

GLOBALIZATION AND FORMATION OF NEW REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

ORGANIZATION FOR DEMOCRACY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT—GUAM: REALITY, POSSIBILITIES, AND PROSPECTS

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After the Kiev summit of the Organization's member states during Ukraine's Presidency GUAM became institutionalized and cooperation within it systemized. The GUAM Baku summit was instrumental in establishing the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development—GUAM. It was important both for further institutionalizing cooperation in the GUAM format and for demonstrating the Organization's possibilities to its foreign partners.

The summit was an important event that helped GUAM to assume a dignified place in the international and regional cooperation system, become firmly established in the region, and raise its appeal. The main political document of the Baku summit, the Baku declaration "GUAM: Bringing Continents Together," presented a political assessment of cooperation in the GUAM format during the time that had passed since the Kiev summit and designated the strategic development goals to be pursued in the future.

The Baku declaration "GUAM: Bringing Continents Together" confirmed the resolve to expand cooperation in order to develop democratic values, the rule of law, respect of human rights and

basic freedoms, achievement of sustainable socioeconomic development, and maintenance of security and stability in the GUAM region. It also strove to enhance GUAM's regional significance and position by consolidating common interests and intensifying branch cooperation. The Declaration underlined the need to fully activate the socioeconomic, transport, energy, scientific and technical, humanitarian, legislative, and law-enforcement potential of the member states in order to create a common space of integration and security in the GUAM region. This was the pivotal idea. All the other documents signed at the Baku summit served to promote it. The Program of Chairmanship of the Azerbaijan Republic approved at the summit by the presidents of the GUAM member states was also oriented toward embodying this idea.

The presidents also adopted the GUAM Strategy of Sectoral Cooperation. This is a new development factor in our Organization reflecting the willingness of our countries not only to interact, but also to further elaborate joint approaches in all areas of cooperation, which is also a practical step toward realizing the idea of a common integration and security space. The activity of the GUAM working groups was also oriented toward implementing the above ideas.

Consequently, GUAM's efforts and achievements will depend on the specific content of the working groups' agendas and on the quality of the ideas being considered and of the documents being approved. This process should generate new proposals for drawing up a legal basis of multilateral cooperation and coming to terms on the implementation of regional projects, including with respect to infrastructure. This will be the best material expression of the member states' cooperation in the GUAM format, and also provide foreign partners with additional encouragement to accelerate cooperation with our Organization.

In other words, the ideas should be realistic, the plans feasible, and the work results tangible. We should also exert efforts to increase the awareness of the positive influence of cooperation within GUAM among our country's businessmen and ordinary citizens.

Based on these tasks and goals set forth in the documents of the Baku summit and in the speeches of the delegation heads, the Secretariat, together with the chairman and other GUAM member states, concentrated efforts on improving the functioning of the entire GUAM cooperation system, raising the quality of the dialog and degree of political interaction, ensuring organized establishment of the Secretariat, and encouraging the generation of project ideas in the GUAM format and their realization. These efforts also went to enhancing the Organization's public image and appeal and increasing public awareness about its statutory cooperation tasks, goals, and priorities.

Ensuring full-fledged functioning of the free trade area, exerting tougher control over measures to combat organized, including transnational, crime, activating cultural-humanitarian cooperation, and executing the signed documents and agreements are still the pivotal tasks.

All in all, these components form the foundation of civilized partnership, the building of which is the key idea of the Baku Declaration. It stands to reason that the most important external vector in the Organization's activity consists of consolidating the support of the international, particularly European, community of the policy of the GUAM member states and Organization as a whole, including with respect to the problem of peaceful conflict settlement.

Within the framework of the Program of Chairmanship of the Azerbaijan Republic, a GUAM Tenth Anniversary Summit was initiated, which was held in Vilnius on 10 October, 2007, exactly ten years after GUAM's international initiative on 10 October, 1997. By defining GUAM's development prospects, the Vilnius summit confirmed the resolve to make an active contribution to international security, stability, and peace in the most efficient and appropriate way. It was emphasized at the summit that, as a natural transportation route joining Europe and Asia, GUAM will continue to play an increasingly important role in economic development and regional integration and, in this way, connect the continents. By bringing together the representatives of different cultural, ethnic, and reli-

gious groups, GUAM is helping to develop a vitally important dialog among civilizations, introducing mutual respect through knowledge and mutual understanding.

