the moment with democracy. That was a role which was currently being played by the new members from central and eastern Europe. But Ukraine could be especially well placed in this respect. Ukraine also needed to raise its profile abroad since few in the West knew anything about the country.
Following up on this suggestion another speaker suggested Ukraine should use the forthcoming Eurovision Song Contest to promote the image of Ukraine! Putting his concern for the wider region in the form of a joke, Hryhoriy Nemyria then suggested that his country ensure that the “next winner of the Eurovision Song Contest is Belorussian.”

Robin Shepherd, of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, urged Mr. Tarasyuk not to neglect the role of journalists in promoting Ukraine’s image abroad. Good relations with influential members of the European media could help keep Ukraine on the agenda. He also said: “If the European Union looks reluctant to bring Ukraine in, use emotional blackmail and point out publicly that it is not a truly European European Union until Ukraine is a member.”

The session was then wrapped up by Mr. Tarasyuk who said he was grateful to all present for being such good friends of his country. “I would like to assure you that I will convey your recommendations to the future foreign minister,” he concluded. He would assume that position within days.

The conferences were conducted according to Chatham House rules. Permission was sought for direct attributions.
UKRAINE AND THE EUROPEAN UNION: A FRESH START?

Hryhoriy Nemyria

Viktor Yushchenko is the new President of a new Ukraine. In the final analysis, this is the key outcome of the dramatic, five-week long Orange Revolution. Ukraine reinvented itself as a nation, and Ukrainian society rediscovered itself as a civil society. No longer is it merely a sleeping beauty, waiting to be awakened. Homo Sovieticus died peacefully in Ukraine.

As for the West, which has been closely following developments in Ukraine in the course of the last two months, it has already received an answer to two questions: “Who was Mr. Yanukovych?” and “Who is Mr. Yushchenko?” The third question to answer is as simple or as complicated as one wants it to be: “What is this new Ukraine all about?”

A Nation Born of Uncertain Parents

Ukraine’s unfinished revolution of the early 1990’s produced an unhealthy continuity of elites. The Ukrainian leadership emerged as a strange cocktail of the old nomenklatura and the “red directors” thrown together with a pinch of national-democratic spice and more than a drop of oligarchical punch. It was this combination of apparatchiks and reformists that gave birth to the independent Ukrainian state – a child of poor health which was vulnerable to the cold winds of neo-authoritarianism. The old system was destroyed from above before civil society became strong enough to issue a challenge from below. It took almost fourteen years to acquire a taste for democracy and to develop an immune system against post-Soviet, authoritarian influenza.

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Legacies of the past – life at the periphery of empires, a “little brother” complex, the Soviet political culture, the Chernobyl trauma – battled for prominence with some very meaningful achievements of the present – the avoidance of ethnic violence, a peaceful solution to the Crimean problem, a liberal language policy, de-nuclearization and a positive record in peace-keeping operations abroad. A civil society with the potential for self-organization and solidarity has emerged alongside the previously unobserved phenomenon of a young middle-class, willing and able to defend its interests.

Outgoing President Kuchma’s choice of then Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovych as his successor was a choice to support the status quo. And the foreign policy expression of the status quo was the so-called “multi-vector” policy which was effectively a product of Kuchma’s attempt to “milk two cows” at once – the West and Russia. In his turn, the presidential candidate invented what might be called the “Yanukovych cocktail” to try and ensure victory. It consisted of three major ingredients. (1) The use of administrative power. (2) The harassment of NGOs, the media and the opposition. (3) The Russian shoulder to lean on (and this is where Mr. Putin comes in). The immediate effect of this typical, post-Soviet “drink” was public outrage.

It seems that President Vladimir Putin, with his awkward and premature recognition of Viktor Yanukovych, overestimated the attractiveness of his own personality and the significance of the “Russian shoulder” for Ukrainian voters. Even more importantly, he seriously underestimated two other factors: the ability of the West – the EU and the United States – to respond with one voice quickly and coherently, and, last but not least, the maturity of Ukrainian civil society. At the critical juncture of Ukraine’s political crisis, after all, it was Ukraine’s vibrant civil society which proved better equipped to bring democratic change than the governing institutions and the ruling elite.

A deeper analysis reveals further differences in the very fabric of Ukrainian society when compared with Russia. Firstly, neo-imperial feelings, fueled by nostalgia, are absent in Ukraine. In the Russian Federation, by contrast, those sentiments remain a crucial part of Mr. Putin’s nation-building project, as well as of his desire...
to maintain the pre-eminence of Russia in its “near abroad”. Secondly, Ukraine is not engaged in a “security versus democracy” discourse, which is charged up in Russia by the Chechnya syndrome. Democratic values have never been sacrificed in the minds of Ukrainians to the artificially securitized political agenda of the state. Thirdly, faith in the virtues of political competition is much stronger in Ukraine. The results of the parliamentary elections of 2002 were an early indicator of the existence of the democratic opposition’s confidence in itself. The passion of the people’s movement – “Ukraine without Kuchma” – and the tragedy of the Gongadze case and the response it evoked have both been signs of healthy developments such as the growing solidarity and maturity within Ukraine’s fragile civil society.

Thus, Huntington’s famous thesis has been defeated once more: this time in Ukraine. It is not the clash of civilizations that matters. It is rather the clash of misperceptions. While the European debate on Turkey was centered around the concern that it was “too big, too poor and too Muslim to integrate”, Ukraine’s problem was its image as a country which is too big in the sense that Ukraine is larger in geography than France, and is the fifth largest country in Europe by population (48.4 million); too poor in the sense that GDP per capita is just slightly more than a third of the average of the ten new EU members; and, of course, too Soviet to elicit serious consideration of its chances of becoming part of the European Union. Not incidentally, therefore, until recently, attitudes to Ukraine’s future ranged from those seeing in the country the potential for a “strategic partnership”, through those that thought about it in terms of a “buffer zone”, to outright indifference. Ukraine has occupied a firmly peripheral place on the mental map of the EU bureaucracy, which succumbed to what we might reasonably describe as “Ukraine fatigue”. The European political mainstream, in general, became comfortably reconciled to the increasing institutionalization of Ukraine’s peripheral status as a country “muddling through” on the margins of Europe. The Orange Revolution undermined this pattern of thinking, which is now totally irrelevant. While big (it is, in fact, the largest European country apart from Russia, which is also a Eurasian power), and still relevantly poor, Ukraine is not Soviet anymore. Furthermore, it has demonstrated an ability to generate a healthy dynamism enabling it to reinvigorate not just itself and neighboring Belarus and Russia, but also the broader Black Sea region and the former Soviet space in general.
A New Western Perspective

It would, therefore, be misleading for the West in general and the EU in particular (including its “core”) to remain de-facto trapped inside a vision, strategy and policy towards the former Soviet space understood as a predominantly homogeneous area of uncertainty requiring “special” arrangements that fall short of any, even distant, membership prospects. We are calling for a fresh look at the countries of the region and their current and future roles in shaping a new, united Europe. Thinking afresh is a must for all Europeans interested in recreating a new harmony of views on the future of Europe, its values, organization and objectives.

The transformative power of the Ukrainian Orange Revolution needs to be utilized to the full. There are clear links between the new democracy in Ukraine and the quality of the kind of bilateral and regional co-operation that could have a decisive impact on broader regional security. Progress in solving the Trans-Dniester conflict with a new and constructive Ukrainian contribution will be the first test down the road.

Viktor Yushchenko and the new Ukrainian government of Yulia Tymoshenko will need to strengthen the social drive and momentum for healthy, domestic, political change. To make it possible, it will be vital to undertake a sustained effort to further the rule of law, fight corruption and to speed up the modernization of Ukraine’s economy. And this will need to take place in parallel with a painful overhaul of the government and in the context of an uncertain pace of constitutional reform. Integration into the EU and NATO and the forging of a strategic partnership with Russia will be the centerpieces of President Yushchenko’s foreign policy strategy. This long-awaited abandonment of Ukraine’s counterproductive “multi-vector” foreign and security policy will require the elaboration of active and consistent policies based on fresh ideas both towards the Euro-Atlantic community and the Russian Federation.

This means that, in current circumstances, the challenge for both the West and Ukraine is to successfully manage overlapping integration spaces, which involve (1)
an enlarging EU and NATO, (2) Russia, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Single Economic Space, and (3) the re-definition of the Black Sea region. Needless to say, the coming two to three years will be critical for the long-term positioning of Ukraine.

One of the by-products of the Orange Revolution was the opportunity, effectively seized upon by the “core” EU countries, the United States and the new EU members, to improve transatlantic relations. In this way, Ukraine has already provided some help in joint efforts to reconnect Europe with the U.S. Also, the Ukrainian revolution provided the EU with an opportunity to show how it can exercise “soft power” in a timely, inclusive and effective manner. It was the EU which played the leading role in the international mediation of Ukraine’s political crisis in concert with others, including the OSCE, the United States, Poland, Lithuania, and a reluctant Russia. In fact, it provided a very rare example of the successful pursuit of a “common” EU foreign policy.

Paradoxically, perhaps, the new, post-revolutionary Ukraine is now better positioned than any other country in the region to contribute to a much needed, constructive rethinking of the EU’s approach to Putin’s Russia – a country which increasingly speaks with a neo-authoritarian accent, and acts that way as well. For a long time, Ukraine has been perceived, especially by France and Germany, as a negative rather than a positive factor in the EU vision of Russia and its place in Europe. This negativism is partially due to the failed, haphazard efforts of the Ukrainian leadership in the early 1990’s to position Ukraine as a bulwark of the West against Russia. Also this has to do with the predominant perception of Russia in the West as a country which is too close to neglect and too nuclear and too oil-and-gas-rich to irritate.

Therefore, in the new environment of positive and peaceful domestic, political change, Ukraine has a great chance to be recognized, once again, as a constructive rather than destructive factor which can add real value in fine-tuning a pan-European vision and strategy towards Russia. In this sense, the best formulation for developing a Ukrainian-Russian relationship of strategic partnership could be a “democratic prosperous Ukraine and a great Russia”, as long as the “greatness” does
not include veto power over the foreign policy choices of neighbors! Obviously, under such conditions, the Ukrainian-Russian relationship will become a natural complementary factor, if not an element, of the strategic partnership between the EU and Russia for the next decade. For the future progress of Europe, an indispensable precondition will be the closest possible degree of cooperation between Ukraine and Russia. Successful renewal of real Ukrainian-Russian cooperation would be very much in the national interests of Ukraine and Russia, as well as of France and Germany. Failure, on the other hand, would be a disaster for Ukraine and Europe, and a catastrophe for Russia. And, of course, a new Ukraine-Russia relationship would be a step on the way to a new start in the Ukraine-EU relationship.

The EU and Ukraine: Past, Present, Future

Since EU enlargement became imminent and the Wider Europe debate started, there have been several possible scenarios for “a return to Europe” and the further development of relations between Ukraine and the EU.

First – a status quo option. This could involve the maintenance of the existing contractual relationships in the form of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), with its possible modification into a PCA+ by the inclusion of issues of security and defense policy and justice and home affairs. Inclusion of the prospect of membership under such a scenario was and remains unlikely.

Second – a tactical alternative. This could involve the modernization of existing contractual relations, and the signing, after implementation, of the EU-Ukraine Action Plan and the Neighborhood Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, in line with an “all but membership” formula.

Third – a strategic alternative. This may involve the modernization of the form of contractual relations and the signing of an Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU which would contain clear reference to the prospect of EU membership. In this sense, it may be somewhat similar to the Europe Agreements. The difference would lie in a more detailed statement of the preconditions and stages of integration, which would require reinforced mechanisms of monitoring and structural political
dialogue. Achievement of each of these stages would entail the possible use of EU resources in the form of participation in programs already accessible for EU members and candidate countries. The last of the stages to be envisaged by the Association Agreement may be a recognition of the associated neighbor country as a candidate country with the prospect of accession negotiations. Thus, the Association Agreement would not offer the prospect of membership in the near future but it would not exclude such a prospect further down the road. It could be signed in 2007/08 subject to the beginning of consultations and negotiations in 2005/06.

Under all scenarios, problems of both timing and content need to be dealt with. The time factor will need to take into account not only milestones in relations between Ukraine and the European Union: for example, the accession of new countries (2007/08), and the expiry of the Partnership and Co-operation Agreement (March 1, 2008). Some events, which have no immediate relationship with Ukraine's cooperation with the EU, may be just as important; among them parliamentary elections in March 2006 (the Orange Revolution has already become such a catalytic event). When internal dynamics in bilateral relations are lacking, such events may either reduce or increase the chances for integration according to their outcome. We may recall, for example, the opposite roles of the French presidents Charles de Gaulle and Georges Pompidou in the process of the United Kingdom's accession to the European Community in the 1960s and 1970s, or the influence of the “Meciar factor” on the European and Euro-Atlantic prospects for Slovakia in the 1990s.

It was evident from the very beginning that the EU was reluctant to formulate too detailed a position towards Ukraine, either one which would have appeared to offer too much or one that was too rigid and would restrict room for maneuver in the future. On the other hand, paradoxically, that was in Ukrainian interests. The country has repeatedly suffered from asking for much too much. And that has been dangerous, both politically and psychologically. Normally, the ability of any country outside the European Union to influence EU decisions and actions is very limited. If the problem cannot be solved now, the solution should be postponed. With additional efforts, conditions for a future solution should be created, and if possible, on better conditions and at the right time. It appears that the Ukrainian Orange
Revolution is creating the conditions for an upgrading of the relationship. The EU has already produced additional offers – Solana/Ferrero-Waldner’s 10 points – to show that it is serious about Ukraine. Some member countries have already taken steps in this direction on their own initiative. Denmark, for example, will re-open an embassy in Kyiv. Baltic countries like Lithuania as well as Poland and other Central and East European countries – new EU members – have emerged as determined advocates for Ukraine in the EU and NATO. Ukraine needs to exploit fully this new window of opportunity and strengthen its own efforts to integrate with Euro-Atlantic institutions.

The prospects for any state approaching the EU, and Ukraine is no exception, are determined, inter alia: first, by the political and economic situation in the country which wishes to integrate; second by the consequences of enlargement – both real and perceived – for the existing EU member states; and, third, by the scale of adjustments needed by the EU for at least maintaining the efficiency of the decision making process.

Ukraine signed the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with the European Union in June 1994 – more than a decade ago. The National Strategy of Ukraine’s Integration into the European Union adopted in June 1998 specified that “[t]he national interests of Ukraine require identification of Ukraine as an influential European country, a full-fledged EU member”. The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (effective since March 1, 1998) provides a legal basis for relations between Ukraine and the EU. According to Article 1 of the agreement, the objectives of this partnership are:

- “to provide an appropriate framework for political dialogue between the parties allowing the development of close political relations;
- to promote trade and investment, and harmonious economic relations between the parties and to foster their sustainable development;
- to provide a basis for mutually advantageous economic, social, financial, civil, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation;
- to support Ukrainian efforts to consolidate its democracy, to develop its economy, and to complete the transition into a market economy”. 
Article 101 stipulates that the PCA “is concluded for an initial period of 10 years. The Agreement shall be automatically renewed year-by-year, provided that neither Party gives the other Party written notice of renunciation of the Agreement six months before it expires”. This means that the agreement will be effective until March 2008.

Ukraine was the first among the newly independent states of the former USSR to sign a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with the EU. After Ukraine, 10 former Soviet republics signed a PCA: Russia (June 24, 1994), Moldova (November 28, 1994), Kazakhstan (January 23, 1995), Kyrgyzstan (February 9, 1995), Belarus (March 6, 1995), Georgia (April 22, 1996), Armenia (April 22, 1996), Azerbaijan (April 22, 1996), Uzbekistan (June 21, 1996), Turkmenistan (May 25, 1998). But Russia’s PCA became effective first (December 1, 1997), the second was Ukraine (March 1, 1998), and the third was Moldova (1 July, 1998). The Partnership and Cooperation Agreements of the other countries became effective on July 1, 1999, except for Belarus and Turkmenistan, PCAs for which have not become effective. Tajikistan has not signed the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with the EU.

