

GUAM AND THE PRC

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I n t r o d u c t i o n

The GUAM organization was officially founded as a political, economic, and strategic union called upon to strengthen the sovereignty of four former Soviet republics—Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova. In the ten years of its existence, GUAM has become an important structure striving to consolidate regional economic cooperation by developing the Europe-Caucasus-Asia transportation corridor. GUAM has also been a forum for discussing security problems, helping to settle conflicts, and eliminating other risks and threats. In 1996, Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova made a joint statement in Vienna declaring their intention to create a union of these four coun-

tries. In April 1999, Uzbekistan joined it and the organization was named GUUAM (the abbreviation is made up of the first letters of the states involved). At that time, it was still an unofficial structure. In June 2001, the GUUAM countries held a summit in Yalta (Ukraine) and signed the Yalta Charter in which the Organization's acting mechanism was set forth. Since then GUUAM has officially acquired the status of a regional formation.

Today, GUAM is attracting the attention of the world community. Despite the fact that its foreign policy has still not found any clear balance between the "toward the West" and "away from Russia" trends, the structure's actions are

nevertheless trying to find this balance. Whatever the case, the GUAM organization appears to be a product of the fall and rise of two major geopolitical forces (the Russian geopolitical force and the Western geopolitical force led by the U.S.), as well as a result of the four states' desire to represent a new geopolitical actor in the region. As GUAM develops, these two main geopolitical forces will continue to play a key and important role. Uzbekistan's membership in GUAM followed by its withdrawal from it indicate the unstable position of the two leading geopolitical forces and the difficulties of turning the Organization into an effective regional geopolitical force.

Despite the fact that GUAM and the People's Republic of China do not have direct ties, during the ten years of the member states' independence, significant progress has been seen in

the interrelations between them and the PRC. As we know, the GUAM states are located on the arc that passes from China to Europe through Central Asia. They are a bridge across which Chinese goods are exported to Europe, a potential transportation corridor for Eurasian electric power, and a channel of cultural exchange between the East and the West. Consequently, as the PRC's economy continues to develop and the policy of openness becomes more entrenched, the republic will inevitably have to activate its bilateral and multilateral contacts with the GUAM member states individually and with the Organization as a whole. So an analysis of the geopolitical reasons for the formation and actions of GUAM, its development prospects, China's relations with this young structure, and the potential influence of the latter on the PRC's regional policy is of immense interest.

1. GUAM—A Product of the Fall and Rise of Two Major Geopolitical Forces

The GUAM states are located on the Caspian and Black seas. From time immemorial, their territories have been arenas where the two main geopolitical forces, the Western countries and Russia, have played and continue to play. After history saw to it that the four countries joined Russia, the countries that now represent GUAM were part of the Russian Empire and then the Soviet Union. At that time, the geopolitical forces of Europe had absolutely no influence on the region.

In the late 1980s, as the Western geopolitical force gained in strength and the Soviet geopolitical force waned, the socialist camp of Eastern Europe fell apart and the Soviet era came to an end. As the republics of the former Union declared their independence, the four GUAM countries also engaged in nation-building. Many events have taken place since the GUAM states acquired their sovereignty, including the creation of the regional organization. All of these processes can be regarded as the product of the clashes and conflicts between the two main geopolitical forces.

Chinese scientists usually believe that since the GUAM states gained their independence, the tense relations between Russia and each of them reflected and continue to reflect the results of the geopolitical games between the U.S. and the Russian Federation. Since the GUAM member states—each of them individually and all of them together—have important geopolitical and strategic resources, they have become competitive platforms for playing out strategic interests, as well as an arena where Washington and Moscow fight and vie with each other.

We all know that the relations between Georgia and Russia have become extremely tense and their clashes rather severe. In January 2004, Mikhail Saakashvili was elected president of Georgia in a landslide victory. Prior to this, a mass movement known as the Rose Revolution unfolded in the

country, after which the previous president—former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze—was forced to retire. In his foreign policy, Mikhail Saakashvili is striving to move from a pro-Russian orientation to a pro-European. He has his sights set on the republic becoming a member of NATO. According to U.S. Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Georgia John F. Tefft, Georgia's joining the Alliance will be beneficial to all the participating sides. Tefft expressed his viewpoint in an interview with *Kviris palitra* ("Palette of the Week") newspaper. During Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili's visit to the United States, President George Bush clearly stated Washington's viewpoint regarding Georgia joining NATO. Georgia could become a very good member of the Alliance, believes Tefft. He also noted that the U.S. would actively support Georgia during its integration into the North Atlantic Alliance.¹

In addition to supporting Georgia in its attempt to become a member of NATO, the United States has been rendering Tbilisi significant financial assistance to carry out its democratic reforms. Robert Legvold, who is an expert on Russian affairs at Columbia University, said that the military component is included in the U.S.'s assistance to Georgia. The United States is also continuing to render Tbilisi significant military aid to raise the modernization standards of the republic's army during its entry into NATO.² Many of Moscow's officials are viewing Georgia's turn toward the West as a threat to their own interests, since they still think of Tbilisi as being in the sphere of Russia's influence.³ Ronald Sunil from Chicago University said: "It stands to reason that Russia includes the former Soviet republics in its sphere of influence, perhaps with the exception of the three Baltic states, since these three countries were already very integrated into Europe. But Moscow still has ambitions and strivings with respect to Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Central Asia. As for Georgia, most important, it has become a contest prize (not a very high one, but important all the same) between the West, particularly the U.S., and Russia. Both sides are trying to influence Georgia, while Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili is leaning more and more toward the U.S."⁴

