GUAM AND THE REGIONAL SECURITY SYSTEM IN THE POST-SOVIET SPACE

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Introduction

The Soviet Union left behind what is now called the post-Soviet space—a political picture that radically differs from the one of the previous period. Fifteen new independent states destroyed the rigidly hierarchical system dominated by one actor to introduce a regional anarchically-organized system. Although this structural change did indeed create a system that functioned as a regional complex[1] of interdependent central security interests of the newly independent states, it nevertheless displayed certain specific features.

Its dimensions and structural-political specifics make the system different from what is regarded as the classical standard Regional Security Complex (RSC), in which the closely interconnected security interests of all states are based on their geographic proximity[2] and where "the security dynamics of the region are

[1] On the theory of regional security complexes (RSC), see: B. Buzan, *People, States and Fear. An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era,* Second Edition, Lynne Rienner Publishers Boulder, Colorado, 1991, p. 190; B. Buzan, O. Weaver, J. De Wilde, *Security. A New Framework for Analysis,* Rienner Publishers Boulder, London, 1998, pp. 10-19.

[2] See: B. Buzan, op. cit., pp. 188, 189, 191, 195.

not determined by the unipolar power at its center."[3] B. Buzan and O. Weaver have described the regional system of the post-Soviet space as a "centered great power regional security complex."[4]

At the same time, having detached themselves from the metropolitan country, the newly independent states formed local interstate systems—regional security sub-complexes. Such are the Baltic sub-complex, which includes Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, the East European (Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova), the Central Caucasian (Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia), and the Central Asian (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan). The newly formed sub-systems remain more or less autonomous, while Russia has preserved the function of the "center" that brings them together into a single "web" of interdependence of the post-Soviet security macro-complex (PSM).

Russia is the only geopolitical actor in this structure able to consistently spread its influence on a regional scale; by the same token, it is the key security factor for all the newly independent states in all the sub-systems described above. This means that the development of the local complexes, the dynamics of the security relations among all the states involved, and their ties with the outside centers of power are all products not only of endogenous factors, but also of their dependence on Russia's geopolitical activity.

The very fact that four of the post-Soviet states (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova) formed an alliance (GUAM) and it underwent subsequent development confirmed the specific features of the security system in the post-Soviet space described above. On the one hand, GUAM is the natural result of the development of the security sphere in the PSM "immature anarchical"[5] and unbalanced political structure. On the other, it is the result of the geopolitical rivalry between Russia and outside centers of power. This means that GUAM's future is part and parcel of the PSM's internal development and its relations with the outside world.

[3] B. Buzan, O. Weaver, *Regions and Powers. The Structure of International Security*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003, p. 55.

[4] Ibid., pp. 55, 62, 343.

[5] For more information about "mature" and "immature" anarchy, see: B. Buzan, op. cit., pp. 175-181.

Development of the Regional Sub-Systems and Institutionalization Vectors

Development of the regional PSM sub-systems revealed both the specific features of securitization in each of the states and different dynamics of the security relations among them. Some regions achieved "maturity," moderation, and a peaceful disposition relatively promptly (this happened in the Baltics), while others experienced less obvious breakthroughs toward a "pluralistic security-community"[6] (the Central Caucasus, Central Asia, and Eastern Europe). The different dynamics of the inner regional security processes described above are explained by the specifics of domestic sociopolitical and economic development and, to a great extent, by exogenous geopolitical factors.

[6] The "pluralistic security-community" is normally understood as a group of political units (states), the relations among which are determined by the "dependable expectations of peaceful change" and "the real assurance that the members of that community will not fight each other physically, but will settle their disputes in some other (peaceful.—*J.E.*) way." Karl Deutsch and his co-authors explain the trend toward "dependable expectations of peaceful change" by the emerging ties of confidence and mutual respect among societies and a "sense of community" (for more detail, see: K. Deutsch, *et al.*, *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area,* Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1957, pp. 5, 36).

The way the primary geopolitical orientations in these regions were formed (they are the product of the ideas the societies of the states involved had about themselves as parts of certain political spaces) affects their political behavior.[7]

From the very beginning, the Baltic states were determined to integrate into the European community and NATO; they chose and, as later events demonstrated, successfully realized[8] this sociopolitical and economic transformation alternative. These countries stayed away from the reintegration projects in the post-Soviet space, even though from the very beginning they offered moderate forms and did not exclude the efforts of European and Euro-Atlantic integration.

The three Baltic states shared an important security imperative that pushed aside their differences. I have in mind their drifting away from the post-Soviet political identity and historically justified fears to become involved in Moscow-dominated post-Soviet reintegration. The three countries developed the "sense of community" that comes into play every time they address regional security problems or their integration into the European and Euro-Atlantic structures.