In spite of the general, unified application of the PCA legal framework to the former Soviet republics, the European Union had already at this stage exhibited some elements of a differentiated approach: only the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements with Ukraine (Article 4), Russia and Moldova envisage the possibility of the creation of a free trade area with the EU. Russia and Ukraine were also the only post-Soviet states to which the European Union applied a new instrument of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) – Common Strategies adopted, respectively, in June and December 1999.

For the successful management of overlapping integration spaces it might be necessary to creatively re-think the concept of “association” as an instrument of EU foreign policy. Presently, there are seven major types of association relations between the EU and other countries, three of which formally foresee the possible prospect of membership (the Europe Agreements of the 1990’s with 10 former socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe; the Association Agreements: Turkey – 1963, Cyprus – 1972, Malta – 1970; the Stabilization and Association
Agreements with Balkan countries); and four types which do not imply such a prospect (the European Economic Area: Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein; the “Switzerland model” of bilateral agreements; the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements – Israel, Tunisia, Morocco and others; the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements: Ukraine, Russia, Moldova and others).

Strong, Weak and Medium Variants of EU Association

For Central and Eastern Europe three models might be possible to pursue. These variants include strong, weak and medium forms of association.

The “strong” association variant is represented by a group of 10 countries (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Romania), eight of which have already entered the EU, and two of which have every chance of becoming EU members in 2007. The “strong” model can be seen as a kind of upward-moving elevator. The subject of negotiation is not the direction it is going in, but the speed of its movement. Ukraine does not even have a minimal chance of getting into the elevator.

The “weak” variant may be represented by a formula like “PCA+”. This means that basic partnership and cooperation agreements may be prolonged and/or asymmetrically supplemented by different bilateral agreements with the EU, thus reflecting the willingness of some countries and the EU to regulate the pace of a mutual drawing together and a framework for partnership. Potentially, one could include into this category such countries as Russia and other CIS countries, which have effective agreements with the EU. Depending on internal political changes, Belarus may also join this group. One appropriate image of the “weak” model would be a staircase, which one may go up or down. Stairs do not necessarily bring one to the same floor, or to the same door, as an elevator does.

The “medium” variant model could be expressed as “sharing everything with the EU but institutions”. Apparently, this model envisages significant movement ahead, beyond the limits of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, and, in general, transition from the level of partnership to the level of approaching membership.
Due to the specifics of the new historical situation, the legal framework of this model cannot duplicate the Europe Agreements of the beginning of the 1990’s. The model implies a significant creative dimension and political will from the EU side at a time when it is concentrating on internal institutional and administrative reform and is going through an important stage of the enlargement process. The “medium” variant model of association may be a real prospect for Ukraine and Moldova in the next 5-7 years as a step towards future membership.

An image of the “medium model” might be an escalator taking its passengers to the same point as the elevator. When the elevator is overcrowded, one may use the escalator. By not staying idle on the escalator but moving ahead fast, one could even arrive earlier than some passengers who have chosen the elevator. For, as we know, the elevator has to stop at some floors. Certainly, it is possible to jump off the escalator or even try to move downwards, remaining, in fact, in the same place. However, such experiments would be unlikely to meet the national interests of Ukraine. It is interesting that experts from the Center for European Policy Studies proposed just such a comparison with an escalator for Norway – a NATO member and a member of the European Economic Area, together with Iceland and Liechtenstein, but not a member of the EU. Thus, Ukraine, while continuing to approach the European Union, may move on to the same escalator not only as its close neighbor Moldova but also as distant Norway. Moreover, it is becoming more and more clear that under certain conditions some of those on the stairs (Georgia, Armenia) will choose the escalator. Under such a scenario, Ukraine may play for some European CIS countries the same role as that once played by Turkey vis-à-vis the Islamic countries. In any event, the best alternative, in a spirit of constructive compromise, would be the development of an advanced concept of future Ukraine-EU relations, taking into account:

(1) The existing Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with its “evolutionary clauses” (free trade area), and emphasis on the necessity of using its potential to the full extent;
(2) Successful implementation of the enhanced EU-Ukraine Action Plan within the framework of the European Neighborhood Policy;
(3) Maximum use of other instruments that are not related to membership (like, for example, participation of Ukraine in the European Union Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina since January 2003);

(4) Securing the principles of differentiation and self-differentiation including speeding up Ukraine’s access to EU programs in the fields of education, science, culture, civil society, people-to-people contacts etc.;

(5) Recognition of the possibility of future membership under the conditions of fulfillment of the membership criteria defined by the EU.

It should be added that the form of a new conceptual approach, one of whose elements would be the future Association Agreement, could be a constructive compromise between the position of those who insist on the priority and practicability of a more cautious, incremental approach (“step by step”), and those who, accepting this logic, at the same time have a more ambitious vision and support the inclusion of a possibility for membership into the wider horizon of Ukraine’s relations with the EU even at this stage.

In any case, one should not neglect the role of the emerging new regional environment. What could be the function and what could be the consequences of reinforced regional cooperation within the European neighborhood?

Encouragement of better regional cooperation is constantly, and rightfully, emphasized by the EU within the Northern Dimension, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, and, especially, the Stabilization and Association process for Balkan countries. Elements of such an approach exist in the European Neighborhood Policy.

In general, while justified as an instrument for the achievement of stability, growth, and security, this principle may have unintended consequences if applied in practice in different regions. For example, for the Western Balkan countries it, together with the prospects for accession to the EU, has a critically important function in providing the only exit from the chaos of the wars and conflicts of the end of the 20th century. However, if the field of its application in Eastern Europe were to be limited to three countries (Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova) or defined by the formula “3+1 (Russia)“,
then, given the current differences in geo-strategic orientations and foreign policy objectives of these countries and an absence of the prospect of accession to the EU for Ukraine and Moldova, it would contribute to the preservation of the status quo. This would all carry with it the familiar set of problems associated with a lack of systemic political and economic reforms in the region and real self-sustainable momentum for democratic change inside the regional hegemon.

How will the two dominating and overlapping integration dynamics – the European (EU+) and the Eurasian (Russia+) – co-exist? If the Common European Economic Space (between the EU and Russia) is supposed to perform the same role as the European Economic Area, then why is it necessary to build a new stadium if there is already an existing one? Moreover, there are almost no players left – Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein being the only ones.

Furthermore, joining the future Common European Economic Space, which is still the subject of a dialogue only between the EU and Russia, will not require full incorporation of the Acquis Communautaire, but will imply only unilateral acceptance of five to six chapters as a pre-requisite to higher institutional convergence. The Eurasian Economic Community, over which Ukraine has been intensively lobbied by Russia, already has its own acquis, which has not much in common with the Acquis Communautaire.

The Eurasian Economic Community and the Single Economic Space can hardly be considered as entities which will facilitate the Europeanization of Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia or Armenia in the same sense as the EU has facilitated modernization in Spain, Portugal, and Ireland and is facilitating modernization of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. It is worth remembering that Spain and Portugal became real “good neighbors” only after they both joined the EU. Apparently, Eurasian integration, in contrast to European, does not require compliance with democratic values as a pre-condition for participation in the process. It is no accident that there was nothing about democratic values in the agreement on the Single Economic Space (Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Ukraine) signed in Yalta in September 2003. Furthermore, while in Ukraine after the Orange Revolution “Europeanization”, “modernization” and “European and Euro-Atlantic integration”
are synonyms, this is not the case in Russia, which is pursuing a “special” or “unique” type of modernization.

That is why a narrow approach should be avoided. This means it is vital to use all available formulae for multilateral, regional cooperation, including the mechanism of “4+1” (Visegrad countries and Ukraine), the Central European Initiative, a reinvented GUUAM and Black Sea Economic Cooperation, and others, including trilateral ones (Ukraine-Moldova-Romania or Poland-Ukraine-Romania). It should be emphasized that, in each case, it is regional cooperation and cross-border relations within European regions that are the instruments complementing European integration but not substituting for it.

Restored confidence in bilateral relationships could help. Most notably, the opportunity for a renewal of friendship and cooperation between Ukraine and France and between Ukraine and Germany should not be missed. From those countries, that would not merely require new political will. It would also require new people with new ideas, both in government and in the broader expert community.

**Conclusion**

Independence Square, or *Maidan* as it is known in Ukraine, became famous around the world as the epicenter of the Orange Revolution. Images of its picturesque tent city and huge 300,000 strong gatherings were broadcast around the world. The closest square – just 100 steps away - is called European Square (*Ye v rope yskaya*). It is there that you can find the Ukrainian House (*Ukrainsky Dom*, formerly Lenin’s Museum and now a “castle of the revolution”) which day and night hosted tens of thousands people. I am encouraged and inspired by the symbolism involved in the visible proximity of those two squares – Independence and European. Ukrainian people – through their own personal experiences – have learned for themselves that there is a link between the two. Independence itself and the years that followed were just the first small steps in this European direction though, of course, they were complicated by a dismal record of frustrating setbacks. The five weeks of Ukraine’s Orange Revolution represent a huge leap forward. But however necessary it was, it is
still not enough. A very difficult and bumpy European road lies before us. Ukraine needs solidarity and support at this critical juncture of its history.

It was Robert Schuman who warned us: “Europe will not be created all at once, nor as part of an overall design; it will be built through practical achievements that will first establish a sense of common purpose”. The Orange Revolution demonstrated that the idea of Europe is strongly supported by the Ukrainian people. It provides an opportunity for the EU and Ukraine to strengthen that sense of common purpose. Europe as a whole will gain from this joint endeavor.
A COMPREHENSIVE REFORM AGENDA FOR THE NEW UKRAINE

Olaf Hillenbrand and Iris Kempe

The recent changes in Ukraine could not have been more dramatic: the democratic candidate in the presidential elections was hindered in his campaign – he was even poisoned – and was defeated only by the blatant rigging of the elections. Yet in contrast with earlier elections, the Ukrainian people stood up in protest, with hundreds of thousands taking to the streets in celebration of the democratic spirit to demand that free and fair elections be held again. Eventually, and more or less in time for Christmas, democracy triumphed spectacularly. Almost overnight, this long-time appendix of Russia turned itself into a self-confident, attractive, European country. Yet the reality following this feast for democracy is more complicated.

The presidential election saw the rise of Viktor Yushchenko as a charismatic and popular leader. He is credible and appears, so far, flawless in his striving for a democratic and united Ukraine. For many – at least in the West, and among intellectuals – Yushchenko embodies the hope that many of the country’s past mishaps can be corrected and that Ukraine can return to Europe. Nonetheless, even though the Orange Revolution provided important impulses and standards for a democratic society – for example in the media – this must not allow us to turn a blind eye to the fact that the election of President Yushchenko only marks the beginning of a thorny path. Elections do not make a democracy or reform an economy: the real changes are yet to come.¹

As in other transition countries of the region, the current euphoria among democrats will give way to a more critical assessment of the reforms initiated by the new government. Whether or not Viktor Yushchenko and his government can live up to the high expectations of their followers will depend on how successfully economic and social reforms are implemented. Changes will need a clear direction and they must not disappoint expectations. This paper discusses some of the priorities and focuses of Ukrainian reform policy for the months to come.

**Challenges**

As a post-communist country bordering the enlarged EU, Ukraine can benefit from the experiences of democratic and market economic reform in Central and Eastern Europe. It can also learn from the experiences of other parts of the post-communist world. The Yushchenko camp has already utilized knowledge and techniques from Georgia and Serbia to organize democratic protest. Now, the new members of the European Union can provide some useful instruction.

In all these cases, the existence of a democratic constitution, functioning institutions, economic progress and broad-based social support were important pre-requisites for the successful pursuit of democratic and market reforms. The longer-term willingness and capacity of Central European governments to implement difficult political, economic and social changes has been considerably reinforced by the EU through its assistance and, most of all, the perspective of future EU integration that it provided. An analysis of earlier processes of democratic and market reform demonstrates that success hinged upon favorable initial conditions, and subsequent good policies. These had to balance the different demands facing government, apply resources effectively, and generate the broadest-possible social consensus about necessary reforms. This capacity for good governance is the decisive precondition for conducting reform.² With this in mind, and despite the impressive victory of

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democratic forces, it is obvious that Ukraine falls short on some of the central prerequisites for good governance and democratic consolidation.\(^3\)

The developments of recent months notwithstanding, democratic traditions in Ukraine remain underdeveloped. Electoral fraud, the attempted assassination of Yushchenko, and massive opposition from the previous government to change through the ballot box indicate that democracy is not yet generally considered “the only game in town.”

Although Ukraine has a constitution that meets democratic standards, its effectiveness remains weak, as the contrast between written provisions and reality indicated. Defects ranged from violations of civic rights, through limited rule of law, to interference with the media. The extent to which democratic institutions will develop effective cooperation in the short and medium term also remains an open question. During the first decade since independence, Ukraine was not able to overcome far-reaching poverty and widespread corruption.\(^4\) The party political process remained underdeveloped. Economy and politics were dominated by a few influential clans, and economic and political influence frequently overlapped. Each of these factors limited the ability of government to act and implement reforms.\(^5\) These deficiencies represent key challenges for future reform efforts. A democratic Ukraine will have to build a nation-wide consensus on democratic and market reforms, separate political power and economic influence, fight corruption and make sure that political opposition is possible.

From a geopolitical perspective, Ukraine, located between Russia and the EU, will have to find a place for itself without aggravating relations with either of its large neighbors. Moscow tried hard to influence the presidential elections in

\(^3\) For more detail, see Hillenbrand, Olaf, “Consensus-Building and Good Governance – A Framework for Democratic Transition,” in: Kempe, Iris, and Helmut Kurth (eds.), Presidential Election and Orange Revolution. Implications for Ukraine’s Transition (Kyiv 2005), 7-31.


Ukraine. Yushchenko’s pro-Western stance contradicts Putin’s aim of restoring and restructuring the Russian sphere of influence and will meet with opposition. The EU, on the other hand, has just gone through a round of enlargement, seems fatigued, and has not yet offered a sound and credible perspective for integrating Ukraine. Hence, Ukraine enters the new era with as many hopes as challenges.

Political and Social Priorities

In order for democracies to consolidate – rather than to revert into forms of semi-authoritarianism as in Ukraine prior to the revolution – a high degree of democratic consensus or a developed democratic culture are essential. The Orange Revolution turned Viktor Yushchenko into the shining emblem of democracy in Ukraine. After his inauguration, he announced his intention for the comprehensive democratization of the country and appealed to his opponents to cooperate with him and his government. Moreover, he made it clear that his government’s orientation is towards Europe and that full membership of the European Union is a key priority. These goals can hardly be criticized; they are logical. Behind them, however, hides a long-term task with far-reaching implications. The defeat of Yanukovych certainly marked the end of the old regime. This does not, however, mean that Ukrainians in the south and east accept this outcome unconditionally. What is more, acceptance of a democratic order appears to remain weak in these regions. This mental division of the country and its weakly developed political culture contains considerable risks. The most pressing task for the new government in Kyiv is therefore a swift and broad reconciliation of Ukrainian society – with itself and with liberal democracy. This constellation suggests four core areas for practical policy-making.

Integrity of the President. Viktor Yushchenko will centrally determine the capacity of Ukraine to consolidate democracy. The success or failure of his policies will be determined by whether or not a democratic consensus emerges. For the period until September 2005, Viktor Yushchenko disposes of far-reaching executive powers, which the recent constitutional amendments will then limit in favor of a more parliamentary oriented democracy. Until then, these presidential competencies could be extremely useful for revamping democratic institutions. However, Yushchenko will have to show responsibility in his use of these presidential powers.
Precisely because Yushchenko has become an icon of democracy, his political style will matter as much as his concrete policies. The transparency of his policies, the inclusiveness of decision-making, respect for mechanisms of democratic oversight, and strict separation of personal and public interests will affect the extent to which a democratic consensus will take root among Ukrainian elites. In the interests of democratic stability, Yushchenko will have to live up to his position as a role model throughout his term of office. As in other transition countries, Yushchenko's presidency may well shape the political style of his successors.