After disintegration of the world socialist system and collapse of the Soviet Union, the countries of Southeastern and Southern Europe located at the site where the two centers of the bipolar world used to meet defined integration into the European and Euro-Atlantic structures as a foreign policy priority. From the viewpoint of forming a new European architecture, with its security component, the main contradiction of the post-bipolar period was resolved by most of the Eastern and Southeastern European countries joining NATO and the European Union, which significantly enlarged the area of stability, security, and democracy on the European continent.

Nevertheless, Europe continues to encounter challenges that must be resolved in order to ensure sustainable peace and progress on the continent. At the same time, the potential of the European and Euro-Atlantic structures with respect to further enlargement of the sphere of influence of Euro-Atlantic values is not inexhaustible, so the states that still remain outside this process are called upon to compensate for the subsequent "exhaustion." A country's vision in the context of regional development and generally in the system of international relations is an extremely important component without which it is impossible to efficiently deal with the problems and meet foreign policy challenges.

After founding their international regional Organization, the GUAM member states intensified their potential in this sense by adding multilateral diplomacy to their arsenal of foreign policy levers in order to more efficiently execute their own foreign policy agenda. Demonstration of the unity among the member states and their ability to draw up a joint platform of action and consistently uphold a joint position are very conducive to enhancing GUAM's authority. We must systemize and oppose the challenges of the 21st century together, because global challenges, be they organized crime or energy security, do not recognize national boundaries.

Since the foundation of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development—GUAM, the member states have been replenishing their regional policy with new content. In addition to executing their national foreign policy agendas, our countries are feeling the urge to create a new European-wide security and stability system. This was a central topic in the European debates, and our countries felt drawn to participate in its discussion. Some of its components, which directly relate to strategic questions of Europe's future—peaceful settlement of conflicts, energy, transport, and migration—directly correlate with the interests and sphere of responsibility of the GUAM member states. Solidarity and responsibility, predictability and consistency, competitiveness and continuity are principles that form the foundation of GUAM's collective policy.

If we look at a map of Europe, we can immediately see how small the GUAM space is both in terms of territory and population, not to mention the level of industrial production and trade. At the same time, this view will give any unprejudiced expert an idea of the potential of this space. It stands to reason that this potential can only be used efficiently by means of coordinated actions aimed at forming a civilized cooperation expanse based on European principles, values, and practice. Correspondingly, deeper integration must be ensured based on the principles of the four freedoms—free movement of people, capital, goods, and services, as well as on cooperation development based on solidarity and mutual assistance. Common GUAM approaches must be drawn up in light of the diverse political and economic strategies and tactics.

In order to become an Organization which enjoys a high reputation and prestige on the international arena, GUAM must be based on a unified system of value coordinates. For us, these include democracy and economic development, which are the concepts incorporated into the Organization's name. We understand them to include strengthening democratic institutions and ensuring human rights, on the one hand, and providing the population of our countries with high standards of living, on the other.

The creation of GUAM in the broad sense should meet the expectations of the citizens of our countries with respect to improving the quality of their living standards. The Organization's strategy should focus on creating conditions in the region for making the full use of our countries' aggregate potential and for implementing a corresponding reform and development plan aimed at achieving greater prosperity and stability.

Our task is to jointly oppose such menaces as conflicts and poverty and ensure our countries a dignified place in the system of international and, more specifically, European relations. Expanding the benefits created by the GUAM space by implementing joint projects and programs, including those relating to infrastructure, could become an important natural component of this process.

One of our basic priorities is raising the appeal of GUAM's transit potential. We are open to cooperation with our partners from Europe and Asia, especially from Central Asia.

Our activity should focus on creating a civilized cooperation space in the Black Sea-Caspian Region based on European standards, criteria, and practice, and particularly on the philosophy of the four freedoms (free movement of people, goods, capital, and services). These services should be our contribution to the creation of a European-wide security and stability system. Implementing this approach will raise, among other things, our potential in the peaceful settlement of conflicts in the GUAM region.

Developing joint transport and energy potential, creating favorable conditions for reforming and developing our economies, and raising the appeal of GUAM's potential for foreign partners are all long-term goals and tasks. In the narrower sense, GUAM's activity is focused on drawing up, signing, and executing various regional agreements and conventions oriented toward realizing the principle of the four freedoms in the GUAM space, as well as on drawing up and implementing specific GUAM sectoral projects, particularly relating to infrastructure. A well-structured and efficient dialog at all levels, including at the level of working groups, is a serious indicator of the countries' interest in cooperating in the GUAM format.