Ukraine lies in the heart of Central and Eastern Europe and so Washington regards it as an important trampoline for gaining supremacy over the Eurasian continent. Of all the CIS states, the separation of Ukraine in particular and the declaration of its sovereignty have the most radical and far-reaching consequences for Russia. Without Ukraine, the Russian Federation cannot be considered a truly Eurasian country. Without Ukraine, Russia's strategic border "shrinks" by more than 1,000 km. Just as important is that Ukraine has vast industrial and agricultural potential and is ethnically and religiously characterized by a kindred 52-million-strong population; it is an outlet to the Black Sea, which is of great strategic importance. All of Ukraine's natural resources and industrial potential were considered Russia's advantages and helped it to rise over any other nation. But the appearance of an independent Ukraine not only forced the Russian leaders to reconsider their own political prospects, but also meant serious geopolitical losses for the country, significantly restricting its geostrategic choice. As we know, on 31 October, 2004, the fourth presidential election was held in Ukraine, which was evaluated as the most "sensitive" election of a head of state in Eastern Europe since 1991. The pro-Western candidate, Viktor Yushchenko, and pro-Russian Viktor Yanukovich clashed in fierce battle. The presidential election in Ukraine became more hyped up as it went on, Russia and the Western countries also intervened in this process with increasing fervency. Ukraine's important geopolitical location made it possible for some of the large nations to show what they were capable of in

¹ See: "John Tefft: Prisoedinenie Gruzii k NATO budet polezno dlia vsekh," 15 October, 2007, available at <http://www.newsgeorgia.ru/geo1/20071015/42071526.html>.

² See: Phoenix Perspective: "Russia and America for Georgia," 17 October, 2006, available at <http://news.phoenixtv.com/phoenixtv/83931293120724992/20061017/905699.shtml> (in Chinese).

³ Ibidem.

⁴ Ibidem.

the struggle within and beyond the Ukrainian election. This time, this election was seen not only as Kiev's choice of orientation toward the West or East, but as a political duel between the U.S. and Russia over Ukraine.⁵

Zbigniew Brzezinski regarded Azerbaijan as one of the key states in Eurasian geopolitics. This republic borders on Russia to the north, Iran to the south, and Georgia and Armenia to the west, which makes the country Moscow's only geographical defense barrier from the south. But after the collapse of the Soviet Union, despite the disagreements between Azerbaijan and Russia, Azerbaijan, submitting to Moscow's persuasion, agreed to remain a member of the CIS. At the same time, in October 1997, it, together with Georgia, Ukraine, and Moldova, created the GUAM organization, which tried to alienate itself from Russia and differentiate itself from the Commonwealth. More important is the fact that, in contrast to the other three republics named, Azerbaijan has significant oil and gas resources, and is also situated in the Caspian Sea region, which is rich in these reserves. This prompted some large Western oil companies to say that whoever prevails over the Caspian's strategic resources will prevail on the international energy market of the 21st century. For a long time, Russia acted as a transit country for the oil and natural gas of the Caspian Basin countries on its way to the transnational market, since these states were very dependent on Russia's oil and gas pipelines. It stands to reason that this largely put the clamps on Azerbaijan's diplomatic autonomy. Present-day international policy has entered its "energy" phase and will be characterized by skirmishes among the nations for energy resources. Due to its special geographical location and its rich oil and gas reserves, Azerbaijan will definitely become a center of "Caspian energy rivalry" between the U.S. and Russia. In fact, the struggle between Washington and Moscow over the republic has not ceased since the Soviet Union collapsed. In recent years, particularly after Georgia's Rose Revolution, the competition between the U.S. and Russia for control over Azerbaijan has become even more intense. In order to nip the spread of the Color Revolutions in the bud, in April 2005, Russian President Vladimir Putin suggested that former head of the Russian Federation Boris Yeltsin go to Azerbaijan to defuse the tension. At the end of February 2006, Putin took a large delegation with him to Baku to participate in the opening ceremony of the Year of Russia in Azerbaijan. All of these measures showed that Moscow intended to strengthen its cooperation with Baku in every sphere. But the U.S. is offering Azerbaijan more benefits than Russia. On the one hand, the United States is rendering the republic direct economic assistance, and on the other, it is supporting Azerbaijan's entry into NATO in order to ensure the country's security. At the beginning of February 2005, the Alliance and Azerbaijan officially put forward a special cooperation plan called "Partnership 1+1,"⁶ which was an important step toward rapprochement. The temptations coming from the U.S. are prompting Baku to maintain good relations with it. But although Azerbaijan is moving increasingly closer in its policy to the West, it does not want to "upset" Moscow either. In contrast to Georgia, which has made a final turn toward the West, and away from Armenia, which is striving to be Russia's "little friend," Azerbaijan is adhering to a more cautious policy with respect to the two largest players.

