

GUAM: ITS CURRENT STATE, RISKS, AND PROSPECTS

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Cooperation within GUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, and Moldova) has been made possible due to the spread in so-called “geopolitical pluralism” in Eurasia, which owes its existence to the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the ensuing decline in Russia’s influence. For Ukraine, these circumstances have led to a unique situation in which Kiev has the opportunity to make a name for itself in the geopolitical role of “East European communicator.”

We can predict that GUAM’s future place and role in the system of international organizations will be defined by what this union manages to achieve in its interaction with the European Union; the extent to which it can coordinate its own policy with U.S. strategy in the Caucasus and Central Asia; and the degree to which it can compete with other Eurasian international structures. In this context, it is important to understand that in the shorter term GUAM could compliment interstate cooperation in the European vector, thus ensuring its own political stability, positive results in the economic sphere, and productive conflict-settlement measures.

The foreign policy orientation of this organization hinges on its divergence with Russia’s integration plans, which makes them rivals, as well as geopolitical competitors in Eurasia. This is because they want to have a strategic advantage and gain control over the hydrocarbons of the Caspian Basin, over the goods and energy transportation routes along the Great Silk Road, and over the markets of the Central Asian and Caucasian countries.

Cooperation within GUAM is helping Ukraine to implement its policy aimed at stepping up Euro-Atlantic and European integration, as well as to develop international projects in formats which meet the new tasks, without ruining equal political and economic cooperation with Russia in the process.

GUUAM is an interstate cooperation organization which gives Kiev a stronger foothold in projects designed to create a southeast system of energy and transportation corridors and to ensure Ukraine's access to the production, commodity, and raw material markets of Central Asia and the Far East. Another particularly important aspect is that this structure is providing Ukraine with the opportunity to carry out the strategic task of diversifying the routes, agents, and sources for supplying our country's economy with energy. In the final analysis, GUUAM can be seen as an important stage in the development of Baltic-Black Sea Cooperation (BBC).

This organization is also attractive to European communities. Their interest is shown in the European international conferences held every year, at which the problems of developing this union and the ways it could cooperate with the European Union are discussed. For example, a meeting of the Committee of National Coordinators (CNC) of the GUUAM member states held in March 2004 in Baku, in which representatives of the World Bank, OSCE, U.N., and TRACECA program participated, was also attended by representatives of the European Commission. Germany and Poland are showing the most interest among the European countries (Ukraine has entered an agreement with Poland on implementing an oil pipeline project Odessa-Brody-Plock-Gdansk). It is obvious that the interests of the European countries are primarily conditioned by the need to diversify their own energy supply, the desire to ensure their own security, and the European Union's striving to participate in the Eurasian process. For the European Union, the development of Eurasian communication systems and cooperation is a significant strategic component (although not entirely clear-cut) of its foreign policy aimed at ensuring the prospects for Europe's geopolitical development, in general, and turning it into a special world center, in particular.

Taking into account the factors presented, it should be emphasized that GUUAM, despite the domestic political situation and the changes in relations with the U.S., Russia, and China, is a strategically important segment of European geopolitics, economics, and security. While understanding the specific nature of GUUAM-Russian relations, Europe is inclined to perceive this organization as a potential ally on which it can rely when carrying out its own world policy. But Europe considers it premature to openly demonstrate this stance.

In this respect, Ukraine should concentrate on developing relations within the framework of GUUAM-BSEC (Black Sea Economic Cooperation Group), which could strengthen Kiev's foothold and arguments in its relations with the EU, primarily in terms of its European integration efforts.

Today it should be recognized that in the context of the Eurasian process, GUUAM has become the interstate cooperation organization able to successfully compete with Russian integration projects. Recognizing this fact, perhaps even before the member states of this structure recognized it themselves, Russia first did everything to undermine it, and is still opposing its development. This is demonstrated at least by the fact that, when commenting on Ukraine's contradictory steps, the pro-Russian mass media try to show GUUAM's lack of prospects and the inefficacy of its main projects, the most prominent of which is the Odessa-Brody-Plock-Gdansk oil pipeline mentioned above.

It appears the time has come for Kiev to realize once and for all that GUUAM, as a natural symbiosis of the interests of its member states, runs counter to Russia's interests and vision of a cooperation organization. Past experience shows that there is no point in counting on equal relations with Russia along the lines of the "cooperation model," but that the "competitive model" cannot be put to bed either. It should be taken into account that, based on its hopes to implement the idea of a "Great Russia," Moscow will try to destroy interstate unions in which it cannot be represented, or, if it becomes a member, in which it cannot dominate. Particularly since it sees GUUAM's political and economic function as a geopolitical threat to the Russian Federation.