Of particular importance will be the approach of the new president to the political opposition. He must not succumb to the temptation to exclude those who were defeated in the democratic breakthrough. On the contrary, democracy in Ukraine will benefit if Yushchenko manages to include the opposition in all major decisions shaping the future course of the country, and thus to commit them to the democratic process of decision-making. With regard to society, Yushchenko will have to strive to become the president of all Ukrainians. This will require him to avoid excessive social hardships resulting from reforms. He will have to avoid the impression that his policies put specific regions or interest groups at a disadvantage. Naturally, these pressures are in potential conflict with policies of reform.

*Democratic Legitimacy.* The most important source of legitimacy of any political system is its success. Once the initial euphoria about the Orange Revolution has subsided, Ukrainians will need to see political and economic achievements in order for democracy to take root more solidly. Market reforms will have a significant influence on the future course of democratic transition, and Ukraine will need to continue the economic upturn of recent years. Politically and socially, those measures that can bring political reality closer to constitutional and legal provisions and that strengthen an open society will yield the greatest successes. This postulate has various implications.

No less than President Yushchenko, his government will have to make and implement political decisions with a high degree of transparency. The judiciary needs to be strengthened both in its independence and administrative capacity in order to live up to its constitutional role to check the powers of government.
The new government would be well advised to make the rule of law the absolute centerpiece of its work. Few other factors strengthen confidence in democracy better than the congruity of the letter and the reality of the law. Legal certainty and the ability to reform are closely related. Such a rule of law initiative could be launched quickly by the new government. In parallel, the new government needs to strictly guarantee those civil liberties that were violated by the previous regime. This includes strengthening the rights of individual citizens towards the public administration system and holding state bodies responsible for infringements on citizens’ rights. What is already evident in the new Ukraine are changes in the media. The *temniki* – thematic orders to editors – have already given way to an open form of media coverage that has come as a surprise to many Ukrainians. Electronic media especially have strengthened their independence from the state, and developed pluralism in the variety of opinions expressed.

An important indicator as to how serious the new government takes the development of a new political culture is the fight against corruption. As part of a rule of law initiative, the fight against corruption has to be a top priority for the coming months and years. Ukraine is a country dogged by mass corruption. Certainly, fighting corruption is a highly complicated task. Nevertheless, the attempt to address the problem will act as a signal of the government’s commitment to building a just society in which the same rules, rights and obligations apply to all. It would simultaneously strengthen the economy and increase its attractiveness to foreign investors. In order to succeed, existing laws have to be applied strictly and equally to everyone, and the effectiveness of existing laws needs to be put to the test. Corruption needs to be made socially unacceptable, and government will have to make sure that corruption is punished without exception. Building general support for this fight against corruption will also require that anti-corruption measures are no longer instrumentalized to fight political opponents.

*Political Infrastructure.* Besides the political will of individual actors, functioning institutions assume utmost importance in democratic systems. The current constitution meets democratic standards and provides a good point of departure for consolidating democracy. Equally positive is the fact that the constitutional amendments of December 2004 resulted from a compromise among all relevant
Weaknesses of the constitution have rested so far with an ill-constructed division of powers that makes political conflicts more likely. One solution to this problem could, in the medium term, be a parliamentary system. While recent constitutional changes do not foresee such a shift, a further discussion of options for developing the constitutional and political system seems worthwhile. Given that parliamentary systems offer more incentives to seek and to find compromise, and foster the emergence of strong political parties, far-reaching and consensual constitutional reform could be one way of generating broad acceptance for the democratic system.

In order to solidify the political infrastructure and the effectiveness of decision-making processes, the role of political parties needs to be strengthened. This includes new regulations for party financing, and a range of other measures to stimulate the transition from personality-based to program-based party structures. Until recently, it was not unusual in Ukraine to impede the activities of NGOs by arbitrary limitations and unexpected bureaucratic measures. An improved status and better legal guarantees for civil society organizations could also induce stronger participation by the public in the political process.

Building a Ukrainian Identity. In contrast with other countries, Ukraine may have gained independent statehood in 1991 but it has yet to become a nation. Efforts at nation-building need to aim at overcoming regional cleavages and at presenting Ukrainians with a shared identity. While at times a positive sense of national identity can be strengthened precisely by overcoming authoritarian structures, recent changes in Ukraine have tended to widen rifts in society. As a result, the Orange Revolution can hardly serve as a founding myth for this young democracy. An emphasis on what is common and shared by all Ukrainians will therefore need to accompany demands for the fairness and efficiency of government policies. If the government succeeds in convincing citizens of the need for reforms in order for Ukraine to build a better future this will, in the long run, contribute to a positive sense of Ukrainian identity.

Accordingly, politics will have to reflect the participatory character of the negotiated transition and efforts to bridge the rifts in society. In this context, decentralization, more competencies for regions and stronger local authorities are not only likely to anchor a lively democratic culture but they also symbolize the change from an omnipotent central government to a more participatory system. If the emergence of clearly identifiable regional and social “winners” and “losers” from democratic change can be avoided, a road to a shared identity will be opened up. The most recent past will also need to be addressed actively. Besides clarifying past events and developments, reconciliation will be essential. Even the suspicion of revenge by the new government would have devastating effects for the political landscape of Ukraine. This treatment of the past will also have to engage with important cultural symbols, such as the debate about the status of the Russian language. In short, Ukraine needs to resolve questions about the country’s broader orientation via social consensus, clearly incorporating the views of Ukrainians about their own future.

**Economic Priorities**

Without visible economic success, Ukraine will not be able to continue its democratic course in the long run. Therefore, it is fortunate that the new president has experience in conducting economic reform. During his time as Prime Minister, he led the country towards an impressive economic upturn. In the near future, he also plans substantial economic reforms aimed at a further modernization of the country. The appointment of Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko also indicates a clear preference for a liberal reform path. The Ukrainian path to Europe will begin with economic integration. Since the EU cannot at present offer EU accession, it will suggest economic relationships that can benefit both sides. This will, however, require that Ukraine becomes capable of competing on world markets. The main direction of economic reform policies is clear: Ukraine has to become more attractive for foreign direct investment and to unleash its own economic potential. Central issues to be addressed will be as follows.

Since 2000, Ukraine has had economic growth rates of more than eight percent (in 2004: 13.4 percent). In order to maintain such growth rates in the long run,
measures aimed at fiscal and monetary stability are essential. Yet the reforms of recent years have produced significant social costs because they were inconsistent and primarily served the interests of particular groups. What is more, there were no mechanisms to compensate for social costs. Poverty in the country remained widespread. It will be important for future reforms to be constructed in such a way that economic growth benefits all groups of society. Otherwise, positive growth rates will not contribute to stabilizing the democratic and market systems.

In order to increase the sustainability of the market in Ukraine, social welfare systems will have to undergo fundamental reforms. The hitherto existing, Soviet-style arrangements provide considerable support to some privileged groups but are not based on real social needs. As a result, comparably high costs generate few social effects. Without a re-orientation of the education and social welfare systems, social stabilization in Ukraine will not be achieved. For Ukraine to become more economically competitive, a tax reform will have to both lower taxes and put them on a broader tax base. President Yushchenko has already announced far-reaching plans following the principle that “everybody will pay taxes”. In addition, a specific initiative could provide incentives for small and medium-sized enterprises. In order to exploit its economic potential, Ukraine needs closer relationships with Western market economies. Accession to the World Trade Organization this year should therefore be prioritized.

In one important respect the drive for economic efficiency and political reform will have to move in tandem because the fight against corruption and the shadow economy is central to both. According to a World Bank survey, Ukrainian entrepreneurs spend 15 percent of their time on contacts with the public administration. Less corruption and equal conditions for all entrepreneurs would facilitate market access by new firms, reduce investments risks and increase efficiency. Apart from poor economic infrastructure and weak purchasing power, corruption is seen as the primary obstacle for foreign companies wishing to invest

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7 Blue Ribbon Commission for Ukraine, Proposals for the President. A New Wave of Reform (Kyiv 2005), 8.
in Ukraine. More generally, transparency across all areas of the economy is a basic condition for the fight against corruption.

The separation of economic and political power aims in a similar direction. The political influence of oligarchs distorts equality of economic opportunity and impedes the economic development of the country. In addition, Ukraine has to increase its economic compatibility with the EU. The implementation of difficult reforms not only increases the country’s credibility abroad but also the willingness of the EU to support Ukrainian reforms as part of its neighborhood policy. Abolishing trade barriers would stimulate economic relationships with the EU and could be a first step towards intensifying economic cooperation. Yushchenko's plan for a first phase adjusting 500 laws to EU norms points in this direction. A next step in the short run could be a bilateral free trade agreement with the EU. Beyond that, Ukraine should make early enquiries about closer relationships with the European Free Trade Agreement and the European Economic Area.

**Foreign Policy Priorities**

In the pursuit of successful reform, Ukrainian decision-makers face the dual challenge that foreign policy is both an object and motor of transition. With its demand for free and fair elections, Ukrainian civil society not only contributed decisively to political change but it also based itself on Western norms and values. The goal of Ukrainian foreign policy has to be to internalize, develop and implement this “spirit” of the Orange Revolution. At the level of conceptualization and planning, Ukrainian foreign policy cannot any longer depend on ad-hoc decisions of the president but should be guided by parameters defined by parliament. A sustainable foreign policy can only be achieved by way of broad, national consensus. Fundamental foreign policy decisions, such as closer ties with NATO or the EU, need to be accompanied by public debate.

Diplomatic personnel represent Ukraine internationally. The new Foreign Minister, Borys Tarasyuk, is rightly regarded as representative of a democratic and Western orientation of the country, and a similar image has to be created for all top representatives in the foreign ministry including embassy personnel worldwide.
Ukraine would be well-advised to communicate its democratic spirit through well-educated diplomats proficient in the languages of Western capitals.

The strengthening of democracy needs to be accompanied by clear and logical signals favoring Ukraine’s integration with Western structures. In contrast to previous practice, goals such as EU membership need to move away from the level of foreign policy declarations and be related more closely to the reform process in the country. With its recently defined priorities, the new government in Kyiv has already taken some important steps in this direction. What is important now is to implement reforms and to meet the Copenhagen criteria. In addition to reform policies, Ukraine needs to find partners to support its plans for Western integration. Good relationships with Poland, Lithuania and Slovakia are already in place and bode well for an independent and democratic Ukraine. This asset should be used both for integration with the West and for the transfer of transition experiences. Yet support from Warsaw and Vilnius will not be enough to pave the way for Ukraine to join the West. Kyiv will also need allies among the traditional motors of Eastern policy in Europe. Ukraine should try to win over Germany and France, but also countries like Finland, as supporters on its way to Brussels. For this to succeed, Ukraine should try to become a partner that is socially and economically interesting, as well as attractive and reliable in foreign and security policy.

Ukraine’s international relationships should not be limited to top level contacts but need to be based on the broadest-possible foundations. Integration of Ukraine with European structures also requires political will in the West. In order to exert a positive influence, Ukraine needs to be as attractive as possible and to have partners in the West. If Ukraine were to unilaterally abolish visa requirements for EU, U.S. and Canadian citizens, it would enhance its image as an open country interested in social contacts and economic cooperation.

Possible NATO membership should be part of this Western orientation. Technically, accession to the North Atlantic Alliance is less complicated than joining the EU. However, Kyiv needs to be conscious of the sensitive nature of moving in this direction and act accordingly. Difficulties include the condition of the Ukrainian armed forces, the Black Sea Fleet (which is in part under Russian control) and
Russian concerns more generally. Closer ties with NATO would offer a strong signal about Ukrainian foreign policy priorities. This could win over Washington as a partner and force it to send clear signals to Kyiv.

For geo-strategic reasons, Ukraine has no choice but to balance its relationships with Russia and the West. In paying his first foreign visit to Moscow, Viktor Yushchenko has given the right signal to the Kremlin. Kyiv cannot but take Russia seriously as a foreign policy partner. Yet its leeway for action has changed considerably. In holding presidential elections according to Western standards and despite Russian interference, Ukraine has demonstrated its independence from Moscow. A future Russia policy towards Ukraine will have to reflect this shift from a reactive dependency to a proactive approach. A democratic Ukraine should formulate and pursue its interests vis-à-vis Moscow, and economic cooperation will figure as prominently as security policy.

EU, Russia and the United States as Actors

The democratic breakthrough in Ukraine confronts Russia and the West with new challenges. On the one hand, the demand for free and fair elections was based on Western values, and Ukrainians understood their protests as constituting a step towards Europe. On the other hand, democratic change also signaled a rejection of the post-Soviet model of integration devised by Putin in relation to the successor states of the Soviet Union and based on economic dependency and direct influence.8

For its part, previous European policy towards Ukraine was based on pointing to problems with democracy and civil society in the country.9 Seen from Brussels, these shortcomings rendered Kyiv’s calls for closer relationships between Ukraine and the EU mere declarations. Western capitals, unlike Russia, were less concerned with


who wins elections than with how elections were conducted. During the December crisis, important European decision-makers including the EU High Representative Javier Solana, and Presidents Kwasniewski of Poland and Adamkus of Lithuania successfully helped negotiate democratic change in Ukraine. In doing so, the EU has provided an important signal. With the Orange Revolution, Ukrainian citizens have impressively met previous Western demands for a democratic Ukraine. It is now up to the EU and individual Western capitals to detail their plans for the place of Ukraine in an integrated Europe.

It is in its own interests that the West assists Ukrainian reforms with financial resources, advice and technical support. The experience of democratic and market reform in other transition countries in the region is particularly valuable and should be tapped. Technical assistance and advice needs to link the reform process in Ukraine with a European perspective. For this purpose, the EU should utilize resources and mechanisms of its PHARE program, and depending on the further course of Ukrainian reforms, also ISPA, aimed at structural policy, and SAPARD, focusing on rural and agrarian issues. Functional cooperation between the EU and Ukraine should be extended in all those areas where mutual interests overlap directly. Important examples are infrastructural development, transport, communication and internal security. Cooperation in these areas could have spill-over effects to other fields. European policy has to develop economic relationships with Ukraine on the basis of free trade. The EU should support Ukrainian membership in the WTO, recognize the country as a market economy and expand free trade as far as economically viable. Ukraine has to be included in the Common Foreign and Security Policy. There is a mutual interest resulting from regional problems with Europe-wide implications, such as the Trans-Dniester conflict, the fight against broader security risks and proliferation of weapons, and the avoidance of state failure.

The EU will be well-advised to offer Ukraine forms of relationships that go beyond the existing neighborhood policy. Perceived as a political signal, the current “No” to EU membership should be transformed into a “Yes” to association. It is possible to conceive of associations taking different forms and intensities, as well as partial membership in individual areas of European cooperation and integration. What is
most important now is to provide an expandable perspective that provides signals and impulses for European cooperation.

Europe and America have similar goals in their Ukraine policies. Accordingly, a European perspective for Ukraine needs to be part of a transatlantic strategy. This also offers a chance to strengthen the Western community of values. Washington and its European partners should offer a joint Ukraine package comprising technical assistance, advice and trade liberalization. Washington should also anchor Ukraine in Euro-Atlantic structures, and the institutional mechanism to achieve this would be support for NATO accession. In doing so, the West needs to take Russian security concerns seriously. In the medium term, such an orientation of Ukraine also offers new opportunities for the Kremlin.

Even after the democratic breakthrough in Ukraine, Moscow remains an important actor for shaping the post-Soviet space. This results from Russia’s economic relationships and from shared security challenges. Yet Russia will have to provide a new basis for its relationships with Ukraine, which have to be guided by equality and democracy among both partners. Russia should base its relations with Ukraine on broad social foundations. Future cooperation will require overcoming a number of historical legacies and enmities. If Moscow manages to re-orient its Ukraine policy, the leeway and potential for re-shaping the post-Soviet space would increase dramatically, which eventually would also benefit Moscow.