⁵ For more on Ukrainian-Russian relations, see: Chen Xiong, "U.S. and Russian Rivalry in the Ukrainian Crisis," *Observations and Reflections!*, 2004; Zhang Jian, "Crisis of Relations between Europe and Russia over Ukraine," *Current International Relations*, No. 12, 2004; Lu Gang, Zhang Yao, "Ukrainian Elections and Geopolitics of Large Countries," *Russian Studies*, No.1, 2005; Li Duanwu, "Ukraine between Russia and the United States—Political Evolutions in the Geopolitical Game," *Russian Studies*, No. 4, 2005; Zhu Fitnes, "The Country is Full of Cracks—Crisis of the Presidential Election in Ukraine. Comprehensive Analysis and Reflections," *Scientific Studies*, Nos. 1-4, 2005; Zhan Kuyili, "The Crimea and Ukraine, Reasons for the Dispute," *Siberian Studies*, No. 4, 2006; Zhao Ming, "Russia and the United States in Ukraine," *International Studies*, No. 6, 2002 (all in Chinese).

⁶ See: "The U.S., Russia, and Azerbaijan Aggravate the Question of Russia's Right to Protect Territory," available at [http://news.xinhuanet.com/world/2005-04/15/content_2831861.htm] (in Chinese).

Incidentally, in Moldova there are also signs of the fall and rise of the influence of the two geopolitical forces. We know that on 2 September, 1990, the 2nd Special Congress of all levels of deputies of Transnistria held in Tiraspol, based on the results of the referendum, declared the existence of the Transnistrian Moldovan Republic. At the beginning of 1992, armed conflicts broke out between Moldova and Transnistria, in which the 14th group of the Russian army deployed in Transnistria took part. In July of this year, the Moldovan and Russian presidents signed a framework agreement on peaceful settlement of the conflict in Transnistria. After this, the Moldovan authorities announced that only if it were part of "one country" could Transnistria be granted autonomy at a high level, but it insisted on independence. Five hundred peacekeeping soldiers were concentrated in the Dniester Region, while there were 2,000 Russian servicemen in Transnistria keeping an eye on weapon stores left by the former Soviet army. For more than ten years, the sides concerned presented several programs for resolving the problem of Transnistria, but the Moldovan authorities and the latter could not come to an agreement. The legal status of Transnistria remains unsettled to this day. On 17 November, 2003, Russia offered a new program for forming a federal system in Moldova. The Moldovan authorities and Transnistria largely accepted it and intended to hold a signing ceremony, but that very day the Moldovan opposition organized a demonstration to protest the adoption of this document. On 25 November, President Voronin said that the signing of the new program was "premature."⁷ Moldova and Washington coordinated their positions once more regarding ratification of the adapted Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty). As a correspondent for the REGNUM Information Agency reported, Assistant U.S. Secretary of State Paula DeSutter announced this on 26 May in Chisinau, noting that the U.S.'s position with respect to the withdrawal of the Russian military contingent from Moldova, as a necessary condition for ratification of the CFE Treaty, remained unchanged. She stressed that NATO also shared the U.S.'s position regarding the withdrawal of the Russian troops.⁸ And on 26 May, 2006, President of Transnistria Igor Smirnov commented in Tiraspol on the protocol signed in Moscow on cooperation between Transnistria and the Russian Federation. He noted that Transnistria was grateful to the Russian Federation for its consistent position regarding the fulfillment of its obligations as a guarantor state of the Transnistrian settlement. Igor Smirnov emphasized: "We will carry out the same policy as Russia."⁹

We think that although the GUAM organization is a product of the fall and rise of the influence of the two above-mentioned geopolitical forces, it is much more important that the Organization is a result of the formation and development of its member states as they search for their place on the international arena.

2. GUAM—A Result of the Increase by the Regional States of Their Own Geopolitical Potential

Tension and conflicts have repeatedly arisen between the four GUAM states and Moscow due to the striving of each of the former to shake off Russia's control in order to retain the country's unity

⁷ See: "The U.S. Demands the Withdrawal of Russian Troops from Moldova," available at <http://international.northeast.cn/system/2006/05/27/050406386.shtml> (in Chinese).

⁸ See: REGNUM Information Agency (on-line): "SShA otkazyvaiutsia ratifitsirovat' DOVSE do vyvoda rossiiskikh voennykh iz Pridnestrovia," available at [<http://is.park.ru/doc.jsp?urn=7374578>].

⁹ See: REGNUM Information Agency (on-line): "President Pridnestrovia: my budem provodit' obshchuiu s Rossiei politiku," available at [<http://www.regnum.ru/news/647244.html>].

and its territorial integrity, as well as acknowledge the increase in its own and the region's geopolitical forces. This directly reflects the efforts of the four mentioned states to acquire the right to have their say on the transnational arena. So the creation of GUAM riveted the attention of the international community to it. It can be said that the formation and development of this Organization is a result of the enhancement by the four countries of their own geopolitical forces.