Three other post-Soviet regions—Eastern Europe, the Central Caucasus, and Central Asia—failed to achieve a "sense of community" when identifying their development and security vectors. This explains why the process of drifting away from their post-Soviet identity was much less consistent and much more pluralistic. From the very beginning the political elites of some states tried to move toward integration into the Euro-Atlantic space (Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, and Azerbaijan), while others preferred moderate integration within the post-Soviet space (Belarus, Armenia, and Tajikistan). In most cases, however, the state failed to clearly identify the development vector and was torn apart by its own desire to join all the integration projects. The shifts, sometimes considerable, can be still observed: they are created by political changes on the domestic scene. We have already grown accustomed to the divergencies between the official political declarations and the real political activities.

The states of the three regions (including those which from the very beginning insisted on their Euro-Atlantic vector) joined the CIS, at different times and for different reasons. Most are involved in organizations operating in various spheres of the post-Soviet reintegration vector dominated by Russia: they are the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), which unites Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan; the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC)—Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan; and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Some of the countries were in two minds about their membership in these structures. We all know that Azerbaijan and Georgia joined the CIS much later, in 1993; Moldova followed in their footsteps in 1994 for objective geopolitical considerations: they were involved in armed ethnopolitical conflicts in which Russia played a certain role.[9] Moldova, Ukraine, and Turkmenistan did not ratify the CIS Charter; the latter went even farther: in 2005 it left the CIS and accepted an observer status.

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[7] For more foreign policy priorities of the newly independent states, see: T. Kuzio, "Geopolitical Pluralism in the CIS: The Emergence of GUUAM," *European Security,* Vol. 9, No. 2, Summer 2000, pp. 81-114.

[8] In 2004 Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia joined NATO and the European Union.

[9] I have in mind the unofficial support Russia extends to the separatist movements on the republics' territories (Nagorno-Karabakh, South Ossetia, Abkhazia, and Transnistria) in the hope of keeping them within its orbit. For more detail, see: B. Coppieters, "The Politicisation and Securitisation of Ethnicity: The Case of the Southern Caucasus," *Civil Wars,* Vol. 4, No. 4, 2001, pp. 74-75; A. Malashenko, "Postsovetskie gosudarstva Iuga i interesy Moskvy," *Pro et Contra,* Vol. 5, No. 3, 2000, pp. 42-43; S.E. Cornell, R.N. McDermott, W.D. O'Malley, V. Socor, F.S. Starr, *Regional Security in the South Caucasus: The Role of NATO,* Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, Washington D.C., 2004, p. 16; S.E. Cornell, "Undeclared War: The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict Reconsidered," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies,* Vol. XX, No. 4, Summer 1997, p. 12; A.I. Utkin, *Mirovoy poriadok XXI veka,* Algoritm Publishers, Moscow, 2002, pp. 400-401; A. Mörike, "The Military as a Political Actor in Russia: The Cases of Moldova and Georgia," *The International Spectator,* Vol. XXXIII, No. 3, July-September 1998, available at [http://www.ciaonet.org/olj/iai/iai_98moa 01.html], 13 December, 2007.

The CSTO and EurAsEC, two key structures within the post-Soviet reintegration vector, experienced even stronger fluctuations. Here is an example: in 1999 Azerbaijan, Georgia and Uzbekistan left the CST.[10] In the same year Uzbekistan joined GUAM, an alternative, pro-Western structure of interstate consolidation set up two years before that by Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova.

Membership of the states in all the above structures is mainly determined by individual geopolitical biases (some of them deeply rooted in domestic developments) rather than by generally accepted supra-state security concerns. Here is another example: Uzbekistan's membership in GUUAM and its absence from the CSTO were short-lived. Under the pressure of sharp criticism of its political regime and the Uzbek leaders' suppression of the riots in Andijan in May 2005 from the United States and the EU, Uzbekistan performed a geopolitical U-turn and moved toward Russia.[11] It left GUUAM,[12] signed an agreement on allied relations with Russia,[13] restored its CSTO membership,[14] and joined the EurAsEC.[15]

The states involved in the post-Soviet reintegration movement are also involved, to different degrees, in integration into the Euro-Atlantic space. Between 1994 and 2002, all of them, neutral Turkmenistan and Russia included, joined NATO's Partnership for Peace framework program, while Georgia in 2004, Azerbaijan and Armenia in 2005, Moldova in 2006, and Kazakhstan in 2006 signed the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) with NATO and have been cooperating with the North Atlantic Alliance.[16]

Theoretically, Armenia's and Kazakhstan's involvement in the CSTO and the NATO partnership programs is quite acceptable. Practically, however, this ensures regional security only if the relations between the two centers of power of both structures (Russia and the United States) remain stable and moderate. Otherwise (this is happening before our eyes), this dual involvement may prove useful in the short-term perspective as a lever for playing on the two power centers' contradictions. At the regional and macro-regional level, this will not create effective collective security systems.

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[10] Azerbaijan, in particular, left the CST for several reasons, including possible stationing of Russia's armed forces on its territory and the treaty's inefficiency in settling the conflict with Armenia, during the course of which Azerbaijan's security and territorial integrity were violated (see: G.G. Tishchenko, "Voenno-politicheskiy kurs i vooruzhennye sily Azerbaidzhana," *Nezavisimy Azerbaijan: Novye orientiry,* Vol. I, Russian Institute of Strategic Studies, Moscow, 2000, p. 240).