The U.S. is paying special attention to GUUAM, with which a separate agreement has been entered—a Framework Program on assistance in trade and transportation, on ensuring border and customs control, and on fighting terrorism, organized crime, and the illicit circulation of drugs and weapons. In 2001-2004, the United States granted the GUUAM countries approximately two billion dollars. An international GUUAM conference was held at the beginning of 2003 in Baku with U.S. representatives in attendance, which gave a new boost to resolving stability and security issues in the region, to eliminating the con-

sequences of natural and man-made disasters, and to fighting organized crime and terrorism. In April of the same year, another conference on the same theme was held, and then other functions were organized. What is more, a GUUAM Law Enforcement Center, which unites the police, border, and customs structures of the member states, was set up with U.S. financial support. At the end of 2003, with Washington's help, GUUAM was granted observer status at the U.N. observer, is successfully implementing the Framework Program mentioned above, and is looking into other promising areas of cooperation.

By carrying out a global policy which places particular emphasis on the geopolitical significance of Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus, the U.S. is making its mark on the overall development of the situation in the Eurasian region. Some Eurasian interstate formations, primarily those which do not share U.S. interests (for example, EurAsEC), will obviously have to deal with Washington's call for greater integration. What is more, it is presumed that if the United States successfully carries out its plans, the "eastern nature" of the Eurasian region will be geoculturally transformed to a "western nature," and there will be a certain modification in the region's civilizational development, as well as a revival of international cooperation in this expanse. In this context, GUUAM's international position looks very attractive, but only if this union demonstrates its viability, let's say, by raising its political responsibility, making clear progress in project implementation, improving its administrative management, and bringing joint policy into harmony with the European and American vision, and so on.

In this context, particular expectations were placed on the decisions of the 2003 GUUAM summit, which, when carried out, were to inspire greater mutual trust in the relations among the member states and evoke optimism in the success of a common cause. At this juncture, we should just mention that these expectations were too high. On the one hand, the member states overestimated their own possibilities, and on the other, they put too much emphasis on the importance of implementing the agreements reached. Nevertheless, a significant amount of progress has been made since the summit in the following important areas:

- creating a free trade zone (in the near future Moldova will complete ratification of a corresponding document). The GUUAM working group for trade and the economy is responsible for executing this agreement; in 2004 there are plans to carry out mutual liberalization of trade conditions and remove the barriers hindering the free movement of goods and services;
- introducing a system for assisting trade and transportation (a regional strategy and action plan have already been coordinated for implementing this project);
- improving the activity of the GUUAM office. As early as 2004, there are plans to raise its status and extend its powers, turning it into the organization's Secretariat;
- organizing GUUAM's Virtual Center against terrorism, organized crime, drug circulation, and other crimes;
- forming the GUUAM Interstate Information and Analysis System (IIAS);
- establishing customs cooperation among the member states;
- coordinating joint activity of the border departments;
- strengthening contacts for developing scientific and technical projects;
- carrying out the activity of the organization's business council;
- developing ties in tourism (creating a tourism council of the member states and a corresponding Virtual Center; drawing up priority projects and joint action plans), and so on.

What is more, integrated implementation of the GUUAM-U.S. Framework Program is guaranteed; agreements have been reached with the EU European Commission on supporting the most recent project on the Eurasian oil transportation corridor; close ties have been established with the Southeast European Cooperation Initiative; in keeping with the Ukraine-NATO Target Plan for 2003 (within their Action Plan), ongoing information exchange has been established with Caucasian and Central Asian partner states on Kiev's cooperation with the North Atlantic Alliance in peacekeeping activity (which

shows NATO's desire to develop ties with GUUAM); a special NATO project called the Virtual Silk Road has been put into operation, which is a satellite system of electronic information exchange for the Caucasian and Central Asian countries (rendering them assistance in developing national research and educational networks).

But, according to our evaluation, only 14 of the 70 provisions contained in the GUUAM Action Plan for 2002-2003 could be fully carried out, and 38 partially. Of course, this state of affairs does not satisfy the member countries, which means the political and organizational implementation of the intended plans must be significantly augmented. In this way, despite the above-mentioned achievements, GUUAM's state in recent years can be evaluated as invariably feeble and ineffectual. However, it cannot be said that the union has lost its potential and prospects just because it has been unable to gather the necessary momentum. It can be described as being in a state of "creative pursuit," that is, at the transition stage from an extensive to intensive development model.