**Vision 2015: On the Way to Market Democracy**

The measures sketched out above combine into a policy agenda for the short term that aims to address the deficiencies of the Ukrainian political system utilizing the current élan and enthusiasm for reform. Political, economic and social reform places many demands on many people. For this reason, transition processes are rarely straightforward and without serious conflicts. In Ukraine, too, not all reform steps will meet with broad social support, and not every measure will result in immediate pay-offs. Experiences from other countries have shown that hardships and stagnation in reform processes can be overcome if there is a more general, credible and broadly acceptable perspective for development.
President Yushchenko outlined his most important goals before the elections and also in his first presidential declarations. He announced the beginning of “a new époque, of a new great democracy.” Ukraine will continue to have close relationships with Russia but the liberal democracies of the EU will provide for the country’s political, economic and social orientation. In so doing, Ukraine will have to go through a lengthy reform process that will not be without backlashes and obstacles.

The debate about, and advice on, future Ukrainian reforms is wide ranging. In addition to his own experience, Yushchenko can draw on the assistance of experts and specialist organizations, cooperation with neighboring countries, and elaborate analyses and strategies. Against this background, the central task of the President and his government will be to crystallize the many aspects of the reform process into an all encompassing program and a credible vision for Ukraine up to the year 2015. This vision will also help to put less popular reforms into the context of a greater, worthwhile goal.

It is in the vital interests of Ukraine that, in elaborating this vision, the place Ukraine is aiming for within European integration structures is clearly spelled out. It will be necessary to stress which political and economic goals this implies, which measures are necessary and which results can be foreseen in which time frame. A road map, of sorts, for the coming years that sets out Ukraine’s course until 2015, will make it easier for political actors and the population at large to discuss and debate constructively difficult and potentially divisive issues along the way. If Ukraine implements reforms properly, she has a good chance to establish a market democracy and to close the gap with her Western neighbors. After the Orange Revolution, Ukraine has several trump cards in hand. The country has an elected president who has announced and launched a clear program for reform; Ukraine has a well-educated population that is ready for reform; and the country has for several years had an impressively growing market economy. Much seems to indicate that the path towards market democracy and a Western orientation are not only

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10See, among others, Ronald D. Asmus (in this volume); Blue Ribbon Commission for Ukraine, Proposals for the President. A New Wave of Reform (Kyiv 2005).
conditional upon each other but indeed are complementary. From this perspective, the changes that have taken place in Central and Eastern Europe over the past 15 years amount to a triple advantage for Ukraine.

While no strategic blueprint for the Ukrainian path to democracy and a market economy exists, a rich pool of examples of prudent reform policies, avoidable mistakes, and orientations is available. Democracies thrive particularly well in the vicinity of other democracies. In this sense, the new and prospering EU member states can serve as examples and incentives for Ukraine to hold out on its way to reform. No less importantly, the EU has become the most important international supporter of political, economic and social reform, and it has well worked out programs to stabilize European countries. If for no other reason, self-interest will lead the EU to provide comprehensive support to Ukraine in the years to come.

The new democracies bordering Ukraine provide a bridge to the West. It has already become apparent that Ukraine has a number of supporters that will demand European integration as Ukraine implements successful reforms. Although it is not up to Ukraine to decide on the mode and time of its integration with Europe, it can influence this schedule indirectly by increasing its compatibility with, and attractiveness for, the EU. Europe can already serve as a point of reference. In gradually approaching the Copenhagen criteria formulated by the EU as conditions for accession, Ukraine can accelerate its journey to Europe. As first steps, however, it is necessary to bridge the manifest rifts in Ukrainian society, to promote a democratic consensus, and to implement viable reforms. If the new president – a previous prime minister and former head of the Central Bank (and thus an experienced reformer) – can turn his democratic orientation and the considerable competencies of his office into credible reform policies, he may well become the godfather of a new, democratic and European Ukraine.
THE EUROPEAN NEIGHBORHOOD POLICY: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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“The policy we are shaping now is not for the EU. This is the policy we are shaping for our nation. We want freedom of speech and rule of law. We want democratic values to be respected. We want the free and competitive market to work. We need those things irrespective of whether we join the EU.”

Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko²

This paper examines the relationship between Ukraine and the European Union following the Orange Revolution and the election of Viktor Yushchenko with particular emphasis on the partnership programs between the EU and Ukraine, and on where these programs are eventually leading Brussels and Kyiv. It explores current EU programs vis-à-vis Ukraine and discusses efforts to reform and develop the economic, political and social policy landscape of the country. It then addresses to what extent these current programs are actually working. It looks at the main problems the country faces and suggests what additional improvements – be they of Ukrainian or EU origin – are necessary. Finally, this paper will address the ultimate goal of any EU-Ukraine partnership. The mission statement of the European Neighborhood Policy is, in part, to share the benefits of the EU’s enlargement with its neighbors. It does not necessarily mean EU membership in the future, however. Are EU-Ukraine partnership efforts designed to ensure that the neighborly

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relationship between the EU and Ukraine does not become a burden on the EU? Or are policymakers in both Brussels and Kyiv serious that these efforts will, one day, lead Ukraine to join a united Europe?

Before discussing these questions in their specific relevance for Ukraine, however, it is necessary to briefly examine the broader framework for relationships between the EU and its neighborhood. As a result of the enlargement toward the east and south in 2004, the EU has reached new limits both culturally and politically. Consequently the enlargement brings with it a general need to reshape the political and economic relationship with other parts of the world, and with those countries surrounding the EU more specifically.

The European Security Strategy, which defined common threats and security challenges, was a first step in this direction. By way of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and following the enlargement process of 2004, the EU would like to redefine its own geopolitical interests and relationships to the new neighbors. Furthermore, the new neighboring countries of the EU should receive an offer to cooperate and build a privileged relationship with the EU. The ENP seeks to create a system of graduated cooperation and association contracts. The crux of the ENP is economic integration within the EU’s single market. Cooperation should also be strengthened in the political arena, tackling such issues as a common security policy, environmental protection and energy strategies. Intrinsic within the already existing framework there are, however, some contradictions: Should European and non-European neighbors be treated equally? Can the EU cooperate on equal terms with democratic as well as with authoritarian regimes? Is Russia just another neighbor among many, or should it receive an exceptional position within the framework of a strategic partnership?

Regarding Ukraine and its changed political realities the following questions have to be asked: Is the ENP still an appropriate strategy to achieve the EU’s objectives to further security, stability and economic development in its immediate neighborhood? Does the current Partnership and Cooperation Agreement provide the necessary framework and how should it be replaced by 2008? Should the EU offer a roadmap
for Ukraine’s EU accession or wait to see whether the new government carries out the necessary political and economic reforms?

The Ukrainian elections have already changed the EU’s foreign policy landscape. Poland’s President Kwasniewski and Lithuania’s Adamkus took the lead in shaping the EU’s position towards the manipulated presidential elections. France, Germany, and other foreign policy leaders followed suit. The EU’s policy towards Ukraine proved to be successful and the Union gained respect and additional stature in the region. It remains to be seen whether the Franco-German duo draws the right conclusions from that experience and increases foreign policy coordination with Poland and other new member states.

**The European Neighborhood Policy**

With the European Neighborhood Policy\(^3\) (ENP) the EU is redefining its geopolitical interests as well as relationships towards its new neighbors. Through its communication “A Larger Europe – Neighborhood” the European Commission created a new framework for EU relationships with its eastern and southern neighbors. The strategic goals of the ENP were defined by the Commission via a communication on May 12, 2004. The common security strategy approved by the European Council on December 12, 2003 concentrates principally on a series of threats that loom in the EU’s immediate neighborhood as well as on collaborative partnerships in order to manage any security crisis.

The entry of eight Central and Eastern European countries together with Cyprus and Malta into the EU signifies major changes in relation to the EU’s external borders and to the EU’s external relations. The European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) will restructure and refocus EU relations with the new neighbor countries to the east (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) and to the south, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership countries (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia) as well as Libya. The ENP was prepared in parallel

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\(^3\) Please find all important documents at the European Commission’s website “European Neighbourhood Policy” at www.europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/index_en.htm.
to the final phases of the 2004 EU enlargement and presented in the European Commission’s communication – “Wider Europe” – at the end of March 2003.

The ENP objectives, as stated by the EU are: “…to share the benefits of the EU’s 2004 enlargement with neighboring countries in strengthening stability, security and well-being for all concerned. It is designed to prevent the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and its neighbors and to offer them the chance to participate in various EU activities, through greater political, security, economic and cultural co-operation.”

The importance of a neighborhood policy is highlighted in the European Security Strategy, endorsed at the European Council of December 2003, which states that the EU’s task is to “…make a particular contribution to stability and good governance in our immediate neighborhood [and] to promote a ring of well-governed countries to the East of the European Union and on the borders of the Mediterranean with whom we can enjoy close and cooperative relations.”

To draw the neighboring countries into an increasingly close relationship with the EU, the ENP will use, as its main operational tool, jointly agreed Action Plans based on common values and a set of priorities. The Action Plans will cover action in specific key areas: political dialogue and reform; trade and measures preparing partners for gradually obtaining a stake in the EU’s Internal Market; justice and home affairs; energy, transport, information society, environment and research and innovation; social policy and people-to-people contacts.

All neighbors of the EU⁴ who do not have immediate prospects for EU accession should be included within the framework of a common Action Plan⁵ in order to

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⁴ Southern Europe and Turkey do not fall into the category ENP, since the EU has opened accession talks with them. The following states remain: Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine, Russia, Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Syria and Tunisia. In June of 2004, the following countries were affiliated with the ENP: Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia.

⁵ Hitherto action plans have been worked out with Moldova, Ukraine, Morocco, Jordan, Tunisia, and Palestine. Pending is the approval by the European Council. The Action Plan with Israel is largely finalized.
facilitate participation within the different activities and programs of the EU as well as to profit from certain financial instruments. In this regard, the EU strives to treat each of the neighboring countries independently in order to continue to develop relationships based on equality, mutual consent, and on each individual political, economic and social state of development.

Action Plans have been adopted for some countries (e.g. Morocco, Tunisia, Ukraine and Moldova) and are under negotiation for others. The proposed regulation on the new Neighborhood Instrument is under discussion by the European Commission, the Council and the Parliament.

The EU is not seeking a common Action Plan with Belarus and its authoritarian regime at this time. The EU has no contractual relationship with Libya. Since the political isolation of Libya ended, the EU is striving to include it into the Barcelona Process and in the medium term to begin negotiations on an association and neighborhood agreement.

Regional clustering, which could be a common approach for the states of Eastern Europe and the Near East, is not intended. However, in practical terms, issues relating to regional balance and equality will continue to play an important role. This applies, for example, to the comparison between Ukraine and Moldova but also to the socio-economically different but politically joined Israel and Palestine.

Regional cooperation continues to exist within the Barcelona Accords, the Council of Europe, as well as other initiatives such as the Baltic Sea Council, the Central European Initiative and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation and should serve to complement the already existing bilateral neighborhood agreements. Both regional security cooperation and the environment play leading roles in the Barcelona Accords (EUROMED). The Mediterranean Action Plan of 1975 and the Environment Program of the United Nations complement EUROMED.

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It is implied, but not explicitly stated, that further applications for membership by these neighbors will, for the moment, be unsuccessful. However, by implementing these Action Plans, there is a clear signal toward Eastern European neighbors that they can greatly improve their prospects of EU accession. Even though these Action Plans will vary greatly from country to country in principle, contained within them are all the elements needed for accession. These Action Plans and, in part, the already existing agreements to cooperate could be used as a basis for future partnerships.

Within the Barcelona Accords, the states of the Near and Middle East and Northern Africa are already working together with the EU. The original agreements, based mainly on economic cooperation were expanded upon in recent years to allow for more collaboration with regard to security, border control and migration. The Barcelona Process is Europe’s main contribution offered to the G8 initiative for the transformation of the “Greater Middle East” toward democracy, development and common security. The Barcelona Process is officially supported through the MEDA program – the principal financial instrument of the EU for the implementation of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

Concerning Eastern Europe, there are already partnership, cooperation and association agreements with the majority of the countries in the region. Common projects as well as third party projects in the region are being supported through the TACIS program, which is the EU’s main instrument for cooperation with the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

From 2007, the new Neighborhood Instrument will support cross border cooperation, regional co-operation involving both EU member states and neighboring countries, and both regional and cross-border cooperation among partner countries. The Commission has proposed a significant funding increase to approximately €15 billion for the period 2007-2013. These funds will certainly act as an incentive for economic and political reform within the partner countries. Until the new medium term financial planning of the EU for 2007 becomes official, a neighborhood instrument should be created based on already existing support such as TACIS for Eastern Europe and MEDA for the Mediterranean region. To what extent these
neighborhood instruments complement or integrate already existing programs remains to be seen. Until then, the so called Neighborhood Programs should be coordinated with each other.

The foreign and security policies of the EU will concentrate, above all, on the new neighbors and will strive to find solutions to common problems. Key questions in this regard include: Are the existing regional and transatlantic security arrangements still adequate? And to what extent must the Common Foreign and Security Policy be developed further? The European Security Strategy sees the strengthening of security in the neighborhood of the EU as one of its top priorities. It states that “[e]ven in times of globalization, geographic aspects still play an important role. It is in Europe's interest that the neighboring countries are being governed responsibly. Neighboring countries, which are ensnared in violent conflict, weak states in which organized crime finds fertile ground, war torn societies or states with an uncontrolled population explosion in the neighboring regions are always a problem for Europe.”

Without doubt, there are several unresolved security conflicts in Europe's neighborhood. When Romania joins the EU in 2007, the frozen conflict between the Republic of Moldova and Trans-Dniester – an independent province backed by Russia – will move closer to Europe. Already today, one million inhabitants of Moldova are in possession of Romanian citizenship. The population of Moldova will therefore join the EU economically. As yet, it remains unclear what this fact means for the security of Europe's outer borders.

Further east, the Caucasus awaits a solution to numerous territorial, ethnic and political conflicts. This is not only a major challenge for the EU in its dealings with the three republics in the South Caucasus but it will also affect the relationship between Russia and the EU. The Caucasus, and above all the conflict in Chechnya, is a barometer – irrespective of the security issues – of the state of development of Russian democracy and its repercussions for Russia's neighbors. It is due to

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Russian sovereignty over the North Caucasus that there is as yet no EU Caucasus policy. Nonetheless, the EU has named a special envoy for the South Caucasus who, however, has so far been operating only from Brussels.

**A Europe of the 35 or Privileged Partnerships?**

The mutual political and economic dependency between the EU and its neighbors is a reality. Even if more states were to join the Union, it is already clear that the instruments of EU accession as all-purpose tools to be used in crisis management and economic integration have reached their limits. Other gradual forms of integration and cooperation must be put into place to supplement enlargement.

With Euro-Mediterranean collaboration as well as countless cooperation and association programs with Eastern European states, a heterogeneous system of cooperation between Europe’s neighbors is already in existence. The new European Neighborhood Policy strives to harmonize this system of institutional regulations, political cooperation instruments and financial mechanisms. In doing so, the following questions arise:

a) Are the neighborhood policy instruments a preliminary step toward integration until complete membership is reached?

b) Is there such thing as partial membership? That is, is an institutional framework (for example, in terms of the single European market, economic membership and monetary union as well as the common foreign and security policies) just below the threshold of full membership conceivable?

c) Currently, below this EU membership threshold, the concept of privileged partnership is being discussed in connection with Israel and Turkey. Under this caption, some in the EU want to offer participation in the European single market, the Common Foreign and Security Policy, and cooperation in domestic and judiciary affairs, that is, membership minus political union. For Israel, Commissioner Verheugen brought a privileged partnership based on these four freedoms to the table.
The EU would like to develop a strategic partnership with Russia which, depending on the development of the Russian economy and democracy, could contain numerous elements of a privileged partnership.