[11] For more detail, see: M. Laumulin, "Multi-Vector Foreign Policies in Central Asia," in: *Central Asia and South Caucasus Affairs: 2006,* ed. by B. Rumer, L.S. Yee, Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Tokyo, 2007, pp. 38-45; M. Laumulin, "U.S. Strategy and Policy in Central Asia," *Central Asia and the Caucasus,* No. 4 (46), 2007, p. 55; F. Tolipov, "Russia in Central Asia: Retreat, Retention, or Return?" *Central Asia and the Caucasus,* No. 5 (47), 2007, p. 30; A. Kniazev, "Russia in Central Asia: Return," *Central Asia and the Caucasus,* No. 5 (47), 2007, p. 34; N. Norling, "EU's Central Asia Policy: The Adoption of a New Strategy Paper 2007-2013," *Central Asia and the Caucasus,* No. 3 (45), 2007, p. 13.

[12] The official letter about Uzbekistan's discontinued GUUAM membership was dated 5 May, 2005. President Islam Karimov explained this decision: "The political orientation of Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova is compelling Uzbekistan to reconsider its attitude toward GUAAM" (see: A. Kamilov, "Uzbekistan: International Affairs," in: *Central Eurasia 2005, Analytical Annual*, CA&CC® Press, Sweden, 2006, p. 308).

[13] Signed in Moscow on 14 November, 2005 (see: *Dogovor o soiuznicheskikh otnosheniiakh mezhdu Rossiyskoy Federatsiey i Respublikoy Uzbekistan*, available at [http://www.government.gov.ru/archiv/data/news_text.html-he_id_103_news_id_19385.htm], 14 December, 2007).

[14] The decision on restoring Uzbekistan's CSTO membership was passed in Sochi on 16 August, 2006 at the meeting of the Inter-state EurAsEC Council.

[15] The corresponding protocol was signed on 25 January, 2006 (see: *Protokol o prisoedinenii Respubliki Uzbekistan k Dogovoru ob uchrezhdenii Evraziyskogo ekonomicheskogo soobshchestva ot 10 oktiabria 2000 goda*, available at [http://www.evrazes.com/ru/main/documentpage/149/], 14 December, 2007).

[16] Ukraine since 2005 and Georgia since 2006 have been involved in the "Intensified Dialogue" with NATO (see: *NATO Launches 'Intensified Dialogue' with Ukraine*, available at [http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2005/04-april/e0421b.htm]; *NATO Offers Intensified Dialogue to Georgia,* available at [http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2006/09-september/e0921c.htm], 18 February, 2008).

GUAM: Is It about Economics and Democracy or Geopolitics?

GUAM, the regional interstate structure formed by Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova, was a response, to a certain extent, to the unstable vector of post-Soviet reintegration described above.

On the one hand, the "institutional split" in the political space of the Commonwealth of Independent States was inevitable because of its obvious inability to address its members' key security concerns. On the other, the legal successor of the Soviet Union tried to regulate other members' contacts with the outside world in the spirit of classical geopolitics.

The CIS failed to offer more or less effective means to cope with the far from simple ethnopolitical context in which the newly independent states emerged and developed. Its peaceful initiatives did nothing to settle the armed conflicts—they froze them, thus opening even more ways to exploit the vulnerability of all sides involved. The attempt to set up a collective security system made in Tashkent in 1992, when a corresponding treaty was signed, failed to take into account the security interests of all the post-Soviet states.

Russia, in turn, tried to monopolize the post-Soviet space by exploiting, in particular, the real and potential ethnopolitical conflicts. This brought no positive results: the societies exposed to aggression and separatism rejected the idea of post-Soviet reintegration. The unfolding securitization processes not only pointed to the "formal" aggressors and separatist movements as the main threat, by also to Russia's informal support of them. For this reason, the integration initiatives Russia suggested were also treated negatively.[17]

By acting in this manner, the Kremlin only partially tied the post-Soviet space to Russia. On the whole, the former metropolitan state and its international structures were rapidly devalued as efficient security mechanisms acceptable to all the newly independent states. As the Soviet Union was moving toward its end, the Kremlin, for obvious reasons, exploited ethnopolitical conflicts.[18] This logic suggested that it should identify its favorites among the newly independent states and present them with opportunities to win. The losers moved away from the pro-Russian institutionalization vector with no intention of regaining it in haste. The CIS became a competitive, rather than cooperating, political space complete with an entire set of features typical of the anarchic macroregional security system—the amity/enmity vectors, exploitation of conflicting interests, the balancing policy, etc.

The position and policy of the West (particularly the U.S.) largely contributed to the "institutional split." The United States could not accept Russia's long-term monopoly in the post-Soviet space; after its victory in the Cold War, it could at best accept "geopolitical pluralism" in Eurasia. Zbigniew Brzezinski has offered the best formula: "In the short run, it is in America's interest to consolidate and perpetuate the prevailing geopolitical pluralism on the map of Eurasia. That puts a premi-

[17] This social trend was most obvious in Georgia, Azerbaijan, Moldova, and Ukraine, the political elites of which, when dealing with Russia's ever promising initiatives, had to take into account the generally negative attitude toward Russia as a source of the security threats.