There are several reasons for this state. The main ones are the low level of activity and the frequent contradictoriness in Ukraine's own behavior as the organization's potential leader; institutional—domestic political and administrative—poor management, related not so much to expert or procedural competence (or incompetence), as to a tendency toward rigid strategic thinking and political responsibility in carrying out the adopted decisions; lack of coordination in the foreign policy actions of the member states; lack of balance in the interests represented in the projects, and at times in the participation of the union's member states: cooperation at a multilateral level should reflect the participation of each state in a particular project; the poor diplomatic skills of the member states, as well as their inexperience in implementing large-scale business and political projects (particularly since such plans are united under the roof of a not yet stable international structure); Russia's efforts to bring the organization's achievements to naught (against the background of geopolitical competition between the U.S. and Russia in Central Asia, the Caspian Region, the Caucasus, and Eastern Europe); and only last, a shortage of funds.

But is this enough to understand: is GUUAM confidently developing and becoming a serious corporate international player, or will this organization ultimately lose its worth and fall apart? Can the extensive rate of its development be considered objectively caused? It is thought that taking into account the political circumstances in which it existed (and exists), it would not be right to count on the high rate of reinforced cooperation desired, but to give an identical assessment would fall in line with the efforts of pro-Russian sources to ideologically and informationally discredit the union. For we cannot ignore the achievements of this structure (which were mentioned above). In our opinion, it "...is more alive than dead."

The political transformations that occurred in the member states had a significant impact on the state of affairs: the elections in Azerbaijan and Georgia, Moldova joining the Stability Pact and the Southeast European Cooperation Initiative, the reintegration efforts of Kishinev and Tbilisi, as well as Kiev joining another Russian integration project (Single Economic Space of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Ukraine-SES), and the furor around the Odessa-Brody oil pipeline.

For all their domestic acuteness, the outcome of the elections in Azerbaijan and Georgia gives reason to believe that the leaders of these two countries will continue to support GUUAM's development and strengthen the union's international position. The negative impact on Georgia's participation in GUUAM could hinder its state reintegration or promote an increase in military and political confrontation (the emergence of which is related to the risk of foreign support of the separatist formations in Abkhazia and South Ossetia). This negative course of events will unequivocally lead to an abrupt decline in GUUAM's prospects, to reconsidering the union's development strategy as a whole, and to its political stagnation. This makes the current situation in Georgia a focal point of GUUAM's activity. In this respect, rapid political, territorial, and economic stabilization, as well as successful completion of its state reintegration, would meet Ukraine's national interests. So within the scope of its possibilities, Kiev should carry out a set of measures aimed at resolving these problems, since any other scenario will likely send GUUAM to its grave.

Along with the reintegration difficulties, Moldova's joining the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe (2001) has meant a certain decrease in Kishinev's participation in building up GUUAM. This was clearly

demonstrated in the Moldovan leadership's contradictory stance during preparations for the organization's regular summit in 2004. It appears that Kishinev would like to distance itself from GUUAM, placing great hopes on its participation in the mentioned Pact, on the Southeast European Cooperation Initiative, on bilateral cooperation with the U.S. (which in 2003 alone gave Moldova 41.3 million dollars in technical assistance), as well as on relations with the EU and the OSCE. Moldova began drawing closer to Uzbekistan, which was disillusioned not so much with the political, as with the economic cooperation within GUUAM: in Tashkent this structure is currently considered an organization with dim prospects.

But all the same, despite the skepticism these two states are showing about GUUAM's prospects, Ukraine's position is considered the determining factor in the development of this organization. It should become the political bastion for its member states and a center for producing and implementing common projects, that is, Kiev needs to acquire certain qualities of GUUAM's leader. But in the meantime, in contrast to Uzbekistan, which clearly upholds a particular foreign policy, Ukraine could carry out equidistant maneuvers between Russia, the EU, and the U.S. A vivid example of this is the ongoing story with Ukraine's consent to reverse, and now, to "general" use of the Odessa-Brody oil pipeline. This same policy is also being extrapolated to actions within GUUAM, which is preventing this international organization from precisely defining its foreign policy strategy. It is obvious that this "flexible" policy carried out by Kiev has little in common with the stance of a responsible leader.