As early as during Shevardnadze's time, Georgia showed signs of its orientation toward the West, often acting against Russia's will. At the end of 2003, with the support of the U.S. and the West, a Color Revolution broke out in Georgia. After Mikhail Saakashvili came to power, he engaged more actively in efforts to distance the country from Moscow and orient it toward Washington. He also began to insist on Georgia joining NATO. This spelled a reduction in Russia's traditional spheres of influence, as well as a threat to its security and interests, which it did not want to permit. Beginning in 2006, several controversies arose between the Russian Federation and Georgia, the so-called "visa dispute" and the "natural gas dispute," followed by the "wine wars" and "spy scandals." This all further aggravated the initial disagreements in bilateral relations. In 2007, an "airplane invasion dispute" flared up between Georgia and Russia. Neither side reached an agreement or made mutual concessions on this question pertaining to violation of Georgia's air space, while tension rose in the relations between the two states. Two points of view that deserve attention developed with respect to the supposed invasion by Russian war planes of Georgia's air space, which incidentally was never proven. The first was that from the very beginning the Georgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasized that this occurrence "not only has an impact on Georgia's security, but also on the whole of Europe's." It immediately asked the U.N. Security Council to convene an urgent sitting to discuss the incident. The second was that the U.S. and its Western allies immediately took Georgia's side by stating in no uncertain terms that they resolutely supported the country in protecting its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and also condemned the incident as an act of aggression on the part of Russia. GUAM's formation in the mid-1990s and its transformation into a regional international organization are a result of Georgia and its three partners striving to strengthen their own geopolitical forces.

We know that Ukraine's geopolitical advantage lies not only in the opportunity it has to become a geopolitical fulcrum, it also creates certain difficulties in its choice of development path. In terms of its territory, population size, economic base, and military might, Ukraine comes second only to Russia in the CIS space. The Orange Revolution that broke out in the republic in 2004 demonstrated that the West's influence on the CIS region has significantly expanded. If Ukraine ultimately distanced itself from Moscow, the CIS would be threatened with collapse. And this in turn would mean that the "single economic zone" consisting of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan could exist only in theory. Well-known American politician Zbigniew Brzezinski said that the West is hoping that "democracy" will spread beyond Ukraine. The West will never give up its plan to "shrink" Russia's strategic space. Of course, Ukraine is not the first CIS country the West and Russia are fighting over, nor will it be the last. Whatever the case, Viktor Yushchenko's seizure of power in Ukraine shows that in the fifteen years since it required its independence, the republic has indeed for the first time rid itself of the Kremlin's dictatorship. In short, it is inevitable that Ukraine will continue to move away from a pro-Russian and move toward a pro-Western policy. The formation and development of the GUAM organization are well-thought components of the balanced policy carried out by Ukraine and a result of the strengthening of its own geopolitical forces.

Azerbaijan is one of the five countries located on the Caspian Sea. It plays a decisive role in the rivalry between the U.S. and Russian energy strategies. Azerbaijan's special geographic location defines its position in world geopolitics. Nor can the policy of "NATO's enlargement to the East" carried out under Washington's supervision ignore its existence. In the 21st century, energy security

policy will become increasingly important and, therefore, the U.S.'s and Russia's skirmish over the energy resources of the Caspian Region not only will not abate, but will evidently become even fiercer. It is natural that the states concerned have their sights set on Azerbaijan, which is located in the geopolitical center of the Transcaucasus. The republic's government is carrying out a multilateral foreign policy aimed at integration into Europe; at the same time, it is paying great attention to preserving and improving friendly relations with Russia. Azerbaijan is very well aware that if it wants to survive in the struggle that has developed between Washington and Moscow regarding geopolitical and energy strategy, it must definitely retain good interrelations with both sides, and that only in this way will it be able to defend its most important interests. In the last eight years, Azerbaijan's overall economic growth has doubled and its minimum wage has increased three-fold. During the first three quarters of 2005, the GDP rose by 21.8% compared with the same period for the previous year, average incomes increased by 25.4%, and the annual economic growth coefficient amounted to 18.7%. Azerbaijan's economic growth rates were the highest among the CIS countries. One Azerbaijani high-ranking government official said that the people had not been planning any Color Revolutions during the 2005 election, because they were very well aware that a Color Revolution would only lead to instability in the state and not add any happiness to life. Whatever the case, the GUAM countries, among which are those where Color Revolutions were held successfully, as well as those where they failed, have the right to form and develop a regional organization in order to achieve national unity, economic development, and social process.

Based on state interests, the Communist Party of Moldova steered a pro-Russian course when establishing its power and constantly emphasized that Moscow was its main strategic partner and the development of Moldovan-Russian relations was of priority importance. After being elected as president of Moldova, Vladimir Voronin chose Russia as the country for his first foreign visit. During this event, he expressed the hope that relations between Moscow and Chisinau would strengthen. He also said that Moldova would like to become part of the Russia-Belarus Union. On 16 April, 2001, Voronin and Putin made a joint statement in which they emphasized the need to expand and further strengthen cooperation between the two countries in the trade and economic, scientific, cultural, and other spheres. Voronin noted that Moldova should first participate as an observer in the integration of the Russia-Belarus Union; and in the future, the republic may join the EU, but he hopes this will happen along with the Russian Federation and Belarus. He also emphasized that Moldova was a "neutral country" and did not intend to join NATO. On 19 November of the same year, the Russian and Moldovan president signed a bilateral Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation, thus laying the legal foundation for developing relations between the states. At the same time, Moldova expressed its willingness to interact with Russia in settling the problem of the Dniester Region, only asking Russia to remove the weapons and hardware, but not demanding the withdrawal of 2,500 Russian servicemen. On 12 July, 2001, the foreign ministers of Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine held talks at which the Moldovan representative said that settlement of the Dniester Region problem was nearing completion, and only the question of its special status remained. What is more, the Moldovan side called for taking Moscow's opinion into account regarding GUAM (Russia criticized this organization due to its centrifugal tendencies). After Voronin became president, he showed indifference toward GUAM and did not take active part in its activity. He emphasized that this organization should not violate the interests of the CIS. But later, due to the significant changes in the foreign and domestic situation, Moldova gradually began to move away from its pro-Russian policy. Rumania, its neighbor in the west, became a member of NATO, and in 2007 it was making preparations to join the EU. Ukraine, which borders on Moldova to the east, south, and north and where a pro-Western regime was established as the result of the Orange Revolution, is trying to join the Alliance and the European Union. This situation had an influence on Chisinau's domestic and foreign policy. Moreover, a crack appeared in the relations between