[18] Amid the economic ruins and ideological crisis that predated the downfall of the Soviet Union and survived into the first years of the Russian Federation, the Kremlin regarded the classical methods of preserving its domination in the former Soviet republics: direct military intervention: Tbilisi (1989), Baku (1990), Vilnius (1991); when the republics became independent de jure, the Kremlin moved its attention and latent support to the breakaway regions—Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan), Abkhazia, and South Ossetia (Georgia), the Transnistria Region (Moldova), and the Crimea (Ukraine).

um on maneuver and manipulation in order to prevent the emergence of a hostile coalition that could eventually seek to challenge America's primacy, not to mention the remote possibility of any one particular state seeking to do so. By the middle term, the foregoing should gradually yield to a greater emphasis on the emergence of increasingly important but strategically compatible partners who, prompted by American leadership, might help to shape a more cooperative trans-Eurasian security system. Eventually, in the much longer run still, the foregoing could phase into a global core of genuinely shared political responsibility."[19]

This pluralism called at least for conditions conducive to de facto independence of the countries that detached themselves from the metropolitan state. Their democratization and market economy[20] were the two most general theses. In practical terms, they should have been given the opportunity to develop their economy, domestic policies, and military sphere independent of Russia. This could have been achieved by opening transportation and energy corridors beyond the Kremlin's control that would connect these states with the EU markets, more intensive cooperation with NATO, and modernization of the armed forces.

Since, for objective reasons, Russia remained stronger than the newly independent state, the relatively stable geopolitical pluralism within the post-Soviet space called for interstate alliances alternative to the CIS and closely connected with and consistently supported by the West. This, in turn, called at the initial stage for the consolidation of the most anti-Kremlin states. This structure could later be enlarged and institutionalized.

In fact, the GUAM members united to address their most painful issues, while escaping the fate of finding themselves in a limited space living according to the rules established by the former metropolitan country. The United States, in turn, regarded GUAM as a mechanism that would create favorable geopolitical conditions in the post-Soviet space. The security interests of the GUAM members fully corresponded to what America saw as its interests in Eurasia—this accounts for the viability of the newly born structure. The member states likewise had many things in common: they sought integration into the European and trans-Atlantic structures, they had to beat off separatism, cooperate in the economic and energy spheres, contribute to the emergence of trans-regional energy and transportation corridors, and, finally, they wanted to be less dependent on Russia.[21] This made them America's natural allies: if realized the above aims would have contributed to geopolitical pluralism, the U.S.'s main lever of influence in Eurasia.

The Russian establishment was not overjoyed to see a new structure—America displayed a too obvious interest in it and extended too much support to this initiative. "GUAM caused a lot of concern in Russia where many of the political observers started talking about a West-inspired 'sanitary belt'."[22] In 1999, when Uzbekistan, a "Central Asian segment," joined GUAM, Russia's concern became even more pronounced.

Even though much was said about economic development and democratization, the Kremlin's forebodings were caused by GUUAM's geopolitical component. The West preferred not to say much about the "sanitary belt," however, the geopolitical situation that gradually emerged in the post-Soviet space throughout the latter half of the 1990s (when the Organization came forward on the political scene) gave food for thought.

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[19] Z. Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard. American Supremacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*, Basic Books, New York, p. 198.

[20] This was outlined in A National Security Strategy for a New Century created by the Clinton Administration (see: *A National Security Strategy for a New Century*, The White House, May 1997, p. 22).

[21] See: T. Kuzio, op. cit., pp. 85-86; F. Splidsboel-Hansen, "GUUAM and the Future of CIS Military Cooperation," *European Security,* Vol. 9, No. 4, Winter 2000, p. 96; B. Parakhonskiy, "The Formation of Regional Cooperation Models in GUUAM," *Central Asia and the Caucasus,* No. 2, 2000, p. 73.

[22] N. Silaev, "GUAM and the Smaller Game in the Post-Soviet Expanse," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 4 (40), 2006, pp. 91-92.

Due to the "Central Asian segment," the geopolitical configuration of the post-Soviet space became even more resistant to Kremlin-dominated reintegration. All four post-Soviet regional subsystems acquired their own centers of alternative influence—the Baltics (the three Baltic states), Eastern Europe—Ukraine and Moldova; the Central Caucasus—Azerbaijan and Georgia, and Central Asia—Uzbekistan. At that time, the NATO and EU memberships of the three Baltic states were just around the corner.[23] This means that consolidation in the GUUAM vector generated the emergence of a West-controlled geopolitical buffer in all the regions of the former Soviet Union enumerated above.

Russia naturally could not accept this course of events: first, it intensified economic and technical integration under the Kremlin aegis within the CIS (EurAsEC, SES, CSTO) and in a wider format (SCO); second, it stepped up its diplomatic activities designed to undermine the functionality of the GUUAM consolidation vector by inviting its members to join the structures enumerated above. This formalized the CIS, which developed from a single integration field into a space of geopolitical and institutional rivalry. On the whole, the Kremlin's efforts proved successful.