The same goes for Ukraine joining Russia's next integration inspiration, the creation of an SES, which was a particular blow to GUUAM and greatly disoriented its other member states. It also had a negative effect on partnership trust toward Kiev. This circumstance augmented the centrifugal trend in GUUAM much more than all of Russia's previous attempts to compromise the corporative project put together. And whereas Europe sees Ukraine's membership in the SES as just an intrigue, which could evaporate if our country integrates with the EU (in the medium term), GUUAM sees this step as a threatening gamble. If, contrary to objective reason, there is a political and ideological split in GUUAM's basic triangle—between Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Ukraine—this international organization will surely be headed for stagnation and collapse.

Kiev's role in GUUAM is hard to overestimate. For instance, it is responsible for the vital political procedure of drawing up and introducing into this structure a common/joint stance on cooperation with the U.S. and the EU (which was done at the meeting of the OSCE Council of Ministers in Maastricht, the Netherlands, in December 2003), or with Russia, for example. This particularly applies to Moscow. A political dialog and negotiations in the economic sphere concerning the common interests of the member countries must be held in the name of GUUAM with a common stance coordinated by it in advance. This will make it possible to significantly reduce the risk of more powerful players deceiving the organization's member states and to raise the level of responsibility of the latter. Ensuring this procedure will cement the organization politically, raise both internal responsibility, as well as partnership and alliance mutual trust, thus turning GUUAM into a structure which "confused" Kishinev and "pessimistic" Tashkent, for instance, would like to see.

The prospects for the Iranian-Ukrainian gas pipeline and Kazakhstan's hypothetical membership in GUUAM, which will no doubt eventually become a participant in the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, indicate the expediency of stepping up the political and institutional processes in GUUAM on Kiev's part (internal administrative work aimed at producing different, primarily specific projects). (Today it would be sensible to offer Astana at least the status of observer in GUUAM.)

Along with the low socioeconomic indices of the organization's member states, GUUAM's greatest shortcomings are the organization's weak coordination of its overall policy and absence of political will among the national elites. The efficiency of the organization's key structures must be accelerated: its working groups, the CNC, the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM), and the GUUAM Office. The organization should also make use of European experience, according to which the internal organizational paradigm envisages gradually creating executive institutions based on economic ties and security interests, which were formed (and will continue to be formed) in harmony with the organization's urgent and priority tasks. It would also be advisable to analyze the experience of the Vyshegrad group

when promoting GUUAM's further development, which could serve as a particular organizational example.

Progress in this area is manifested by the adoption of a declaration on ensuring stability and security in the region, agreements on creating a GUUAM Parliamentary Assembly, and so on, which should also be counted among the organization's achievements. And further strengthening of relations at the level of the GUUAM member state parliaments will be an additional stimulus to developing cooperation among the participant countries. In this respect, Ukraine, in particular its parliament, the Verkhovnaia Rada, needs to boost its activity.

Organizationally, GUUAM must concentrate its efforts on drawing up a joint strategy for its member states to enter NATO and the EU, which would strengthen security in the Black Sea-Caspian Region and restore partnership confidence measures in the relations among its countries. At the current stage, it would be a good idea to more actively implement already approved trade, energy, communication, and infrastructure (transportation) projects and raise the working efficiency of its key groups.

An important role will be played in GUUAM's institutional and political development by the location of its executive bodies. The organization's "capital," in our opinion, should be in Yalta. The reasoning behind this is that it was in Yalta that GUUAM was recognized as an active international structure, as well as that this city lies on the communications routes which are a target of business cooperation within the organization. It is thought that the partner countries will positively assess this proposal put forward by Ukraine. What is more, in terms of distance, Yalta is the most acceptable and convenient place for meetings, and they, of course, will now take place much more frequently.

Other grounds for this decision is that the Crimea is somewhat isolated from the rest of Ukraine today, and placing GUUAM's central working structure here would help to draw the peninsula more into our country's sociopolitical and foreign economic life. It would also be wise to put an end to the historical perception of Yalta as the city in which the heads of state of the anti-Hitler coalition signed documents on the division of Europe after World War II.

In the general context of Kiev's foreign policy, it is well to see GUUAM as a priority component of the "European choice" strategy, which would promote Ukraine's geopolitical development. In particular, it would give it additional room for political maneuver. Kiev's re-assessment of GUUAM, from a simple political and economic international organization to a pro-European Eurasian geopolitical formation, would be extremely timely, since in other foreign policy areas—Russian and European, with Ukraine's policy aimed at distancing and integration, respectively—its efforts can hardly be called successful (this is a long-term prospect). What is more, Ukraine's strategic partnership with the major world players is not very productive (there are several reasons for this, but the main one is the geopolitical rivalry of the latter against the background of the incompatible possibilities of our country and its orientational diversity, that is, its "multifacetedness").