Moldova and Russia when Chisinau officially asked Moscow to withdraw its troops from the Dniester Region, accusing the Russian servicemen of “illegal occupation” and objecting to their continued deployment. At the same time, the Moldovan authorities moved increasingly closer to the West, wishing to obtain its support. Moldova, which is striving to join the EU as quickly as possible, is also strengthening its relations with Ukraine and Georgia, trying in its own way to add some vigor to GUAM’s activity.

It is very obvious that the formation and development of GUAM are a result of the striving of its members to survive between two large geopolitical forces, as well as of the four countries raising their own geopolitical potential.

3. China’s Position with Respect to International Organizations

The transnational strategies of the PRC were formed under the influence of the country’s domestic situation and domestic policy priorities. China’s attitude toward international organizations went through stages ranging from resolutely denying them to completely accepting them, from an indifferent attitude toward them to giving them an important place in foreign policy. This winding path is explained by the priority of domestic policy in the PRC, only after which is attention focused exclusively on foreign policy. This strategy reflects the understanding of world order by several generations of Chinese leaders, as well as their demands on the functions of transnational structures.

To put it in general terms, the leaders of the first generation of the CPC under Mao Zedong practiced minimal participation in international affairs with respect to international organizations. The government was more interested in achieving international recognition of the new regime and setting up as broad a united battle front as possible against imperialism and colonialism. If transnational formations did not meet these requirements, they were usually ignored.¹⁰

In contrast to Mao Zedong’s ideas, which were formed after people’s power was established in China, the principles of “realism” and “supremacy of national interests” in foreign policy were fully embodied in the theory of Deng Xiaoping. Correspondingly, the leaders of the second generation of the CPC under Deng Xiaoping occupied a confident and business-like position toward international organizations and the transnational system in order to use them for promoting China’s reforms, openness, and development. The frequently cited statement by Deng Xiaoping is well known: “Whether or not we will act efficiently or inefficiently in international affairs depends primarily on our own achievements in economy-building. If our country develops and moreover prospers, our role in international affairs will be great.”¹¹ Like Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping believed that the current transnational political and economic order was unequal and unfair, but the ways of reform he put forward differed from Mao Zedong’s approaches. He emphasized that a new international order should be established based on the criteria of the five principles of peaceful coexistence. In transnational affairs, just as in international organizations, it is necessary to both fight and cooperate. In so doing, relations

¹⁰ See: “Chairman Mao on Peaceful Revolutions,” International Section of the newspaper *Renmin ribao*, 4 April, 1968 (in Chinese).

¹¹ *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping*, Vol. 2, 2nd ed., Peoples’ Publishing House of the PRC, Beijing, 1994, pp. 240-241 (in Chinese).

should oppose, but not break each other, there should be interaction, but each should retain his own voice. It was precisely due to Deng Xiaoping's theory that the number of transnational structures increased during his rule compared with the previous period. The PRC also became a member of them and a party to various international conventions. At the same time, the PRC achieved a breadth and depth of participation in international affairs that could not have been achieved in Mao Zedong's time. By recognizing the existing transnational system, the reliance on Deng Xiaoping's fundamental strategy on international organizations created favorable conditions for the state's economic development.

The third generation of Chinese party leaders headed by Jiang Zemin was guided in resolving questions regarding interrelations with present-day large international organizations by the following precepts: first, comprehensive and complete participation in international affairs and achieving more right to have their say in order to better express the international interests of 1/5 of the planet's population. Second, becoming more actively involved than before in regional relations, particularly in transnational structures, as well as becoming involved in the mechanisms of neighboring international systems right down to showing the initiative for this (for example, expressing itself more actively in the initiative mechanism of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization). Third, adhering to the previous position in the tactics defined by Deng Xiaoping consisting of gradual involvement in affairs with a further increase in activity and efficiency. And remembering that the formation and achievement of multipolarity is a long and winding process.

Globalization is a double-edged sword for developing states, and so they have to work toward the advantages and avoid the hazards, skillfully meeting its challenges and trying not to miss favorable opportunities. While participating in transnational affairs, it is wise to strive for a gradual change in the features of the old international system. The PRC must "uphold the truth, fight for justice, and protect peace and stability throughout the world." At the same time, we must fight "against the Cold War mentality," and comprehensively promote the development of a new type of transnational relations based on the principles of "not joining blocs," "not relying on obstructions," and "not acting against third countries." This will be to the benefit of the world community and the global system of international relations. The nucleus of Jiang Zemin's strategy regarding transnational organizations is, along with guaranteeing its own development and maintaining stability, to create the image of China as a great power with the right to express its own opinion.