The processes that took place in GUUAM in 2001-2005 can be described as a crisis: "It (GUUAM.—*J.E.*) failed to achieve practical results, while the statuses of those who represented the member states at the GUUAM meetings were steadily declining. In 2002, Uzbekistan 'suspended' its membership."[24] Seen in the international political context, the approaches that describe GUUAM as primarily exogenously stimulated alliance deprived of all internal resources appear very convincing. Nikolai Silaev has offered the following assessment: "It is unlikely that there was a connection between better relations between Russia and the West and GUUAM's stagnation, yet there is the feeling that the elites of the newly independent states were using similar projects as a means 'to utilize' the energy of political confrontation between Moscow and its Euro-Atlantic partners."[25]

It would be no exaggeration to say that the "international political context" of GUUAM's stagnation coincided with America's counterterrorist operation in Afghanistan, which made the Kremlin's support a priority. The compromise between Washington and Moscow about the U.S. military operation and American bases in Central Asia[26] did not presuppose, to say the least, worsened bilateral relations over GUUAM. After stationing its military bases in Central Asia, the United States acquired the direct possibility of influencing the geopolitical processes in the key regional segment of the post-Soviet space. For obvious reasons, this was not in Russia's long-term interests; however, on the whole Russia profited from elimination of the potential threat to its southern borders from the Taliban. O. Barabanov has pointed out: "In case of stepped up Islamist activities, the Americans will be the first to rebuff the attack and will, in this way, actually protect Russia's national interests. This served the main argument in favor of America's military presence in the South of the CIS."[27]

After the crisis, GUAM continued developing within the "international political context," which remained a key factor in its progress.[28] First, with the Taliban regime out of the way, the threat to Russia's interests in the south was neutralized, which meant that America's military presence in the region was no longer needed. More than that: concerned about the situation, the Kremlin spared no efforts to remove the American bases from Central Asia. Second, seen from the other side of the

[23] They joined NATO and the EU in 2004.

[24] N. Silaev, op. cit., p. 92.

[25] Ibidem.

[26] See: Sh. Igitaliev, A. Karimova, "Central Asian and Caucasian Strategy: Several Models of Interrelations among the U.S., China, and Russia," *Central Asia and the Caucasus,* No. 2 (44), 2007, pp. 43-44.

[27] O.N. Barabanov, "Politika SShA v Tsentral'noy Azii i Zakavkazie," pp. 13-14, available at [http://www.riss.ru/library/US-SRAZ.pdf], 11 February, 2008.

[28] The year 2005 can be described as the year of its revival.

Atlantic, President Putin's centralization of power looked very much like authoritarian trends: "The U.S. criticizes Vladimir Putin for 'curtailing the democratic reforms, for exercising state control over the mass media, and for appointing governors instead of holding direct elections'."[29] Different approaches to the Iraqi, Iranian, and North Korean issues, as well as Russia's arms sales to China, Syria, and Venezuela worsened the relations between the two countries still further.[30] The United States was obviously displeased with the Kremlin's efforts to use the economy to gain a tighter grip in the newly independent states.[31]

The crisis in the two countries' bilateral relations cropped up in two interconnected geopolitical processes in the post-Soviet space, which revived GUAM. I have in mind, first, the Color Revolutions: the regime changes (particularly in Georgia in 2003 and in Ukraine in 2004) were Washington-supported to say the least. There is every reason to believe that they were caused by the Kremlin's too hasty and too obvious attempts to acquire more political influence in these countries.[32] Institutionalization under the banner of democracy and fighting authoritarianism was the second factor. In 2005, the so-called Community of Democratic Choice ("community of the democracies of the Baltic-Black Sea-Caspian region") initiated by Georgia and Ukraine appeared on the crest of the Color Revolution wave.[33] This was, in fact, an attempt to set up a belt of democratic states around Russia, which "was slipping toward authoritarianism," in particular by promoting "revolutionary" transformations in the post-Soviet states.

A similar "ideological argument" was used to take GUUAM out of the prolonged crisis. In April 2005, Chisinau hosted a summit that adopted the declaration "In the Name of Democracy, Stability, and Development" and a joint statement "Building Democracy from the Baltics to the Black Sea."[34] The Kiev summit of May 2006 consolidated the ideological foundation with the alliance's new title: "Organization for Democracy and Economic Development—GUAM."[35]

On the whole, the developments that took place in the organization in 2005-2007 can be described as consolidation; even without Uzbekistan the structure retained its functionality. In fact, with Uzbekistan out of the way the members found it easier to close ranks on the basis of common interests, which resulted in adequately-coordinated political behavior. At the same time, exogenous stimulation remained GUAM's main driving force, while its activities were clearly motivated by its member states' common interests. This allowed the members to become actively involved in all the key international issues: the conflicts on their territories and the trans-regional energy and transportation projects.