The European Economic Community cooperates with some of the EU’s old neighbors (Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein\(^8\)) who do not desire membership. The EEC is an expanded domestic market where numerous consumer protection and environmental regulations were agreed upon in the acquis of the European Economic Community.

Through its enlargement toward the east, NATO has put itself chronologically ahead of the EU. Currently the Ukraine and Georgia have stated their interest in joining NATO. Compared to the complex EU Acquis Communautaire, membership in NATO is much easier to attain and can be seen as a preliminary step or an alternative to full EU membership.

Even membership in the Council of Europe could be suitable for some states, e.g. for the North African neighbors of the EU. This is the case with the Southern Caucasus and is a medium term solution just below the threshold of full EU membership.

**Current EU-Ukraine Relations**

The two main agreements which form the legal basis of EU-Ukrainian relations are the 1998 Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and the EU-Ukraine Action Plan proposed in 2004 pursuant to the European Neighborhood Policy. These agreements offer close cooperation between the EU and Ukraine on a wide range of issues including political dialogue, trade and investment, economic and legislative cooperation\(^9\) and cultural and scientific cooperation. Furthermore, the EU and

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\(^{8}\) Switzerland has signed the EEC (European Economic Community) contract but its ratification was rejected via referendum.

Ukraine have also entered into a variety of other bilateral agreements covering trade in textiles and steel, science and technology, nuclear energy and space.

Since March 1998, the core of EU relations with Ukraine has been the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement\(^{10}\) (PCA). The PCA sets forward the political, economic and trade cooperative efforts between the EU and Ukraine. Its many broad aims include highlighting respect for shared fundamental values; providing an appropriate framework for political dialogue; setting common objectives in terms of harmonious economic relations; sustainable development; cooperation in key policy areas; and support of Ukraine's democratic transition. The PCA presents itself as an important instrument in bringing the country in line with the legal framework of the single European market, as well as the future development of a free trade area and Ukrainian membership in the WTO.\(^{11}\) The PCA also established an institutional framework for coordinating efforts. This framework includes bilateral summit meetings between the President of Ukraine and the EU Presidency, the President of the EU Commission and the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, as well as regular ministerial and senior civil servant-level meetings.

By the admission of both the EU and Ukraine, the efforts of the PCA have had mixed results. Both parties have agreed that positive results in political dialogue, in the form of structural institutions to encourage such dialogue, have been achieved. However, a 2003 Joint Assessment Report has called for improving ties in trade and investment; further cooperation in social, scientific and cultural areas and supporting economic and market reform.

While intensified cooperation between the EU and Ukraine in these areas of common interest is one aspect of the PCA, such cooperation may be insufficient without financial assistance to help Ukraine's transition to a democratic market.

\(^{10}\) See Mission of Ukraine to the European Communities, “10th Anniversary of the EU-Ukraine Partnership and Cooperation Agreement’s Signing”, available online at http://www.ukraine-eu.mfa.gov.ua/cgi-bin/valmenu_miss.sh?1p0103999909.html.

\(^{11}\) Ibid.
economy and to meet the goals set forth in the agreement. To this end, the EU has earmarked funding for technical assistance for Ukraine under the EU sponsored TACIS program. Created to reinforce democracy and the rule of law and to promote the transition to a market economy in partner countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the EU, under TACIS, has provided Ukraine with more than 1 billion Euros since 1991, making it the largest donor to Ukraine. 12 212 million Euros alone have been allocated for the period 2004-2006 to support TACIS goals. 13

TACIS funds are earmarked to support institutional, legal and administrative reform in Ukraine; to spur the private sector and economic development; and to address social consequences associated with the transition to a market economy by supporting health sector reform and the development of social assistance policy. 14 Financial assistance under TACIS is also spent on nuclear safety, including the clean-up of the Chernobyl site and shutting down the existing reactors; cross-border cooperation between Ukraine and its neighbors as well as macro-financial assistance in the form of loans. 15 While TACIS has provided significant financial assistance, a new European Neighborhood and Partnership Agreement will replace TACIS in 2007. It is expected to draw on increased funds and will attempt to coordinate better with the ENP, specifically addressing the needs of cross-border cooperation. 16


The EU-Ukraine Action Plan

At the EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council meeting on February 21, 2005, the EU-Ukraine Action Plan was passed. The original version of the Action Plan had already been negotiated with the old government of Prime Minister Yanukovych. The final decision on the plan was therefore postponed from the EU’s December 2005 summit to wait for the new government to take office. However, the core elements of the plan were not changed. On the initiative of EU High Representative Solana and Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner, an additional ten-point declaration was passed that summarizes the political initiatives of the Action Plan.

The new Ukrainian government had demanded that the Action Plan give a clear EU accession perspective to Ukraine. The EU insisted on Ukraine implementing the announced and agreed reforms first, before talking about further steps towards EU integration. The preamble of the ten point declaration states in a sybillic tone: “The EU acknowledged Ukraine’s European ambitions and made clear that a new commitment to democracy and reform opened new prospects for both Ukraine and EU-Ukraine relations.”17 The proposals made in the Action Plan fall into the following categories.

**Economic and Market Reform.** Even today, the EU has surpassed Russia as Ukraine’s major partner in trade. The EU could offer Ukraine market economy status as well as its support for accession to the World Trade Organization. WTO accession is the precondition for negotiating any future free trade agreement with the EU. From the EU viewpoint, Russia should join the WTO at the same time to create a pan European free trade zone. The Russian government, on the other hand, has offered Ukraine and others the creation of a Common Economic Space, as well as negotiations for a Customs, Economic and Monetary Union. As long as economic cooperation with Russia is limited to free trade and is compatible with both countries’ aspirations to join the WTO, there is no contradiction with the EU’s Single European Market. President Yushchenko has already announced that integration with the EU’s

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17 Council of the European Union, Press Release 6428/05.
internal market has priority over the project for a Common Economic Space. As a first step towards the economic integration of Ukraine into the internal market, the EU should offer market economy status to Ukraine. The Neighborhood Action Plan describes some necessary steps on that road.

Ukraine’s recent political transformation was supported by significant sectors of the country’s economy. However, for Ukraine to have a viable economic future, it must successfully deal with the legacies of a planned communist economy, as well as the negative byproducts of reform, including political corruption and the black market, which occurred as a result of the abrupt shift to free-market capitalism in the 1990’s. The most pressing economic problems include diversifying Ukraine’s aging industrial economy, continuing privatization efforts, combating the black market economy and doing a better job of inviting foreign investment.

Ukraine must diversify away from many of its aging industries – steel, chemicals, shipbuilding, coal, machine-tools and weapons manufacturing – which relied on government subsidies and which became even less viable after traditional export markets collapsed. In addition to diversification, privatization efforts in Ukraine have proceeded more slowly than in other post-communist countries in central Europe. While privatization of small and medium-sized enterprises has been nearly completed, privatization and re-privatization of larger industries have progressed at a much slower pace. During 2001-2002, the government’s large scale privatization targets were not met, largely in the electricity and telecommunications sectors.

Second, political corruption, and in particular the existence of a black market economy, remain a major scourge for lawful business practices and efforts at market reform. It is estimated that about 55% of Ukraine’s economy may take place in the black market. This situation is worsened by punitively high taxes and the presence

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19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
22 Viktor Yushchenko’s speech at the 2005 World Economic Forum.
of organized criminal networks, some with extensive connections to local and regional governing powers. Studies by the IMF and World Bank indicate far higher levels of corruption in Ukraine than in almost any other country in the region. 23

Third, Ukraine requires more international investment. The amount of foreign direct investment in Ukraine is much lower than its neighbors; 165 USD per capita in Ukraine versus 280 USD in Russia, 2,100 USD in Poland and 2,200 USD in the Czech Republic. 24 These disappointing figures are in part due to the economic problems just described: slow economic diversification and privatization as well as corruption. They also stem from very cautious investment strategies during the early post-independence years due to Ukraine’s greater suspicion of Western economic investment and influence, a less anti-communist outlook and limited exposure to market ideas. 25

Perhaps the best assistance that the EU can provide to Ukraine is an expedient move to solidifying a free trade zone between the EU and Ukraine. A free trade zone would embody the core principles of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), including most favored nation status, the national treatment principle, freedom of transit, and general prohibition of quantitative restrictions on most goods. The creation of the zone would have two important side effects. First, realization of this zone may lead to greater foreign investment. Second, it is expected that the adoption of the core GATT principles will be synchronized with Ukrainian membership in the WTO. While such a zone has long been envisioned by the PCA and ENP, Ukraine remains in material breach of many of the provisions of the PCA: protective economic measures in industries such as the automotive sector, undue protections relating to value-added tax and excise taxes, and a variety of legislative weaknesses remaining in intellectual, industrial and commercial property protection. 26 The EU

24Viktor Yushchenko’s speech at the 2005 World Economic Forum.
should pressure Ukraine for the further implementation of regulatory reform and to initiate an internal debate on the realization of this zone. The EU should encourage Ukrainian economic reform so that foreign investors are comfortable with the stability of the Ukrainian market, the strength of the currency and the belief that any investment will be financially beneficial. In addition, it should encourage legal reform to ensure transparency, predictability and simplification of regulations. Here, economic assistance may be less valuable than the cheaper alternative of providing Ukraine with best practices to draw upon through political exchange, political dialogue and technical assistance. In addition to seeking a free trade zone and encouraging foreign investment, the EU should continue efforts for economic development and market reform. Deepening trade relations and strengthening of foreign investment in Ukraine are only as valuable as the economic climate in which these efforts are carried out.

Cooperation in Key Sectors. The European Neighborhood Policy in general as well as the EU-Ukraine Action plan in particular identifies several key sectors in which cooperation on the bilateral and regional level as well as private sector development should be enhanced. Those key sectors include energy, transport, environment and health. The Action plan contains a number of environmental provisions:

- Environmental governance: improve the capacity of stakeholders to deal with environmental and sustainable development matters;
- National environmental policies and tools on key sectors (energy, transport, etc);
- Implementation of environmental commitments at international (e.g. Kyoto) and regional (e.g. Regional Sea Conventions) levels, and;
- Implementation of EU international initiatives (e.g. EU Water Initiative, EU Marine Strategy).

The protection of the environment, the sustainable use of energy resources and the creation of functioning administrative structures are part of the goals of the ENP. Furthermore the region should increase its environmental cooperation. When trade agreements are made with neighboring states, there should be a minimal guarantee for environmental standards. To that end, the environmental regulations in the Barcelona Accords, the MEDA for the Mediterranean, the agreements for cross
border regional cooperation INTERREG, as well as a series of projections within the TACIS programs, offer opportunities. The draft of the Action Plans for the Ukraine will strive for more nuclear security. However, in the Action Plans already finalized, environmental policies do not take centre stage.

The participation of citizens as well as other organized civil groups would be strengthened through improved access to environmental information, environmental impact analysis, and proper reporting. In defining the new neighborhood instruments, it must be made certain that non-governmental organizations and other civil groups can participate directly in these EU programs.

Central to the aspiring environmental partnerships should be the creation of a functioning environmental administration, with consistent legislation, as well as systematic links to the environmental policies of the EU. The European Commission, for example, would like to strengthen administrative structures, national environmental action plans, environmental legislation and the creation of new financial instruments.

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Of special interest to the EU are the areas of water, waste, clean air, technical standards of industrial facilities and nature protection. The EU offers help in the development of administrative structures and in prioritizing sector specific investments. Aside from the Action Plans which the neighbors must coordinate separately, there are international guidelines such as the Framework of the UN Economic Commission for Europe with regards to cross-border air pollution or the system of World Natural Heritage Parks which serve as direction for political and financial prioritization.
A further goal of ENP is to push for the signing and ratification of regional and international agreements and to assure their implementation. After the recent ratification of the Kyoto Protocol by Russia, this protocol now becomes effective and with it, the implementation of the agreement moves to the centre of attention. Aside from financial instruments, the EU emissions trading system is the most important tool for forcing the neighbors into a sustainable use of their energy resources. If the emissions trading system were open to other member states of the Kyoto Protocol, there would be enormous incentives for the modernization of the energy infrastructure in Eastern Europe. A constituent element of the Action Plans should be the promotion of energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy. More important, however, are the strategic energy partnerships with neighboring countries, not only in terms of importing fossil fuels such as oil and gas, but also in furthering the climate policy goals of the European Union. Regional security interests also play an important role in developing the energy sector, as does the democratic development and the participation of civil society. From the point of view of environmental protection, the concerns of climate protection, clean air and water, plant security and nature protection are extremely important.

*Political and Social Reform*. Ukraine’s efforts must include strengthening the stability and effectiveness of institutions guaranteeing democracy and the rule of law, furthering judicial reforms to ensure the independence of the judiciary, promoting media pluralism, ensuring respect for trade unions’ rights and core labor standards and ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in line with international and European standards. The EU might be able to offer financial and technical assistance where Ukraine tries to adapt legislation to the Acquis Communautaire. Opportunities to bring Ukrainian policymakers, jurists, civil society representatives and union leaders to the EU through people-to-people projects and exchanges are ways of imparting best practices. Additionally, private-sector and NGO efforts should be funded by the EU to provide additional support to observe and guide Ukrainian efforts.

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Ukraine should also ratify and implement the remaining human rights treaties that it has not yet implemented, especially those treaties relating to women’s rights, suppressing transnational organized crime and the treaty establishing the International Criminal Court. These treaties are particularly important as Ukraine is a major through-point for the trafficking of drugs and people into the rest of Europe, and a home for organized crime. Of particular urgency is ratification of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime; the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons; the ninth Protocol to the 1950 European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms; the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.28

Improving Regional and International Stability. Whereas economic and social reform are key to improving quality of life issues in Ukraine, ensuring regional and international stability through EU-Ukrainian partnership is no less important. So far, joint efforts in this area have mainly been centered on political dialogue, including over the European Security Strategy and joint efforts at crisis-management, and encouraging additional Ukrainian participation in security forces in the Balkans.29 Resolving outstanding regional and international concerns on issues such as Ukrainian borders, Trans-Dniester and Ukraine’s relations with Moscow will also be necessary.

With the EU’s help, either through technical or financial assistance or additional dialogue, Ukraine must take steps to strengthen its borders. Ukraine’s borders are porous, which contributes to organized crime and drug and human trafficking filtering through the country into the rest of Europe. As an EU member, these borders could easily serve terrorist groups armed with weapons of mass destruction.


interested in obtaining easy access to a European Union capital for nefarious purposes. Nor are Ukraine’s borders particularly peaceful. Ukraine should take an active role as mediator in the Trans-Dniester conflict where ethnic Russians in the Moldovan province are seeking secession, including by using violent means. As Moldova’s citizenry includes ethnic Romanians and Ukrainians, the EU may be increasingly concerned that this conflict could jeopardize the peacefulness of the Black Sea region.

Additional political dialogue is also necessary to bring Ukraine closely in line with EU policies over combating terrorism, limiting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and clarifying policies over the use of force. Through political dialogue, Brussels should also clarify with Kyiv its relationship with Moscow. Nearly a quarter of Ukraine’s population consists of ethnic Russians, and Russia has had an unduly close relationship with Ukraine, especially during the Kuchma administration. Ukraine is strategically important to Moscow, which sees the country as a buffer zone between Russia and the expanded EU and NATO, as well as a major transit route for its oil and gas exports. While the EU has supplanted Moscow as Ukraine’s largest trading partner, Ukraine remains heavily dependent on Russian trade and energy supplies.

It would behoove Brussels to engage in political dialogue with Kyiv so that the EU is not jostling with Russia over the future of Ukraine. Ukraine brought Germany and Poland together with Russia last November to search for peaceful resolutions of the election dispute. That cooperation should continue with political dialogue at the highest levels. Relations between the EU and Russia can improve as long as the EU respects legitimate Russian interests in Ukraine.