Today, with respect to the ongoing development of the spirit of openness in the PRC's foreign policy, the continuous upswing in the Chinese economy, and the people's ever growing confidence in themselves, as well as thanks to the efforts of today's new generation leaders to raise the country's international prestige, the Chinese people's attitude toward transnational structures has radically changed. Compared with the attitude in the past, it has become more active and more positive, which on the whole reflects Chinese society's optimistic view of international organizations. Understanding the meaning of transnational formations means understanding the state of today's international community, which largely promotes an understanding at a higher level of present-day international policy and international affairs. Transnational organizations are becoming barometers of the state of the international community.

Transnational structures have been developing very rapidly in the 21st century. According to the *Yearbook of International Organizations*, there are more than 28,000 transnational formations throughout the world. More than 4,000 of them are intergovernmental international organizations, and more than 23,000 are nongovernmental, whereby 90% of the transnational structures were formed after the end of World War II.

The wide proliferation and development of international organizations is not only an impressive achievement of mankind's activity, but also an indication of the level of its civilization, since these

organizations are not only regulators of the contradictions that arise in a transnational community, but also coordination mechanisms in politics, economics, culture, science, and technology. Every country of the world needs such structures, just as the world community definitely needs them. They are necessary formations and play an important role in creating material benefits and spiritual values. If we consider the place of transnational organizations in the international community, then we can say that over time they will have greater opportunities and room for their activity. More than 4,000 intergovernmental transnational structures have a legal status and are the entities of international law. Although these transnational intergovernmental organizations do not have the four factors necessary for managing state activity, they have countries as their members with structures for this kind of practice, as well as international rights and functions. So they have more room for maneuver with respect to their independent participation in transnational affairs. This in turn has led to a significant increase in the prestige of these entities.

When forecasting the further activity of transnational organizations, it should be said that it is unique and extensive. They are capable of achieving what one country on its own cannot achieve and can play a role that no sovereign state is able to perform. Moreover, they are extremely diverse in type, disseminated all over the planet, and encompass all aspects of human activity in politics, economics, culture, education, public health, finances, trade, and so on. They are present in man's everyday work in the production of clothes and food, which is directly related to the emergence of transnational formations.

Transnational organizations are creating very favorable conditions by means of their own practice, since they have progressive information technology and the ability to precisely define their own powers and obligations, as well as administrative structures with their strictly limited framework of activity. So they can react immediately, make decisions quickly, and get down to work. In actual fact, transnational formations have already become an efficient tool in resolving international political and economic problems and channels of international exchanges. They have become a driving force behind international political democracy and centers for the development of transnational law and the practical application of its resolutions in regulating relations in the international community.¹²

As a great nation and one of the power centers of the transnational community, the PRC should act in harmony with the U.N.'s international organizations and play an active role in transnational structures in order to make its contribution to international cooperation.

4. The Vectors of GUAM's Policy and Its Dilemma

In recent years, GUAM's development as a regional organization has not been entirely sustainable, since in 2002 Uzbekistan temporarily suspended its participation in the organization's activity. This was followed by Moldova's and Azerbaijan's skeptical attitude toward GUAM. But as Color Revolutions broke out one after the other in Georgia and Ukraine, GUAM began to change. Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko and Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili supported GUAM's integration and strove to raise its status and role. They made a common choice for the member states to

¹² See: Wang Yizhou, "The PRC in Relations with International Organizations. The Practice of Research Interpretation," *Working Documents Series* (financed by the Ford Foundation). PRC Academy of Social Sciences. Institute of World Economics and Politics, No. 9, 2006, available at [<http://old.iwep.org.cn/chinese/workingpaper/zgygjzz/1.pdf>] (in Chinese).

integrate into Europe, which alienated GUAM even more from Russia. In 2005, before and after the parliamentary elections, Moldova began to see itself in a union with GUAM. Despite its doubts, Moldova nevertheless attended the summit that year, trying to use GUAM's influence to further preserve its independence and territorial integrity.

On 23 May, 2006, a summit of the leaders of the four GUAM states, Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova, was held in Kiev. They decided to raise the role of this unofficial regional organization and turn it into the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development with its permanent office—the Secretariat—in Kiev. As we know, GUAM has been rather a vague structure from the very beginning, a platform for putting pressure on Russia and causing the disintegration of the CIS. Since the organization did not make any waves with its activity at first, the West looked on it with disdain. Some analysts believed that GUAM's promotion as the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development meant that it would continue to distance itself from Russia and move closer to the West.

It is easy to see that each of the four GUAM republics is striving to move toward the West using the "convenient corridor" with which this organization provides them. Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova are CIS countries trying to free themselves from Russia and join Europe as quickly as possible. Georgia and Ukraine originally wanted to create a Community of Democratic Choice in order to fulfill these wishes. But they subsequently came to the conclusion that it would be more convenient to use GUAM as a bridge to reach the West. GUAM has been an organization with a pro-Western label attached to it from the very beginning. This coincided with U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney's severe criticism of Russia, after which Washington and Moscow became embroiled in a fierce battle. GUAM wanted to take advantage of this golden opportunity to its own end.