The fact that the 61st and 62nd U.N. General Assemblies discussed the draft resolution Protracted Conflicts in the GUAM Area and their Implications for International Peace, Security and Development as part of their agenda was a result of the members' consolidated activities. This was done to

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[29] Quoted from: Sh. Igitaliev, A. Karimova, op. cit., p. 44.

[30] Ibidem.

[31] The Liberal Empire conception should be regarded in this context: Russia should restore its influence in the newly independent states by expanding into their economies (see: A. Chubays, "Missia Rossii v XXI veke," *Nezavisimaia gazeta,* 1 October, 2003). It was realized in Armenia where its economic entities were sold to Russia to pay off the debts, in Georgia where there were attempts to put its energy system under Russia's control, etc. (for more detail, see: V. Papava, F. Starr, "In the Caucasus, a 'Neo-Imperial' Russian Revival," *The Daily Star,* 20 January, 2006).

[32] In Georgia, by buying the key energy facilities; in Ukraine, by helping pro-Russian presidential candidate Viktor Yanukovich come to power.

[33] This structure united Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova, the Baltic states, Poland, Rumania, Macedonia, and Slovenia. Much was done to involve "post-revolutionary" Kyrgyzstan.

[34] The summit was attended by the GUUAM heads of state (with the exception of the president of Uzbekistan), as well as the presidents of Rumania and Lithuania, the OSCE chairman, and Steven Mann, special negotiator for Nagorno-Karabakh and Eurasian conflicts who represented the United States.

[35] See: Kiev Declaration on Establishment of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development—GUAM, available at [http://www.mfa.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=130&info_id=1490], 23 May, 2006.

demonstrate to the world that the Russian peacekeepers in the zones of the Transnistrian, Abkhazian, and South Ossetian conflicts were inefficient. The GUAM members decided to set up peacekeeping forces of their own to replace the Russian contingents.[36]

The GUAM members also pooled their forces to achieve secure energy supplies.[37] In fact, this was another issue discussed at the summits that was no less painful than the conflicts and peacekeeping. The 7th and 8th items of the Kiev declaration said about "inadmissibility of the economic pressure and monopolization of energy market" and emphasized "the need to activize efforts to ensure energy security, including by means of diversifying routes of transportation of energy resources from the Central Asian and Caspian regions to the European market." The members supported the idea of using "the international transit capacity of the GUAM States to ensure also sustainable supply of energy resources."[38] In October 2007, the Vilnius summit discussed the same issues.[39]

In the post-crisis period, the original exogenous geopolitical stimulators of GUAM's development were complemented with democratic and economic stimulators; the member states have acquired internal motivations for their consolidated activities. Can we say today that the internally motivated economic and democratic trends, rather than the geopolitical situation in the post-Soviet space, are pushing GUAM forward?

In the absence of exogenous stimulation, it is too early to regard the alliance as functionally solvent. The practice of the Color Revolutions demonstrated that the democratic slogans are all fairly "geopolitical;" at least they are regarded as such in most of the newly independent states, Russia included. This will keep the issue within the geopolitical context and give rise to adequate countermeasures. The GUAM states themselves have only begun their move toward sustainable functional democracies and are still far removed from the role of democratic leader in the post-Soviet territory.

GUAM is taking its first steps as a single economic structure; the agreement on the free trade area signed in Yalta in 2002 has not yet increased trade turnover among the members. Trade turnover with external actors remains larger than within the alliance.[40] On a regional scale, GUAM will have to compete with much stronger projects patronized by the Kremlin, especially the EurAsEC. The efficiency of cooperation in the energy sphere, in particular, via the Baku-Supsa-Odessa Brody-Plock pipeline with an estimated annual carrying capacity of 14.5 million tons, looks doubtful. So far, Azerbaijan is the only oil-rich member that sends the bulk of its oil to the BTC pipeline (annual carrying capacity 50 million tons). With its carrying capacity increased to the planned 60 million tons a year, there will hardly be enough oil to move along the GUAM energy corridor.[41]

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[36] The agreements on the GUAM peacekeeping contingent were reached in Baku at the sitting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of member states in June 2007 (see: "Strany GUAM sozdaiut svoi mirotvorcheskiy contingent," NEWSru.com, Monday, 18 June, 2007, available at [http://www.newsru.com/world/18jun2007/baku_guam.html], 4 February, 2008).

[37] This question was raised in connection with the problems of energy supplies from Russia to Georgia and Ukraine in 2005 and 2006; this can be described as the Kremlin's attempt to use its "energy domination" to put political pressure on these countries.

[38] See: Kiev Declaration on Establishment of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development—GUAM.

[39] The summit in particular reached agreements on the Baku-Supsa-Odessa-Brody-Plock project (see: "Prezident Ukrainy na summite GUAM prizval sdelat upor na edinoy energeticheskoy strategii," available at [http://www.newsru.com/world/10oct2007/guamm.html], 4 February, 2008; "Kazakhskuiu neft razvernut na Pol'shu: Konsortium dlia prodlenia truboprovoda Odessa-Brody rasshiriaetsia," *Kommersant*, No. 138 (4754), 1 October, 2007, available at [http://www.kommersant.ru/doc-rss.aspx?DocsID=809878], 4 February 2008).