Ukraine has also expressed an interest in joining NATO, both as a guarantor of regional security and as a first step towards European integration. The Central European countries as well as the Baltic States joined NATO first before they

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became EU members. In principle, joining NATO is the easier task. EU membership demands the implementation of a complex body of legislation – the Acquis Communautaire – as compared to the much simpler preconditions for NATO membership. NATO was able to anchor the Central Europeans in Western security structures, before those countries were ready to join the EU. Ukraine might not need this reassurance. NATO itself has transformed itself from a Cold War defense alliance into a coordinating body between the security policies of the US and the Europeans. As an alternative to joining NATO, Ukraine could participate partly or fully in the European Security and Defense Policy, which is a possibility explicitly foreseen in the European Security Strategy.
This chapter is based on a paper originally written in December 2003, almost one year before the Orange Revolution unfolded and captured the political imagination of the West. It was produced for a conference in Kyiv in early 2004 sponsored by the Friends of Ukraine network of NGOs in cooperation with the democratic opposition. The purpose of the event was to provide a platform and opportunity for the opposition in Ukraine to gain international recognition before the start of what everyone expected to be a tough political campaign for the next president of Ukraine.

While not an expert on Ukraine, I was asked to write the paper because I had played some modest role in developing Western strategy for Central and Eastern Europe in the 1990s. It was therefore presumed that I might have some interesting thoughts on how the West might deal with Ukraine as well.

As I sat down to write, I was struck by just how pessimistic most Western observers had become about Ukraine’s prospects. It was as if the West had succumbed to a giant case of “Ukraine fatigue” – fed up with the frustrations of dealing with Kyiv under President Leonid Kuchma and having run out of political imagination. Many observers had all but given up on Kyiv achieving a democratic breakthrough.

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Things are now in flux, but at the time, it seemed to me that the West was having a difficult time thinking beyond the then autocratic status quo or lifting its sights and focusing on the enormous significance of Ukraine’s future orientation in general and the specific importance of the upcoming presidential election in particular. Even I knew enough about Ukraine to recognize that this was a watershed political campaign that would set the tone for years to come and possibly have ramifications across the region and into Eurasia more broadly. Given the apathy of many in the West, I was looking for a way to energize readers of my paper by helping them understand the strategic stakes involved in order to help mobilize interest and support.

I therefore decided to deploy a method I had learned while working as a young analyst at the RAND Corporation earlier in my career. Instead of starting my analysis with the current status quo and asking what was doable, I decided to jump ahead in time and present the reader with a highly desirable scenario – and then work back and try to think through what kind of policies might produce that result. The advantage of such an approach is that it forced the reader to think more radically and to go beyond mere tinkering with the status quo – and opened up space for more ambitious policy options. The scenario I laid out was a democratic and Westernized Ukraine that had received an invitation to join NATO in 2010 and was well on its way to being integrated into the EU. I then presented a series of steps that I believed would have to happen for this to become reality based on the experience of anchoring Central and Eastern Europe to the West.

To many this analysis seemed far-fetched to say the least. Several Western colleagues jokingly inquired whether I had taken up writing fiction. When I visited Kyiv in February 2004, I was reminded of the reality that the democratic opposition in Ukraine was up against when my colleagues and I found ourselves closely followed and monitored by the local security services. I remarked to the U.S. Ambassador in Kyiv, John Herbst, that I had not experienced such special treatment since visiting communist East Germany shortly before the Wall came down. In short, Ukraine seemed like a country a long way away from joining the EU and NATO! When I subsequently submitted the conference paper for publication, several journals turned me down, saying that the scenario laid out was unrealistic.
Today it is a pleasure to read through this paper and conclude that, if anything, I erred in not being optimistic and bold enough. The people and civil society of Ukraine surprised us all with their desire for freedom and fair elections as manifested in the Orange Revolution. They turned the conventional wisdom of the West – and perhaps the East as well – on its head. At the same time, their very success means that many of the questions raised in this paper have now moved from theory to practice, from abstract issues to very real political challenges on our agenda.

The Strategic Meaning of the Orange Revolution

Nowhere is this truer than when it comes to understanding what is currently at stake in Ukraine. The Orange Revolution was not just “another” revolution or the crumbling of yet another autocratic order in a country that straddles Central and Eastern Europe on the one hand and Eurasia on the other. It was a seismic political and strategic event whose impact is likely to be enduring and whose repercussions and aftershocks are likely to be felt for some time to come.

Historic parallels are always tricky and imperfect. Yet, if there is a parallel in the region that comes closest to helping us comprehend the significance of what has happened in Kyiv, it may be the democratic breakthrough in Poland some fifteen years ago. The democratic breakthrough in Poland then both catalyzed and reinforced other democratic movements across the region and opened the door for a rollback of autocratic rule and influence. It was the beginning of the end of the outer ring of the Soviet empire, and the advent of a consolidation of democracy which would ultimately lead to the integration of countries stretching from the Baltic to the western edge of the Black Sea into Euro-Atlantic structures.

If the Orange Revolution succeeds in establishing a truly democratic, successfully reformed and westernized Ukraine, the influence of this event could be equally far-reaching. To the north, successful developments in Ukraine will almost inevitably have an impact on neighboring Belarus, although President Lukashenko may try to tighten the screws of his dictatorship in the short-run. To the south, a democratic Ukraine has also opened a window for positive change in Moldova and a resolution of the frozen conflict in Trans-Dniester. Coupled with the Rose Revolution in...
Georgia, the Orange Revolution has opened the vista of a third wave of Euro-Atlantic integration extending across the Black Sea into the Southern Caucasus. The democratization of the inner ring of the former Soviet empire will in turn raise the issues of whether the West will be willing and able to anchor these countries into Euro-Atlantic structures as well.

While history rarely repeats itself, the West again finds itself poorly prepared to deal with the consequences of this kind of political earthquake. Having just officially enlarged to Central and East European countries stretching from the Baltic in the north to the western rim of the Black Sea in the South, NATO and the EU were looking for a period of consolidation. Only a few months ago it was conventional wisdom to say that further enlargement was not on the agenda, and for reasons that were understandable even if one did not share them.

Whether we like it or not, the Orange Revolution will inevitably reopen all the old debates of the 1990s over where Europe's frontiers lie, how far NATO and the EU should extend, the future of the trans-Atlantic link and – last but not least – relations with Russia. When communism first collapsed in 1989 and the former USSR unraveled two years later, the West was compelled to adjust a predominant image of Europe centered on Western Europe to eventually include Central and Eastern Europe as well. As anyone who was part of that debate will testify, that process was painful, controversial and full of contradictions. Eventually, however, the moral and historical imperative of letting these countries join NATO and the EU as they met the entry criteria of these institutions won out and European and trans-Atlantic structures were extended across the continent.

Following the Orange Revolution, we now face the question of whether we should make a similar political commitment to extend these structures to Ukraine and, maybe eventually, further beyond into Eurasia. We must now debate whether the West should make a second leap of strategic and political imagination that opens the doors of European and Euro-Atlantic structures to countries that are emerging from the new wave of democratization reaching from Ukraine down into the Southern Caucasus.
With Turkey in mind there are signs that such a leap of the imagination may already have been made. Although, as far as European integration is concerned, Turkey is certainly a special case – having been part of the West through NATO for half a century and not now needing to overcome a legacy of communist rule and economic mismanagement. Yet its own aspirations and drive to join the EU inevitably add another dimension to the question of how far the borders of European and trans-Atlantic institutions should extend.

This notion of a third belt of countries – eventually stretching from Belarus in the north to Armenia in the south and pivoting both strategically and geographically around Ukraine in Central Europe – is what many leaders and commentators have already started to call the “third wave” of democratization and Euro-Atlantic integration. This third wave would follow two previous waves which saw the successful anchoring of the Visegrad countries and subsequently the so-called Vilnius group of Central and East European countries. It is a breathtaking prospect that would once again redraw the map of Europe and Eurasia. Whatever one’s view, addressing developments and change in these countries is likely to be one of the major challenges facing the Euro-Atlantic community over the next decade. And in a number of ways it all hinges on the success of the Orange Revolution.

Simply describing the prospect of this third wave of Euro-Atlantic integration today is enough to make many EU or NATO civil servants twitch – and it undoubtedly has a greater unnerving impact on many officials further to the East. The “pucker factor” is undoubtedly very high in many a European Foreign Ministry. The same was true, of course, in the early 1990s when the first countries of Central and Eastern Europe started knocking at Western doors and saying they wanted to become part of our community and institutions. “Impossible,” argued some. “Incompatible with the EU’s agenda,” others insisted. “It would dilute NATO,” still others claimed. One can easily imagine the same sorts of arguments being put forth in memos and internal papers in Foreign Ministries across Europe today on Ukraine.

One wonders whether such objections would hold up better now than they did last decade when they clashed with the aspirations of the people and their desire to go West. This is not to say that the debate over Ukraine will simply be a repeat of
the past. It won't. The West has changed dramatically over the last decade as it has expanded across the continent. Ukraine and the other potential candidates of this third wave of Euro-Atlantic integration are also different, often poorer and their connections to mainstream Europe more distant. Many Americans and Europeans have never been to cities like Kyiv or Tbilisi let alone Baku, Yerevan or Minsk.

Yet, one doesn't have to be a strategist of the stature of Clausewitz to sense that we are once again at a critical moment in history. The Orange Revolution has opened up an opportunity to redraw the map of Europe and Eurasia. And there is one thing about the experience of the 1990s that we should not lose sight of. Anchoring Central and Eastern Europe to the West was a tremendous strategic accomplishment. Rarely has an act of preventive diplomacy been so successful. Faced with a window of opportunity and having learned from the wars of the Balkans, the West acted in advance to anchor these countries to the West in order to eliminate the latent risk that these countries would ever again become a source of geopolitical rivalry and conflict. The costs of doing so were modest – when compared to the costs of past conflicts – and the results far-reaching.

Today, Europe is more democratic, peaceful and secure than at any time in recent history. At a time when both the broader Middle East and Asia have emerged as the new loci of global threats, the old continent is increasingly safe and secure. The Orange Revolution has now offered us the historic chance to extend that same degree of peace and stability further eastward into Ukraine, perhaps across the Black Sea and maybe eventually into Russia itself. The stakes are very high indeed.

**What Needs To Be Done**

Given these stakes, the West should undertake an all out effort – moral, political and material – to help Ukraine succeed in its efforts at reform and westernization. The Orange Revolution has produced what may be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to extend democracy and stability several hundred kilometers eastward and to change the maps of Europe and Eurasia for the better. Both Ukraine and its friends must rise to this challenge.
First, to be sure, the lion’s share of this effort must be done in Ukraine and by Ukrainians themselves. The challenges Kyiv faces are considerable, especially given the backlog of problems and challenges left unresolved or made worse by the mismanagement of the previous decade. The hill that lies ahead is steep. Many pitfalls exist and there are forces at home and abroad who do not necessarily want to see Ukraine succeed. But that is exactly why the West’s support is so important and why it must be clear which side of this battle we are on, especially in the difficult moments that undoubtedly lie ahead.

Second, we in the West must face and win our own battle about the importance of reaching out to Ukraine and providing it with the same kind of perspective we offered the countries of Central and Eastern Europe a decade ago. While the prospect of integrating Ukraine seems staggering to many observers today, this is not something that is going to happen overnight in any case.

It will take time for Ukraine to complete this transition – as well as for the West to adjust to the prospect of a large country like Ukraine joining its ranks. It took the countries of Central and Eastern Europe somewhere between 5 and 10 years to transform themselves for NATO membership and over a decade to prepare for the EU. And the key factor that ultimately broke down opposition in the West to enlargement for those countries is the same factor that will break down opposition to Ukraine: domestic, political reform. As Ukraine becomes more and more Western and democratic and as Americans and Europeans become more and more comfortable with it, they will also be more willing to provide the kind of perspective that Kyiv wants and deserves.

Equally important, however, will be the future success of European integration in the West. For there to be a wider Europe in the future, we must also create a stronger Europe which means a stronger EU. For an institution like the EU to be able to reach out and eventually integrate countries like Ukraine and Turkey, the successful overhaul of the EU’s own internal structures and decision-making is a prerequisite. That is why both the United States and Ukraine should be rooting for the successful ratification of the current EU constitution and should lend their moral and political
support for the cause of deepening EU integration. For if that process stumbles, the EU will be less and less able to embrace and anchor its neighbors.

Third, in more operational terms the next major step for Ukraine is implementing the domestic reform agenda laid out by the new government which, in turn, will be critical for deepening its relations with the EU and NATO. Already today, one can see the first signs of change in Western attitudes and strategy. The EU-Ukraine Action Plan is a solid document and, if successfully implemented, would entail a significant step forward. What it currently lacks is the kind of integrationist perspective that Kyiv wants. That perspective is still missing because the consensus over extending it does not yet exist. However, if Ukraine successfully implements the Action Plan and the EU constitution moves forward, it is possible to imagine the EU starting to lay out a vision that includes an ever closer relationship with Kyiv, perhaps already starting in fall 2005 under the UK presidency.

The situation in NATO may be even more promising. The major hold-ups to deepening Ukraine's relations with NATO were essentially political. They were a result of the democratic backsliding and creeping authoritarianism of the Kuchma era coupled with anti-Western and anti-American propaganda that has produced very low levels of public support for the Alliance. The Orange Revolution has lifted many of the political concerns that NATO, for its part, had over deepening relations. The path is now cleared for a deepening of reform and cooperation that would allow Ukraine to move into an Intensified Dialogue and then graduate to the Membership Action Plan – certainly no later than the next NATO summit in 2006. The bigger hurdle may be overcoming domestic opposition to closer ties with NATO, especially in those regions where pro-Moscow forces are strong.

Last and certainly not least, there is the question of Russia and the impact that events in Ukraine will have on its future. All too often, many commentators see the West caught in a zero-sum game between assisting Ukraine and maintaining good relations with Russia. In reality, the opposite is the case. Here, too, the Orange Revolution has given the West an enormous opportunity. After all, the goal of Western policy is to promote the positive transformation of Russia into a modern, democratic state that seeks closer ties with us. And a successfully reforming and
A Strategy for Integrating Ukraine into the West*

Imagine the following scenario. It is the year 2010. Ukraine has just received an invitation to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization at a NATO summit scheduled in Warsaw, Poland, in recognition of that country’s championing of close NATO-Ukrainian relations. Following the election of a new President in Kyiv during the fall of 2004, Ukraine clearly shifted gears and charted a new reform course at home and a clear pro-Western foreign policy abroad. Domestically, Ukraine surprised its critics by making real and rapid progress in overcoming its fractious domestic politics, cleaning up corruption and pursuing clear and credible economic reforms. The changes in foreign policy were equally exciting. Under a new pro-Western reform-minded leadership, Ukraine now became, along with Poland, a clear and consistent pro-Atlanticist voice in the region, a regional reform leader and a major contributor to Alliance peacekeeping operations in Afghanistan and elsewhere in the Greater Middle East.

Ukraine’s increasingly warm relations with NATO were matched by closer ties with the EU as well. With the issue of Ukraine’s strategic place and role in Europe settled and Kyiv making important progress at home, what once seemed out of reach was now seen as more and more likely. A recent EU Commission report confirmed the significant progress Ukraine had made in meeting the Copenhagen criteria. To be sure, there were still important disagreements in the EU over Ukraine’s “European-ness,” how its entry would affect the Union’s finances and just how many votes it would receive under the new European constitution. Nevertheless, numerous Western commentators were predicting that EU membership was increasingly

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a matter not of whether, but of when, and that the Union would soon announce its
willingness to open accession negotiations as well. To many Ukrainians it was the
fulfillment of a dream which they had harbored for years.