We are constantly taking steps to enhance GUAM's image, appeal, prestige, and reputation, and in the practical sense, to improve the functioning of the entire GUAM cooperation system and raise the quality of dialog and political cooperation.

What are the reserves for improving the functioning of GUAM's cooperation system? Today GUAM's cooperation efforts must be replenished with specific content, businessmen convinced of its importance, and our citizens made aware of its benefits. This should take the form of specific and pragmatic work on the following:

- drafting, signing, ratifying, and executing regional conventions and agreements;
- implementing GUAM's legal mechanisms, explaining and rigorously using them, preventing their violation, and ensuring full-scale functioning of GUAM's free trade area with the protection of the rights of all the member states' exporters and importers, possibly with the drawing up and launching of mechanisms for this;
- generating ideas, drawing up projects, primarily relating to infrastructure, and implementing them (priority areas being energy and transport).

The Secretariat and technical potential being created (interactive dialog on the Organization's new website and the video conference system) will create qualitatively new opportunities for organizational and technical support of the entire cooperation system in the GUAM format, support of the member states' national foreign policy agendas, as well as encouragement of bilateral cooperation. The Secretariat's potential being created will make it possible to hold working group meetings and execute the decisions adopted with greater efficiency. In particular, the Organization is working on a new website which will be more informative, better structured, more attractive, and

will also have the technical capability of providing an interactive dialog among working groups to monitor execution of the decisions adopted and draw up prospective targets of cooperation. The video conference system, which will make it possible to conduct virtual meetings, will help to economize on human and financial resources and ensure that face-to-face working group meetings are held more efficiently.

Naturally one of the most important, if not the most important, priority of our Organization is mobilizing the world community to support the peaceful settlement of conflicts in the GUAM region based on the generally accepted principles and regulations of international law. To be more precise, based on the territorial integrity of our countries within internationally recognized borders.

We see GUAM's role in patiently explaining to the world community our approaches regarding the peaceful settlement of conflicts in the GUAM region. We have already mentioned our efforts in this direction, including on the U.N. and OSCE platform. We will continue to exert consistent and untiring efforts until we restore our countries' territorial integrity and reinstate the rights, honor, and dignity of refugees and temporary migrants. Last December, the GUAM member states submitted a corresponding resolution draft to the 62nd Session of the U.N. General Assembly for review. Now the member states are holding consultations with partners in New York and in various capitals. There is a good chance that the General Assembly will accept the resolution, and there is hope that most of the U.N. member states will support the draft. In our opinion, the U.N., as the most representative forum of the international community, could play a very important role in drawing attention to the need for settling the conflicts in the GUAM member states, and the U.N. is a universal international form for voicing GUAM's points of view.

We now face the difficult task of consolidating the support of most of the countries in the General Assembly and finding the best way to promote the resolution draft to ensure a positive voting result, thus crowning the many months of GUAM's efforts with success. Such a result will undoubtedly help our countries to achieve peaceful settlement of the conflicts. However, it should be noted that the joint work carried out and the solidarity demonstrated among the GUAM member states on the U.N. platform, as well as on the OSCE platform, have already done their part by captivating the world community's attention and drawing it toward this problem. This is also enhancing GUAM's international prestige and reputation.

A few words on GUAM's foreign partnership. GUAM's enlargement is not an end in itself. Our goal is to build an organization with a high international reputation and prestige, which occupies a worthy place in the international relations system. This can only be of benefit to our citizens and attractive to our partners. The growing interest in GUAM and enlargement of the area encompassed by our foreign partnership relations proves that the Organization's development strategy has been drawn up correctly. At the same time, we are indeed open to cooperation with any European or Asian country or organization, as our charter and political documents state. This naturally implies that such an organization or country should share the goals and tasks set forth in GUAM's founding documents. When we receive an application requesting membership or observer status, we consider it in keeping with the founding procedures.