[40] For more detail, see: N. Muzaffarli (Imanov), "Politico-Economic Complementarity and Compatibility between Guam Member States" (see: present edition, pp. 14-34).

[41] See: I. Tomberg, "Energy Policy and Energy Projects in Central Eurasia," *Central Asia and the Caucasus,* No. 6 (48), 2007, p. 44.

This means that in the short- and, probably, mid-term perspective the alliance will preserve its geopolitical image. This will also determine its influence on the security sphere in the post-Soviet territory.

Development of GUAM and Changes in the PSM

Today, GUAM is propelled mostly by the dynamics of the Russia-the West geopolitical rivalry. It is too early to describe the alliance as an entity capable of sustainable and independent geopolitical activity. This means that within the PSM it will remain, for the time being, an object or a mechanism for realizing the stronger power poles' security interests. At the same time, actual transformation of GUAM into an economic project (suggested by its title) holds promise. This will depend on the dynamics in the security sphere at the system's macro-levels—the relations between Russia and the West and between Russia and other newly independent states.

Today, the dynamics within the former duad are determined by the priority of military and political interests when the "security dilemma" typical of all competing international political systems comes to the fore.[42] Even in the economic sphere and in the struggle against trans-national threats, the relations within the duad are coming back to the "zero sum game"—the half forgotten Cold War realia.

In many respects, the relations between Russia and the other newly independent states resemble the relations within the first duad. These relations, however, are not merely dominated by the relations with the West, but also display regional specifics based, in particular, on the much lower polarization level and the much more pronounced power disbalances. "Russia and the other newly independent states" formula is highly conventional since there is only one "pole of power" in the PSM, namely Russia, while the other newly independent states cannot be described as an alternative power pole. More than that, the aggregate indices of the national power of the RF and the other newly independent states are vastly different.

These specificities, together with others, contributed to the regional system's instability at the earliest stage of its progress from "immature" to "mature" anarchy. The military and political threats found at the very top of the agenda of the PSM states explain why they present stronger military and political positions as their priorities. The aggregate power indices of the newly independent states are very different for objective reasons, therefore none of them could address the task independently by tapping inner resources. The logic of political realism forces them to seek "outside sources." In this situation, Russia, the only "power pole," has failed to serve as a source of adequate military and political solutions for all the newly independent states for the simple reason that some of them regard one another as objects of confrontation (Azerbaijan and Armenia), while others see Russia as such an object (Georgia, Ukraine, and the Baltic states). More than that, a bloc with the former metropolitan country threatens the potential partner with loss of sovereignty: any state seeking "external protection" risks being swallowed by Russia because of its obvious predominance able to upturn any alliance. Under these conditions, to stabilize the "maturing" process, Russia should avoid a de facto alliance with some of the newly independent states against the others, and stop exploiting the ethnopolitical conflicts in its interests. Russia did not do this, and

[42] For more detail, see: K.N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics,* McGraw-Hill, Boston, 1979, p. 186.

could not do this, for reasons stemming from the system of the security relations at the supra-regional level.[43]

This means that the political structure of the PSM itself, coupled with the system's objective instability, presupposed that it would not be easy to create common inter-state security mechanisms. The structural specifics do not presuppose that any state can achieve relative stability by developing the system on its own and using the mechanisms of balance of power. The wide gap between the aggregate indices of national power that separates Russia from the other newly independent states is too obvious even if all of them close ranks to form another pole.

Theoretically, if the conditions described above retain their functionality one can discern, at the level of both duads, two possible stabilization scenarios within PSM: either the newly independent states will be swallowed by the only power pole[44] or the newly independent states will pool forces with the "outside" center of power to create a pole alternative to Russia.

In both cases, the space will emerge, with very different implications for the supra-regional level, out of the object of rivalry of different security interests. Under the first scenario, the PSM will disappear leaving Russia to spread its influence and concentrate its activity at the supra-regional level. This might revive the atmosphere of Cold War confrontation with the obvious implications for global security. The second scenario will create a more or less balanced security system at the regional level and decrease confrontation at the supra-regional level.

I have already written that these scenarios are both possible as products of the conditions at the Russia-the West level of security relations. If the conditions change, different stabilization scenarios might move to the fore. For example, the military and political threats might become de-securitized; the economic development and the struggle against the trans-national threats might replace geopolitical with social hues. This will launch alternative security scenarios in the PSM: the stress will be shifted from balancing to cooperation. So far, the situation in the region does not suggest that these changes are around the corner. This allows us to speak about GUAM's future functions and its impact on the processes within the PSM.

In the context of the current macro-factors of security, GUAM might preserve its balancing function (the outside actors intended to impart this role to GUAM from the very beginning) and objectively stems from the need to keep the members' independence. The distribution of power potential in the PSM's political structure suggests that the efficiency of this function and, consequently, stability and moderation of the security relations will depend, first, on consolidation of the GUAM members and, second, on support from the outside power pole.