Ukraine's remarkable domestic and foreign policy success was producing strategic
benefits for the region and beyond. It was starting to transform the geopolitical map
of Europe and Eurasia in the same way that the anchoring of Central and Eastern
Europe had a decade earlier. In addition to extending the borders of integration
and stability further eastward directly to Russia’s own borders, Ukraine's success
was having a ripple effect across the region, enabling it to become the de facto
hub of a new group of democratic and reform-minded states stretching from the
post-Lukashenko Belarus in the north to Georgia and the Caucasus in the South.
Commentators also agreed that Ukraine's successful democratic transformation
was now having a positive impact in encouraging and motivating the democratic
opposition in Russia as well, holding out the prospect that Russia’s slide into
authoritarian rule could eventually be reversed.

But Ukraine's successful transformation and its anchoring to the West was
strategically important for other reasons as well. By anchoring this country of 50
million people, it further consolidated peace and security in this critical section of
the Euro-Atlantic community and facilitated the Alliance's strategic shift away from
defending the old European heartland. It simultaneously created a new platform,
better positioned for the US and Europe to tackle what everyone recognized as
the major challenge of the 21st century – dealing with the instability and threats
emanating from the Greater Middle East. Ukraine's rising strategic stock was
reflected in its active role in participating in NATO-led stability operations in the
Greater Middle East. A successfully transformed and democratized Ukraine also
gave the West an enhanced capacity from which to radiate its political influence
and stability into the Caucus and Central Asia, as well as further into the Greater
Middle East.

Is this vision far-fetched and completely unrealistic, or is it within the realm of
the feasible if Ukrainian and Western leaders were to boldly put their shoulders to
the wheel and work to turn this vision into reality? To be sure, if Las Vegas were
to put odds on this scenario today, they would not be particularly good, though they would certainly be better than prior to the Orange Revolution. Many Western observers, before that revolution, had become jaundiced about Ukraine's desire and capacity to reform itself along Western lines. Given the scandals, setbacks and disappointments of the last decade, the West seemed to succumb to a massive case of 'Ukraine fatigue', with the country slipping from the Western agenda. Such Western sentiments had not gone unnoticed in Ukraine, where many doubted the commitment of the U.S. or Europe to helping Kyiv become a full member of the Euro-Atlantic community.

At the same time, anyone familiar with the fierce debates over NATO and EU enlargement in the 1990s can testify to how radical and uncertain those policies were viewed when they first appeared. If Las Vegas had placed odds then on the likelihood of NATO and the EU embracing some ten Central and Eastern Europe countries from the Baltics to the Black Sea within the next decade, they would not have been very high either. The goal of fully integrating Ukraine into the West, while certainly ambitious, is not necessarily any more “unrealistic” than the objectives the West accomplished over the last decade. In many ways, it is the next logical step and the next project that the Euro-Atlantic community should embrace.

Moreover, the strategic benefits that would flow from successfully anchoring Ukraine to the West are considerable. When one considers the strategic challenges the West must confront in the years ahead, clearly we would be better off tackling them with a pro-Western democratic Ukraine on our side. But if one thing is for sure, this won't happen on its own. It will only happen, if at all, with sustained reformist governance in Ukraine itself as well as with a renewed commitment in the West to making this country's integration a top priority, a clear and realistic long-term strategy to implement that vision and a set of allies on both sides of the Atlantic who are determined to make it happen.

This paper attempts to step back and lay out the big picture of what it would take to come up with a coherent and realistic strategy to anchor and integrate Ukraine in NATO and the EU over the next decade. Drawing on the lessons and experience of
the last decade, it shows what Kyiv – as well as the United States and the European Union – must do to turn this vision step-by-step into reality.

Understanding the Ingredients of Past Success

Before tackling the question of what the key components of a strategy for integrating Ukraine must include, it is useful to go back and examine why and how the West succeeded in successfully integrating Central and Eastern Europe from the Baltics in the north to Bulgaria and Romania on the Black Sea in the south in the 1990s. After all, absent that success, the question of Ukraine’s aspirations and place in the Euro-Atlantic community would not even be on the agenda today.

The first and undoubtedly most important of these ingredients was the will and drive of these countries – from both the leaders and their populations – to become part of Europe and the trans-Atlantic community. It is impossible to overstate just how important this factor was. The doors of NATO and the EU would never have been opened to these countries had the leaders of Central and Eastern Europe not knocked – and at times pounded – on them. The story of Presidents Walesa, Havel and Goncz visiting Washington in the spring of 1993 for the opening of the Holocaust Museum and the impression they made on then President Bill Clinton by explaining why joining NATO was their number one priority – is among the most vivid examples, but by no means the only one, of commitment and leadership in the region making a difference.

But it is and was not enough just to simply say you want to join the West, no matter how eloquently this or that leader might put it. No country has an entitlement to join NATO or the European Union. The aspirations of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe would not have been taken seriously until it became clear the leaders and populations of these countries demonstrated in word and deed their commitment to the values and interests of the Euro-Atlantic community. And there was no better bar to measure that commitment against than the willingness of these countries to take difficult reform steps and to take foreign policy decisions to align themselves with the West that involved real costs and real risks. Without Poland’s successful shock therapy, Lech Walesa would have had a much harder time...
getting the West to pay attention to his country’s desire to join NATO. Absent their remarkable success in reforming and reorienting themselves to the West, the Baltic states would never have been taken seriously as candidates for either NATO or the EU. The list could be continued.

To be sure, no one expected these countries of Central and Eastern Europe to become like modern Western European democracies overnight. Everyone understood that consolidating democracy in the region could take a decade or more. What was critical was a tangible sense that these countries were setting the right course, establishing a credible track record that the West could build on and that there was a fundamental political will and commitment in these leaderships and societies to stay on course and see the process through to a successful completion. In other words, to become an ally, candidate countries had to start to look and behave like allies. Above all, they had to establish a track record that would create confidence and start to overcome the hesitation and opposition that was initially so widespread in the West.

Did the West deliberately try to leverage the desire of these countries to join our institutions to get them to transform themselves? Of course it did. Western officials at times joked that the prospect of NATO and EU membership was a “golden carrot”, an incentive for countries to address or fix an array of problems and issues. Historians will no doubt debate how much of the successful transformation of Central and Eastern Europe – from domestic reform to the settling of border disputes or the granting of minority rights etc. – was due to this desire to join NATO and the EU, and how much would have taken place anyway. But for anyone involved in the process, it was striking how often the need to take certain steps in order to qualify for NATO or the EU was used by Western governments or invoked by governments in the region to justify painful or controversial steps.

The critical point is that as these countries took these steps and demonstrated their will and willingness to reform and change, they started to gain in credibility and standing in Western eyes. Once they started to look and act like allies, it became increasingly easier for the West to imagine them as allies – and for politicians to start to make the case we should therefore make them allies. Eventually we reached
the point where the act of making them members of our institutions went from being seen as a radical and almost silly idea to one that had become conventional wisdom and almost non-controversial.

This brings us to the second key factor – the need for the West to create the kind of clear perspective for these countries for ultimately becoming members of institutions like NATO and the EU that would help motivate them. By themselves, these countries would not have been able to stay on course and achieve what they did. At times, Western officials compared the process of integrating into NATO or the EU to a marathon race – which the countries themselves had to run but one in which the West would play the role of coach, trainer and sometimes cheerleader. But the Central and East Europeans had to know and believe that this perspective was real and that the doors to our institutions were open if and when they made it to the end of the race.

Creating the will in the West to offer that perspective, in turn, required a vision and a convincing political and strategic rationale as to why the West had to undertake this project. Both involved winning a fight in the U.S. and Europe over a future definition of Europe and the future purpose of the Alliance in a world absent the old Soviet threat. The answers eventually provided by Western governments – namely to extend the structures of trans-Atlantic and European integration from the western half to the eastern half of the continent – seem commonsensical or logical today. But they were not preordained. For example, when the idea of NATO enlargement was raised initially, it was widely opposed throughout much of the US government and strategic community and had almost no support in Western Europe. Turning that mindset around involved long and hard intellectual and political battles.

One element that was critical was a new definition of a wider Europe – of a continent whole and free in which the countries of Eastern Europe were as democratic, free and secure as those of Western Europe. After nearly a half century of forced partition, that concept was not immediately self-evident to many. When one spoke of “Europe” in the late 1980s or early 1990s, many in the West actually meant Western Europe. Central and Eastern Europe was often seen as a distant place or second class part of the continent. And newly established countries like
Ukraine were largely unknown, countries whose very future, let alone their place in the West, seemed open to question.

The other key element was the strategic rationale underpinning NATO and EU enlargement. In addition to the moral and historical argument for reuniting Europe, there was an important strategic argument that had to be articulated and accepted. And, in a nutshell, that argument was that the West was much better off acting in advance to lock in peace and security by bringing these countries under its wing rather than take the risk that future instability could again rise in a strategic no man's land or vacuum between Germany and Russia. It reflected the notion that in a new Cold War era, institutions like the Alliance had to act and go to where the potential crises lay or they ran the risk of being overwhelmed and rendered obsolete – a point captured in the famous phrase that NATO had to go “out of area or out of business.” In a sense, NATO and EU enlargement were a giant act of crisis prevention.

To be sure, there were many other hurdles. Initially, neither NATO nor the EU had any standards for deciding or guiding when and how new members could join, and there was very real concern in the West that by embracing these countries it might simply end up importing the residual problems of the East rather than resolving them. This produced the need for a strategy to enlarge in a manner that created the confidence that enlargement would not dilute or destroy the basic effectiveness of these institutions. The list of questions the West had could be continued.

The critical political mass required to move forward was achieved through the combination of the political and moral imperative of creating a Europe whole, free, and at peace and in which wars had essentially become inconceivable, along with the strategic argument that we were much better off using the window of opportunity we had after the end of the Cold War to lock in peace on the continent once and for all. This tandem pushed the question of anchoring Central and Eastern Europe to the forefront of the diplomatic agenda in the 1990s and kept it there.

None of this would ever have happened without the sustained leadership of the United States over a decade and through several administrations. While individual European leaders played key personal roles in the process, it was Washington...
that played the key role in initiating NATO enlargement, coming up with the key conceptual and strategic moves as well as undertaking the heavy diplomatic lifting to turn vision into reality. And without NATO taking the security issue off the table, it is questionable whether the EU would or could have enlarged as well.

Nowhere was this more apparent than when it came to dealing with Russia. The dilemma facing the West in dealing with Moscow was pretty simple. While we believed that anchoring Central and Eastern Europe to the West via NATO and EU membership was not a hostile act and that the creation of stability and integration on Russia’s western border was actually very much in Moscow’s own interests, the number of Russians who agreed with that logic could probably have been fit into a reasonably small room. So the West had to pursue enlargement in the face of strong and, at least initially, growing Russian hostility and repeated threats that such a course would lead to a new confrontation or Cold War. To further complicate matters, many allies as well as a sizeable number of Americans were only willing to enlarge either NATO or the EU if they were confident that it would not lead to a new confrontation with Moscow.

As a result, the question of how to deal with Russia was at the center of western policy thinking from the very beginning to the very end of this process. And the closer NATO and the EU came to the actual borders of Russia, the more pressing that need became. To be sure, there were many arguments on both sides of the Atlantic over how to deal with the Russia factor. Was it better to try to negotiate a deal or understanding with Moscow? Or was it an illusion to think that such a deal on Western terms was feasible and was the West better off simply creating new facts on the ground over Russian objections – and then waiting for the dust to settle before trying to negotiate a new cooperative relationship?

The United States and Europe tried to manage this dilemma by adopting a dual track strategy of pursuing integration while offering Moscow its own new and cooperative relationship with an enlarging set of Euro-Atlantic institutions. At the same time, Moscow itself was fully aware that many in the West were only willing to enlarge if they knew that Russia would acquiesce, so it tried to exploit those concerns to derail the process for as long as it could. It only became serious about negotiating a new
relationship with the West once it was clear that enlargement was going to proceed no matter what. Even then negotiating a soft landing in Russia’s relations with the West became a diplomatic high wire act.

What does this mean for Ukraine today? All of these questions and dilemmas are likely to repeat themselves as Kyiv and the West struggle to define and implement a common strategy that could successfully anchor Kyiv to the West. First, if Ukraine wants to be treated like a serious candidate for Western integration today, it has to show it is serious about transforming itself along such lines and make the same kind of progress at home that Central and Eastern European countries made in the 1990s. Second, both the United States and Europe need a new vision of a wider Europe, one that includes Ukraine and explains in more political and strategic terms why embracing Kyiv now should become a top priority for the Euro-Atlantic community. Third, the question of Russia and how to deal with Moscow as we move to embrace Ukraine will, once again, be one of the thorniest policy debates of all across the Atlantic (as well as with Kyiv). Last but certainly not least, Washington needs to be refocused on this agenda at a time when its attention is increasingly focused not on Europe but on new challenges emanating from beyond the continent and in particular from the Greater Middle East.

**Anchoring and Integrating Ukraine**

The point of departure for developing a credible strategy to anchor and integrate Kyiv to the West must recognize the similarities and differences between the Ukrainian and Central and East European cases. In both cases, three components were and are necessary.

The first is motivation on the part of the aspiring country. Both the elites and society must have the will and motivation to pursue policies that de facto make them part of the West in both domestic and foreign policy terms. They need to become an ally in word and deed. The second is ‘the carrot’ – i.e., a credible perspective provided by the West that the country can and will become a member if it meets the criteria set by either NATO or the EU. The third is a strategy to deal with Russia. That strategy is needed to help build and sustain Western cohesion and consensus, to protect the
aspiring country as well as to preserve an overall positive and cooperative Western-Russia relationship.

The big difference between the Central and East European case on the one hand and Ukraine on the other can be summarized in the following sentence: in the case of Ukraine the internal motivation and drive to join the West has for a long time been weaker; the carrot or perspective being offered by the West is smaller and less attractive or credible; and the Russian problem looms much larger. This means that the challenge in any strategy that seeks to anchor and integrate Ukraine must address this weakness. It must enhance the internal drive and will in Ukraine to transform itself into a more credible candidate. It must make the perspective of actually being able to join the West more credible than it is today, and it must deal upfront with the question of Russia.

Against this backdrop, what would a realistic strategy for integrating Ukraine into the key Euro-Atlantic institutions of the West look like over the next decade or so? The following five steps are critical if the West and Ukraine are to come up with a realistic strategy along these lines in the years ahead.

First, the place to start must be in Ukraine and its domestic and foreign policy track record and performance. If Ukraine wants to be treated like a second Poland it needs to start to reform and transform itself so that it starts to look and act like Poland in its domestic and foreign policy. It needs to do so not to do the West ‘a favor’ but rather because these changes are seen as fundamentally in Kyiv’s own interest and reflect the aspirations of the Ukrainian people. Nothing will change Western attitudes toward Ukraine more quickly and thoroughly than success at home.

What Ukraine has to do is hardly a secret or mystery. It needs to become a fully fledged democracy and fix its political system for the long term. It needs to reform its economy. It needs to address the problem of arms exports. It needs to come to terms with and tackle the corruption problem. The list could be continued. It needs to do the same things that the countries of Central and Eastern Europe did in order to successfully transform themselves. The West will ask no more but also no less of Ukraine than it did of Central and Eastern Europe.
Until the ascension to the presidency of Viktor Yushchenko, Ukraine had lost much of the good will it once enjoyed in the West. Like many Ukrainians, the West had become frustrated at and fed up with the behavior of Kuchma’s leadership. Many in the West were suffering from what might be called “Ukraine fatigue.” They had all but given up any real expectation that Ukraine, in the short term, was willing and able to truly transform itself in a fashion similar to, for example, Poland in the 1990s. The U.S. and Europe were never going to be prepared to make far-reaching policy shifts without a major shift inside of Ukraine. This is why the December 2004 elections and what happens now are so important.