As for specific aspects of cooperation with individual foreign partners, we have drawn up and coordinated very pragmatic areas of cooperation, which is reflected in the corresponding summary documents of the GUAM-U.S., GUAM-Japan, and GUAM-Poland meetings. With the U.S., this relates to efforts to organize and actively cooperate with countries within the framework of the Virtual Law-Enforcement Center, the Program of Cooperation between Operating Bodies of Border Services of GUAM, the Secretariat Assistance Program, and the complete Program of Trade and Transport Facilitation; with Japan, it relates to energy-saving technology and tourism, and with Poland to energy, transport, and experience with creating a free trade area in different formats while drawing closer to the European Union.

The European Union is also a natural partner for GUAM. On 30 November, 2007, the first informal meeting took place in Madrid in the GUAM format—Group of GUAM Friends in EU. The exchange of opinions led to an agreement to hold a second meeting, prior to which the sides agreed to draw up an agenda and exchange opinions on the topic of the talks.

The EU is one of our most promising partners for many reasons. The goals and tasks set forth in GUAM's founding documents fully coincide with the goals and tasks the EU poses in Southeastern Europe and specifically in the GUAM region. They are based on the philosophy of strengthening the security and stability system by developing regional cooperation. All the countries are under one of the European Union's political levers—new European Neighborhood Policy, by means of the potential of which the European Union is encouraging regional cooperation. GUAM, on the other hand, due to the high integration of the interests of its member states, is an efficient tool of regional cooperation. We believe that with the help of our institutional cooperation structure, we will be able to ease the EU's organizational burden in carrying out its own plans to implement various projects and programs in our region. We are ready for this cooperation. The most promising areas of cooperation in the European Union-GUAM format are fighting organized crime and one of its manifestations, illegal migration, energy, and transport. Due to the situation developing, the White Flow project is acquiring special significance, which could place GUAM in an entirely new position in the European cooperation system in its various dimensions. We will repeat, for this and many other reasons, one of GUAM's most natural partners is the European Union.

The Organization for Democracy and Economic Development—GUAM is coming to the Tbilisi summit with a well-streamlined cooperation system, high quality of political cooperation, and growing prestige and reputation in the international relations system. The following can be identified as GUAM's most important recent achievements:

- impressive results with respect to the functioning of the GUAM free trade area. In the last year, trade among the GUAM countries grew from two to three billion dollars. But this is far from the limit. We should step up efforts to streamline the mechanisms and tools that will ensure sustainable functioning of the free trade area. The Strategy of Sectoral Cooperation approved at the Baku summit is aimed at accomplishing this;
- organized formation of the Virtual Law-Enforcement Center and launching of the GUAM Interstate Information Management System. In so doing, GUAM's institutional possibilities in fighting various aspects of organized, including cross-border, crime have significantly grown. Combating the illicit circulation of weapons and drugs, as well as illegal migration, is important both for the GUAM member states themselves and for raising the quality of our interaction with foreign partners, primarily the U.S. and European Union. We are also open to cooperation with other countries and international organizations;
- continued efforts to consolidate the world community's support of the peaceful settlement of conflicts in the GUAM space in keeping with generally accepted principles and regulations of international law. An important stage in this process was submitting a draft resolution called Protracted Conflicts in the GUAM Area and their Implications for International Peace, Security and Development to the U.N. General Assembly. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the leaders of our diplomatic missions at the U.N. and OSCE for their active and efficient efforts in this direction.

Other GUAM programs and projects are also underway, which will be assessed and systemized at the Tbilisi summit. All of this is being carried out within the framework of the GUAM Strategy of Sectoral Cooperation approved at the Baku summit and three of its components: economic cooperation, law-enforcement cooperation, and cultural-humanitarian cooperation.

The main document of the Tbilisi summit will be a Declaration summing up the last year of the Organization's development and designating plans for further cooperation. I am sure that the course adopted by the presidents of our countries in the previous political documents toward forming a civilized partnership space in the GUAM region based on the corporation principles, standards, and practice developed in the European Union will be continued. There are plans to approve the Program of Chairmanship of Georgia in the Organization, which, as I understand, will focus on consistent implementation of the principle of the four freedoms (free movement of people, goods, capital, and services) in the GUAM region.

The Chisinau, Kiev, and Baku summits demonstrated that the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development—GUAM bases its development philosophy on the principles of predictability, consistency, and continuity. The Tbilisi summit will be another confirmation of this, and our Organization will continue to make its contribution to the system of regional integration and European stability and security.