GUAM's intention to oppose the CIS is becoming all the more obvious as it transforms from a "flimsy" union into a regional organization. After the Color Revolutions, Georgia and Ukraine spearheaded the Commonwealth's fragmentation. During the March events in Kyrgyzstan, the foreign ministers of the two above-mentioned republics immediately flew to Bishkek to talk the country into creating a Community of Democratic Choice. At the end of 2004, the first forum of this formation was held in Kiev attended by the presidents of nine states, as well as EU and NATO representatives. Once more there were calls urging the dismantling of the CIS. Georgia and Ukraine again expressed their dissatisfaction with the Commonwealth, making it understood that they intended to withdraw from it. At this forum, Moldova joined those who were attacking the CIS. GUAM failed to invite Moscow to two of its summits. If GUAM had been recognized by the international community, it would have been the only regional organization within the former Soviet Union in which Russia did not participate.

It is essentially no accident that the Russian Federation was not included in GUAM. Whether or not this structure had sought other ways to hold a dialog with the CIS or had threatened to leave it, its steps would have been a definite expression of the aggravated relations between the GUAM countries and Russia. By the end of 2004, the Ukrainian-Russian gas dispute worsened the already tense relations between the two sides. Moscow prohibited the import of Georgian wine, which infuriated the Georgian government. Wine is also one of Moldova's important export commodities, so it was dealt a blow when Russia's prohibition to import its wine went into force. This along with the question of the unrecognized government of Transnistria created continuous tension between Moldova and the Russian Federation. During the mentioned summit, the Ukrainians pasted the streets of Kiev with Georgian wine advertisements in order to show Russia how they felt.

All the same, it was not that easy for GUAM to rid itself of the popular opinion about its weakness. Internally, this organization was in no way a monolithic collective. As the Russian mass media noted, the Organization's fate depended on Azerbaijan. The reason for this was simple—Azerbaijan is an Islamic country and maintains close interrelations with Russia (just as it does with Kazakhstan).

It actively supports the unity of the CIS, has common interests with its states, and the oil pipeline running through Baku is in urgent need of Kazakh oil. Looking from the outside, Moscow still holds the economic levers for regulating relations with these countries. Moreover, we still do not know whether the GUAM states can achieve the real advantages they receive from Russia from anyone else. So GUAM has a long road to hoe before it can ultimately withdraw from the CIS and completely integrate with the West.

5. GUAM and the PRC

After setting up the Organization, the GUAM states began to successfully establish friendly bilateral relations with China. Georgian Foreign Minister Gela Bezhuashvili said that the People's Republic of China was one of the first countries to recognize Georgia's independence, and the latter greatly appreciated this. Establishment of diplomatic relations between Georgia and China laid the foundation for constructive cooperation between the sides, which is opening up a new page in their history. After establishing diplomatic relations, cooperation between the two states, which is being carried out on the basis of mutual respect, mutual understanding, and mutual trust, has been rapidly developing. Relations between Georgia and the PRC became an example of how a large and a small country can cooperate under conditions of equality and mutual benefit. Georgia is thankful to Beijing and highly appraises its consistent position regarding the Georgian state's territorial integrity.¹³

Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi highly appraised the interrelations between the two countries. He said that since the establishment of diplomatic relations, Chinese-Georgian relations have been developing favorably. The sides, guided by the principles of equality between large and small states, mutual respect, and a genuine approach to partnership, understand and support each other in important problems regarding state independence and territorial integrity. They respect the social structure and path of progress the people of their countries have chosen, do not interfere in each other's internal affairs, and are very attentive to developing their relations on the basis of equality, mutual benefit, and friendly cooperation. The Georgian authorities headed by Mikhail Saakashvili value the traditional friendship between the PRC and Georgia and are exerting efforts to ensure the healthy development of interrelations. The Georgian leadership is strictly observing the principles enforced in the Chinese-Georgian communiqué on the establishment of diplomatic relations regarding the Taiwan question, is resolutely adhering to the "one China" policy, and recognized the PRC government as the only legal government representing the entire nation and Taiwan as an inalienable part of Chinese territory. The Georgian side has been rendering the Chinese side valuable support for many years in such important issues as the Taiwan and Tibet, as well as in the struggle against the terrorist forces of Eastern Turkestan. The PRC leadership highly appreciates this position held by Georgia and is confident that the friendly Georgian people will continue to support Beijing in the future in the great cause of the Homeland's peaceful reunification. The Chinese side respects Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, fully understands the Georgian people's choice of social progress model made in keeping with the republic's realities, and welcomes the efforts of the Georgian side aimed at ensuring stability in the country, as well as growth of the national economy. Beijing will continue to render Georgia as much help as it can in promoting dynamic socioeconomic development.¹⁴

¹³ See: G. Bezhuashvili (Georgian Foreign Minister), "Georgia and China in the Past, Present, and Future," available at <http://world.people.com.cn/BIG5/41214/5832725.html>] (in Chinese).

¹⁴ See: Yang Jiechi (PRC Foreign Minister), "Traditional Friendship between China and Georgia Will Become Stronger Over the Years—on the 15th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the Two Countries," available at [<http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjdt/wsrc/t328735.htm>].