Apart from domestic change, Ukraine will now also need to develop a clear and consistent track record in its foreign policy as a Western ally. In this realm, Ukraine is perhaps better off than in the domestic realm given its role in Iraq and elsewhere. However, it would be a major mistake if Kyiv were to conclude that it has essentially “bought off” the West, and the United States in particular, by sending troops to Iraq. There is so much more it could do to become an ally in terms of its concrete foreign policy actions, especially as the West seeks to develop a new strategy vis-à-vis Belarus, around the Black Sea region as well as in the Greater Middle East. Obviously the domestic and foreign policy changes needed are linked. If Ukraine can now seriously reform itself at home, it would enhance its foreign policy role as well and perhaps allow Kyiv to become an example and force for positive change to the north and south.

Second, turning Ukraine around will require the West creating a clear and credible perspective for Kyiv to eventually become a full member of our institutions – as well as the moral, political and economic support needed to help make that happen. Once again, a coalition of dedicated and like-minded countries on both sides of the Atlantic will have to come together and commit to making the integration of this country the kind of strategic priority over the next decade that Central and Eastern Europe enjoyed in the 1990s. Ukraine’s anchoring to the West must become the next step in the completion of Europe and the Euro-Atlantic community.

This will require creating the modern day equivalent of the perspective – or the “golden carrot” – that played such a key role in motivating Central and Eastern
European countries a decade ago. This won’t happen over night or by simply waving a political magic wand. For the West to take such a bold step will require a further adjustment in our definition of what constitutes Europe and the Euro-Atlantic community. Today many people in NATO and the EU undoubtedly consider Europe to be more or less complete in terms of its current membership – and are quite content with NATO and the EU having their special cooperative partnerships with countries like Ukraine.

Quite frankly, if someone had asked me in 1997 – when I was serving in the State Department under Secretary Albright and responsible for NATO enlargement – whether I would be content to consider Europe “complete” if we succeeded in bringing in all the countries from the Baltics to the Black Sea into NATO and the EU, I suspect that along with many colleagues I would have said ‘yes’. Our mental image of what Europe meant ended somewhere around the Polish-Ukraine border. Today however, building on our successes of the last decade, it may be time again to recast and expand our definition of Europe to explicitly include and work for the perspective of Ukraine – just like many of us worked to recast and expand our definition of Europe a decade ago to firmly include Central and Eastern Europe.

This new vision of a wider Europe that must be created is, of course, not only about Ukraine. There is a similar set of issues that centers on the question of whether Turkey should become an EU member (though that prospect has now been opened, at least on paper) and whether other Black Sea states such as Georgia or even Azerbaijan or Armenia should have such a perspective. And one day – hopefully sooner rather than later – we will have to face the question of where we think a post-Lukashenko democratizing Belarus belongs as well. While working in the State Department in the 1990s, I would often tell my staff that we should think about policy in terms of a ten, twenty-five and fifty year plan. It reflected my view that the West would be considered a failure if we could not anchor and integrate Central and Eastern Europe within a decade of their liberation from communism. The twenty-five year plan was a reference to the longer-term task of integrating Ukraine and the half-century mark was for Russia.
In other words, today we have to fight and win the intellectual and political battle for a new definition of a wider Europe that includes Ukraine. And Ukraine will have to help us win that battle through its actions and performance. In my view, this wider vision should include Turkey and have a place for the southern Caucasuses as well. Such a new vision will also require strategic justification and a rationale that is convincing if one hopes to generate the consensus and political will to carry it out. That rationale cannot simply be a warmed over version of what worked a decade ago since the strategic context has changed so much, especially after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. It must consist of two key components which are pretty self-evident if one considers the map, as well as the current strategic challenges confronting the West.

First is the point originally made by Zbigniew Brzezinski, that Russia with Ukraine is an empire but Russia absent Ukraine is not. Or put somewhat more gently, a successfully democratized and anchored Ukraine is a very good incentive and guarantee that Russia will not again succumb to the imperial temptation in its relations with Europe and the West. This point deserves to be underscored at a time when there is a growing concern and debate in the West over whether Russia's experiment in democracy has faltered (if not failed) and whether Moscow is not drifting into a kind of new authoritarianism and neo-imperialism in what it still considers to be its near abroad.

A second and equally important reason why Ukraine is so important strategically has to do with the Greater Middle East. It is from this region that the greatest threats to future Trans-Atlantic security are likely to emanate in the decades to come. Even a quick look at the map shows why the West is so much better off strategically if we can anchor Turkey, Ukraine and the Black Sea region as part of our community and as a platform from which to radiate stability and influence further east and south. As opposed to viewing this region as the far eastern periphery of the current West, we need to think of it as our strategic hinterland as the Western alliance pivots to be able to project influence and power south into the Greater Middle East.

Third, developing this vision will be an important challenge for both Americans and Europeans. While the United States' role is crucial, an issue we will turn to
later, several additional things also need to happen if key European countries, acting either in NATO or through the European Union, are to ever embrace this vision of a wider Europe and make Ukraine's western integration a top priority. Today, several Europeans are fearful or intimidated by this vision of a wider Europe – just like they were initially ambivalent about and intimidated by the vision of a Europe stretching from the Baltics to the Black Sea in the early 1990s. The reasons for these concerns must be acknowledged and addressed in a straightforward fashion. They center on power, money, efficacy, and – at the end of the day – identity.

They center on power because Ukraine is a big country, and based on its size and population it would be a major player in terms of votes in any future EU, presumably on a par with the other major players in the EU. Ukraine centers on money because of the size of the country, its large agricultural sector and the amount of assistance it would theoretically qualify for. They center on efficacy because many Europeans worry how a future European Union would operate and whether it would be more or less effective if Ukraine were at the table. And, finally, European concerns also center on identity because many Europeans are not yet sure what kind of country Ukraine really is and how closely it would embrace the kind of values the EU espouses and is seeking to develop.

Perhaps the most important is for the EU to successfully resolve its current constitutional impasse and to come up with a better mechanism to ensure the new and enlarged European Union emerges as a successful actor capable of generating the kind of political will and resources necessary to develop and sustain such a course. Even more so than in the early 1990s, there is a fear in European countries today that further enlargement would dilute and possibly destroy the institution. To be sure, one can debate long and hard precisely how the EU can or should accomplish the goal of making an enlarged EU work better. But one thing should be obvious: a weak and divided EU focused on its internal woes is unlikely to generate the capacity and attention to be able to tackle this challenge. And it is therefore very much in Ukraine's interest to see the EU pull itself out of its current malaise.

Fourth, it is impossible to imagine Ukraine's successful anchoring and integration with the West without the active support and enlightened leadership of the United
States. The American role is crucial for so many different reasons. It has to take the lead and help create the overall vision and strategic context in which Ukrainian integration becomes more feasible. If the United States plays its cards right, it can help overcome reticence in some European corners over Ukraine. By taking the lead through NATO, it can make it easier for the EU to move forward as well. And it must take a lead in tackling the issue of Russia – both via its leading role in NATO, as well as bilaterally in its relations with Moscow. As the Central and Eastern European experience showed in the 1990s, Washington can nonetheless use its political muscle and much smaller levels of assistance as a significant catalyst for internal pro-democratic reform. And American NGOs and other private groups can also play a key role in assisting Ukraine.

But this simply underscores the need for a common and coordinated US and European effort. This is one of many reasons why it is so important to engineer reconciliation across the Atlantic in the wake of the Iraq war and the divisions which that conflict left behind across the Atlantic and within Europe. This is something the West has to do itself for its own reasons, but there is little doubt that Ukraine could be a major beneficiary of such a move. A fractured Alliance, along with a divided and inward-looking EU are far less likely to embrace the kind of bold but needed steps laid out in this paper.

Fifth, nowhere is the need for a coherent and reunified Western approach more important than when it comes to Russia and how to address Moscow in a strategy for Ukraine. Once again, the West will face the dilemma that a strategy aimed at further extending stability and locking in a democratic Ukraine will in all likelihood be seen as hostile by many Russians and once again the West will have to reject such zero-sum geopolitical thinking and instead be prepared to defend its own integrationist logic.

The reality is that NATO and EU enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe has not created the new threat on Russia’s western border that many Russian leaders and commentators predicted. On the contrary, it has probably created more enduring peace and security in the region than at any time in recent history. The great paradox of course is that an enlarged NATO has de facto eliminated the worry
which has haunted Russian leaders since Napoleon: the rise of an aggressive and hostile power on its western border that could threaten the Motherland. Moreover, since September 11th the United States and its allies have probably done more to reduce the threat to Russia on its southern border by the successful war against the Taliban and a NATO-led peace keeping mission there. Western encirclement, one might argue, can have its advantages.

Nevertheless, the hard political reality is that these facts and arguments, while valid, won’t necessarily get you very far in Russia today. Moscow today is going to oppose any serious NATO and EU effort to anchor and integrate Ukraine with the West. The combination of Russian neuralgia, coupled with its proximity, leverage and entanglements in Ukraine, mean that addressing the Russian factor will be an essential component in any Western strategy vis-à-vis Kyiv.

The West basically has three strategic choices when it comes to how to best to approach Moscow in this context. The first is to basically ignore Russian anxieties and move to create new facts on the ground quickly. This is what might be called ‘the Nike strategy’ based on the motto: “Just do it.” This strategy assumes that it is all but impossible to overcome Russian reservations by persuasion and diplomacy, and that it is better to quickly and quietly create new realities, let Russia adjust, and then pick up and build a new relationship. Once Moscow accepts this new reality its view will change somewhat and it will become more accommodating.

The second option is for the West to pursue the same kind of dual track strategy employed during the 1990s when NATO and the EU enlarged to Central and Eastern Europe. This strategy would mean that both NATO and the EU would pursue integration with Kyiv in parallel with a strategy of outreach to Moscow aimed at building a parallel, cooperative relationship. The latter relationship should not be seen as an effort to somehow buy off or appease Moscow in some crude fashion. Instead, it would be an effort to address what we would consider to be legitimate Russian concerns, as well as to look for ways to ensure that Ukraine’s going West also pulled Russia in its wake. At the end of the day, the West’s overall goal remains the same – to demonstrate to Moscow that we are prepared to take legitimate Russian concerns into account, to show that cooperation can produce benefits for it as well,
and also to work with Moscow to try to get it to abandon a zero-sum mindset and encourage it to think in win-win integrationist terms.

The third option is to adopt an approach whereby the West only moves forward with integrating Ukraine once it has negotiated an understanding with Russia that defuses the risk of any confrontation or harsh retaliatory steps against the West.

The problem with the first strategy is that it runs the risk of scaring off allies as well as eliciting an unnecessarily harsh overreaction in Moscow. The problem with the third option is that it gives Moscow a clear incentive to stall. The track record of the last decade in dealing with Moscow on these matters suggests that Moscow will oppose such a policy until it is convinced that the West is going to act anyway and in spite of its objections. But it also suggests that a policy of engaging Moscow intensely while still protecting Western objectives may be the best way to achieve one’s goals while engineering a “soft landing” and keeping the door open for future cooperation with Moscow.

It may be premature to decide which of these options would make the most sense today. Many in the West will undoubtedly be inclined to opt for the middle option because it worked in the past and led to success in the first round of NATO enlargement. But one should not overlook the fact that today one sees the early signs of a reappraisal of Western policy vis-à-vis Russia taking place. For the last decade Western policy has been premised on the assumption that Russia is – if only gradually and in fits and starts – moving in the right direction domestically, and is interested in pursuing a cooperative relationship with the West. In spite of many setbacks on this or that front, people basically believed that Russia was moving in a positive and upward direction.

Today a growing number of people are questioning those assumptions. Opposed to viewing Russia as a country moving in the right direction with some setbacks, they are increasingly concluding that Russia is a country moving in the wrong direction with some successes. This shift in Western thinking on Russia policy is being driven by the trend toward anti-democratic and autocratic rule in Moscow and what is seen as a newer and more neo-imperial policy towards Moscow’s immediate neighbors,
including Ukraine. While it is too early to predict the outcome of this debate, it is plausible and indeed likely that some revisions and shifts in Western thinking and policy vis-à-vis Moscow are down the road.

**Conclusion**

The year 2004 was a pivotal year for Ukraine as well as the Euro-Atlantic community. And 2005 will be no less important. The U.S. and Europe are each moving in their own way to define new strategic agendas in two key areas. One area is what could be called the new eastern agenda – i.e. those countries to the east of the new members of NATO and the European Union. For perhaps the first time, serious discussions are starting to emerge in the West over how it could and should develop a more coherent policy toward the broader Black Sea region. At the moment much of this focus is on Georgia but it will spread to include the rest of the southern Caucasus. There are also signs of an effort to – finally – come up with a more effective strategy vis-a-vis Belarus and the continent’s last remaining totalitarian dictator – President Lukashenko. A reconsideration or readjustment of Western policy toward Russia is also increasingly in the air in the wake of a growing trend toward authoritarian rule in Moscow under President Putin.

Equally if not more important, the West is shifting its focus to the problems we face beyond the confines of the continent – especially the Greater Middle East, a region likely to be at the center of discussions for the simple reason that many of the greatest threats facing the West today emanate from there. NATO is in Afghanistan and likely to be there for some years to come. NATO may very well end up taking a significant role in Iraq. There is growing talk of creating a new regional security system for the region drawing on the experiences of the OSCE. Increasingly, the U.S. and Europe are looking for new ways to pool their efforts and resources to tackle the problems of this volatile part of the world.

Where is Ukraine in the midst of this broader set of shifts and reappraisals? Are such reappraisals going to make Ukraine less or more relevant in the eyes of the West? The answer to this question depends in large part on what Ukraine does now and whether good intentions can be translated into reality. This year is one of
enormous opportunity for Kyiv. It has a chance to put itself at the center of the first agenda mentioned, as well as to make itself an important actor on the second. It can start to create a new dynamic where change at home starts to lead to changes in Western thinking and policy as well. While the path will be long and at times steep, it can start to create a dynamic that could bring the country closer and closer to the West – and perhaps eventually fully into the Euro-Atlantic community.
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Pavol Demes
Snapshots from the Ukraine Strategic Dialogue

“Family photo” in the plenary hall of the Ukrainian Parliament

The participants at work in the Ukrainian Parliament
Snapshots from the Ukraine Strategic Dialogue

In session

A passionate debate over coffee
Snapshots from the Ukraine Strategic Dialogue

Oleh Shamshur, Ronald D. Asmus, Borys Tarasyuk and Hryhoriy Nemyria

Pirkka Tapiola, Daniel Speckhard, Bruce P. Jackson and Sascha Müller-Kraenner
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Urban Ahlin, Joscha Schmierer, James Sherr and Oleh Zarubinsky

Volodymyr Ignashchenko and Toomas H. Ilves
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Petro Poroshenko

Borys Tarasyuk in his seat in the Ukrainian Parliament
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The Heinrich Böll Foundation, affiliated with the German Green Party and headquartered in Berlin, is a legally independent political foundation working in the spirit of intellectual openness. It was founded in 1997 by merging the three foundations Buntstift (Göttingen), Frauen-Anstiftung (Hamburg), and Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung (Cologne).

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"The recent democratic opening presents Ukraine with an enormous opportunity to anchor democracy, stability and security in our country and Eastern Europe more broadly. For this to succeed, enhanced dialogue with our partners and neighbors in the region, in the European Union and in the United States will be critical."

Petro Poroshenko, Secretary, National Security and Defence Council, Ukraine

"In the fall of 2004, I witnessed the Orange Revolution in Ukraine. With my own eyes I saw young people protecting the ballot boxes with their bodies. In the peaceful demonstrations in Kyiv, Ukrainians both old and young stood together against corruption, longing for freedom and democracy. The Ukrainian democratic movement had to wait too long to get the world’s attention and support for their struggle. That must not be the case again."

Urban Ahlin, Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Parliament of Sweden

"Ukraine’s successful Orange Revolution may be the next step in redrawing the map of Europe and, thus, will challenge and test the strategic imagination of the West in a profound way."

Ronald D. Asmus, Executive Director, Transatlantic Center Brussels, German Marshall Fund of the United States