The desired aim can be achieved only if both conditions are fulfilled—even though this is far from simple. The still persisting vagueness of the foreign policy aim of the GUAM members and their geopolitical orientation create a problem. The alliance was a pretty amorphous structure because the members had no common approaches, in particular toward the alliance's main aim. This is the key endogenous factor: each of the members regarded GUAM as a mechanism through which it could address its problems (reintegration of the lost territories, legitimate status of the regional leader, diverse energy sources, etc.). Other no less important issues related to the common geopolitical landmarks remained mere declarations. Each of the members preferred individual relations with Russia and the United States; at times these relations looked more like playing on the contradictions between the centers of power, without bothering to clearly identify their own geopolitical identity. Together with GUAM's devaluation as a consolidated structure, this extended Russia's manipulation chances; the West could not decide how it should support the alliance as a real counterbalance to Russia's re-

[43] There are apprehensions caused by possible strengthening in the "free from Russia" space of external power centers with potential threats.

[44] The theory of the RSC looks at overlay as one of the stabilization models (for more detail, see: B. Buzan, op. cit., pp. 219-221).

integration policies.[45] Today, the alliance has stepped up its activities and demonstrated clear signs of consolidation, but the problem persists.

The West's position was equally vague: it tried to meander between the interests of the newly independent states (including the GUAM members) to pull some of the pro-Russian states (Armenia) to its side while ignoring the effects on the other states (Azerbaijan). On the other hand, the West tried to approach Russia; in the early 1990s, Washington was guided by the Russia-first principle to realize certain security interests within the Russia-West duad.[46] In the PSM framework, this approach restored the Kremlin's idea about this territory as an area of its natural domination; the newly independent states, in turn, began to have doubts about the West's intention to support their independence. This increased their pro-Russian geopolitical orientation and made it harder for the West to create a sustainable alternative.[47]

In the context of the stable obtainable macro-factors, *definiteness* and *consistency* are two indispensable conditions of at least "maturity" and hence relative stability of the PSM anarchic structure.

- *Definiteness* and *consistency* of geopolitical orientations and the GUAM states' security policy—forming a pluralist security community orientated toward Euro-Atlantic structures, including placing the stakes on collective approaches to the security issues and abandoning the practice of maneuvering between the interests of the power poles.
- *Definiteness* and *consistency* of Western policies in relation to the alliance as a whole and its individual member states, in particular—sustainable military-political, economic, and organizational-technical assistance to GUAM as the developing regional security community and to its stronger balancing function, as well as unwavering support in dealing with the key security problems of the member states.
- *Definiteness* and *consistency* in relation to Russia means that the West and GUAM should clearly identify and demonstrate their level and goals of cooperation with Russia in the common regional security sphere.

In Lieu of a Conclusion

In view of the current specific features of the security relations in the PSM and the geopolitical processes around it, it is too early to talk about the possibility of turning it into a single pluralist security community. Any discussion of this process should be applied to the sub-regional segments (which remained on their own when the Baltic countries integrated into NATO and the EU) with certain qualifications. The following issues should primarily be discussed: should this process be limited to the existing geographic and functionally localized regional sub-complexes (Eastern Europe, the Central Caucasus and Central Asia) or is there still the chance of setting up a security community that would include individual states patterned on GUAM's transregional interstate consolidation? Second, what can become the "initiating and stimulating" core area? In his conception, Karl Deutsch described the United States as the core area of the North Atlantic security community.[48]

[45] Predominantly individualist approaches were obvious in the relations between the GUAM members and the European and Euro-Atlantic structures.

[46] In 1991-1994, the United States concentrated on making a democratic state with a functional market economy out of Russia and preventing proliferation of nuclear weapons Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan inherited from the Soviet Union (see: S.E. Cornell, *Small Nations and Great Powers. A Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict in the Caucasus,* Curzon Press, 2001, p. 367).

[47] To confirm this, we can go back to the macro-factors of the GUAM crisis discussed in the previous section.

[48] See: K. Deutsch, *et al*., op. cit., p. 138.

Within the political space described in this article, this function can, conditionally, belong to (1) Russia; (2) certain states of the regional sub-complexes with adequate economic and political potential; and (3) an interested outside center of power. The first and the third alternatives look much more plausible; however, a combination of the second and the third cannot be excluded.

Any discussion of the development of trans-regional security communities in the PSM can predict the formation of two pluralist communities: (1) orientated toward Russia and Eurasian values; and (2) orientated toward the West and Euro-Atlantic values, in which GUAM could serve as the foundation; we cannot exclude its expansion into Central Asia in particular. Their further amalgamation cannot be excluded: they could blend into a single political actor. The former scenario presupposed reintegration with Russia's dominating role; the latter, either integration into NATO and the EU or, which is less plausible, its internal integration and transformation into an independent amalgamated security community within the PSM.

The above can be realized only if security relations reach "maturity" within the PSM and around it, in particular through sustainable internal strengthening of the newly independent states and *definiteness* and *consistency* in their security policy and in their relations with Russia and the outside centers of power.