Former PRC foreign minister Li Zhaoxing indicated in an article on Chinese-Azerbaijani relations that in the past 15 years, exchange of visits at the highest level is still going on and political mutual trust is intensifying. In March 2005, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev paid a successful visit to the PRC, during which he and Chinese leader Hu Jintao signed a Joint Statement on the Further Development of Friendship and Cooperation between the PRC and Azerbaijan. During this event, the sides once more confirmed their willingness to exert joint efforts to ensure continued intensification of Chinese-Azerbaijani relations for the benefit of the peoples of the two countries. Business cooperation is intensively expanding between both republics in all spheres. China remembers that former president Heydar Aliyev made an enormous contribution to the development of Chinese-Azerbaijani relations. Relations between these states will continue to progress in keeping with the plan drawn up by their leaders.¹⁵

According to the information of the PRC embassy in Ukraine, the establishment of diplomatic contacts between the two countries opened a new era in the development of friendly relations. During the past 15 years, Chinese-Ukrainian relations have risen to new heights. Visits are still being exchanged at the highest level and mutual political trust is becoming constantly stronger. Both sides are supporting each other in the main issues of sovereignty and territorial integrity. When Ukraine declared itself a non-nuclear state in December 1994, the Chinese government made a proposal on its own initiative on granting Kiev security guarantees. Ukraine is adhering to the “one China” policy and decisively supporting the position of the Chinese leadership on the Taiwanese problem. Mutually advantageous partnership between the two countries continues to expand and intensify. More than 90 documents on bilateral cooperation have been signed and an efficient mechanism of cooperation has been created that encompasses the economy, trade, culture, science and technology, and space. In 2006, the aggregate trade turnover volume reached 4,160 million dollars, which constitutes an increase of almost 30-fold since diplomatic relations were established. The trade structures are being optimized and economic and technical cooperation launched. Ukraine will become China’s third largest trade partner in the CIS region. The sides are adhering to consultation and cooperation methods in international and regional practice, which is making a positive contribution to the protection of peace and stability on the planet.¹⁶

PRC Ambassador to Moldova Gong Jianwei noted in his interview with Moldovan National Public Broadcasting that the PRC was the first state to recognize the Republic of Moldova and establish diplomatic relations with it. Bilateral relations, friendship, and cooperation have been steadily and successfully developing for more than ten years. The leaders of the two countries continue to exchange visits, political trust is intensifying, spheres of cooperation are gradually expanding, and relations in various vectors are strengthening. Interrelations between the states are developing normally and steadily on the basis of mutual respect and trust, equality, and mutual support. We highly appreciate and are also thankful for the fact that Moldova has always adhered to the “one China” policy and upholds an unwavering position on the non-establishment of any official ties with Taiwan. The PRC values Moldova’s achievements in economic revival and social progress, and supports its European integration efforts. China expresses the hope that Moldova will play a more active role in regional and international affairs.¹⁷

¹⁵ See: Li Zhaoxing (PRC Foreign Minister), “‘A Friendship that Has Hurdled the Great Wall and Caspian Sea.’ Celebration of the 15th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the PRC and Azerbaijan,” available at [<http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/chn/wjb/zjzg/dozys/gjlb/1676/1678/t307633.htm>] (in Chinese).

¹⁶ See: The PRC Embassy in Ukraine, “‘We Will Strengthen Friendly Relations on Behalf of a Bright Future.’ In Honor of the 15th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the PRC and Ukraine,” available at [<http://ua.china-embassy.org/chn/zwgx/t312866.htm>] (in Chinese).

¹⁷ See: Interview by PRC Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Moldova Mr. Gong Jianwei for Moldovan National Public Broadcasting, *Information Bulletin of the PRC Embassy in Moldova*, available at [<http://www.chinaembassy.md/chn/zmgx/t266042.htm>] (in Chinese).

Despite the fact that the PRC has established friendly and productive bilateral political, economic, and cultural relations with the GUAM states, it still does not have direct relations with the Organization itself. Nevertheless, taking into account China's principled position to be tolerant toward international structures, the PRC respects the GUAM states' freedom and right to create their own regional union. The republic respects GUAM's efforts to strengthen partnership, enhance regional security and stability, and reinforce national political and economic relations, and also values this Organization for its efforts to fight international terrorism, organized crime, and drug smuggling.

Since GUAM hopes to export Azerbaijani and Central Asian oil to Europe, the Organization will take this as a starting point to become a group of countries eager to shake off Russia's control and build European relations independent of it. This could well place the PRC in a somewhat disadvantageous position in its rivalry with Europe over Central Asian oil.

At the same time, since the GUAM member states are increasingly orienting themselves toward the West, Europe's political influence on the CIS countries will increase. This could possibly lead to disintegration of the Commonwealth, which will add new factors of instability around China.

However, it is unlikely that GUAM can have a direct influence on Beijing and will pose any direct threat to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. At the same time, GUAM's development could create favorable conditions for Chinese business—the PRC will be able to use the Organization to open the Silk Road to Eurasia. This economic channel, which will bypass Russia from the south, will open up opportunities for exporting Chinese goods to the markets of the Black and Caspian sea basins, as well as to Central and Eastern Europe, which is of great strategic importance for economic exchange between China and Europe.

The PRC hopes that GUAM, while increasing its own geopolitical clout, will be able to find a peaceful and balanced approach to the two above-mentioned main geopolitical forces in order to enhance the region's prosperity, which will be of benefit to all the sides.