We should also pay attention to the fact that in the geostrategic sense, Kiev's short-term prospects are not developing in the best way: keeping in mind the European and domestic situation, cooperation with the EU will not develop very well, while developing cooperation with the Russian Federation is burdened with Moscow's intentions to revive "Great Russia," which will cause state stagnation in Ukraine. So it would be good for our country to develop relations in a different geopolitical vector, through the GUUAM system as a model (which differs from the Russian) of Eurasian cooperation within the Great Silk Road.

Keeping in mind the dynamics of the development of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (where the key, but still not the leading, participant is the PRC) and the possibility of cooperation between GUUAM and the SCO, it would be sensible to draw up a prospective plan for their interaction. This will make it possible to broaden the field for reinforcing the political dialog and partnership on a multilateral basis.

The results of a study of the political processes going on in the SCO shows significant discrepancies between Beijing and Moscow regarding this structure's policy. It is obvious that Russia's motivations go far beyond the boundaries of economic cooperation, since the RF is trying to give the SCO a more pronounced political bent. In our opinion, the Russian factor is setting up a certain amount of geopolitical

rivalry with the U.S. in the SCO's policy, which is causing tension in the organization itself. Zhang De-guang, SCO Executive Secretary, said during his working visit to Tashkent on 9 March, 2004 on this account that "...the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is a peaceful community and is not looking for confrontation with any other international organization or interstate alliance." In so doing, he emphasized that he did not see any reason to consider the SCO and NATO opposing sides, particularly given today's fight against international terrorism and extremism. This statement can be evaluated as the result of Moscow's permanent manipulation of the SCO's potential on the international arena, as well as, first, an expression of opposition to Russia's plans to involve Beijing and its zealously guarded SCO in the foreign policy rivalry with the U.S. for influence in Central Asia, which China believes to be premature, and, second, as an attempt to assure the United States and Europe of the PRC's immutable stance regarding the SCO's behavior in world politics.

Recently, the polemics between Beijing and Moscow have come down a tone or two, which made it possible to constructively prepare the agenda for the recent summit and successfully hold it. But, as the comments of Chinese representatives show, Beijing is still worried about this problem and looking for more effective ways to influence Moscow's behavior. The PRC is striving to enlist greater consolidated support for disavowing Russia's policy, which, as we have already noted, is tending toward using the SCO as a tool for implementing its own global policy. China considers such actions risky for the organization (in any case, premature). It is very likely that Beijing's efforts in this area are conditioned by the shaky political stances of several SCO member states (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan), which are drifting toward Moscow.

China is cautiously, but persistently, looking for partners which could join the SCO and become reliable co-members for the PRC in ensuring greater stability in this organization's policy. Ukraine just happens to be one such potential partner. (By the way, Beijing has already said unofficially that it wishes to see Kiev among the SCO's members.) Based on this, it is expedient for Ukraine (at least taking into account the prospect of greatly extending its room for foreign political maneuver) to develop a political dialog with China in this area. But, in our opinion, Kiev's participation in this structure would be more efficacious within the framework of GUUAM-SCO cooperation. This flexible format of interrelations, by creating a GUUAM official representative office under the SCO, for example, would allow Ukraine to develop bilateral relations with the PRC and realize its own interests at the same time (let's say within the framework of Kiev's foreign economic policy); to be in the epicenter of the political process in the SCO and correspondingly define its tactics in it; to avoid the risk of being drawn into an open dispute between Beijing and Moscow; to assist in carrying out a policy in Central Asia advantageous to GUUAM; to retain the possibility of joining the Shanghai Cooperation Organization; and to confirm Kiev's position in GUUAM as the organization's leader.

Restructuring of the Eurasian communication and oil and gas supply systems to Europe and the U.S. is making the need to ensure political stability, create a favorable business environment, improve and raise the region's economy, and strengthen its security system more urgent. This prospect requires drawing up a general strategy for GUUAM's development, in which the communication and energy issues should be combined fundamentally with safety of the communication systems.

Ukraine's partner countries in GUUAM objectively face the need to quickly settle conflicts, create an interregional zone of stability and security, and ensure conditions for developing economic cooperation.

An important aspect of forming Ukraine's regional foreign policy and developing GUUAM should be recognizing further "militarization" of international relations, since the concept of security is still indelibly related to force and to protecting society and its national interests primarily by militaristic means. But the culture of peace in international practice is in no way a reality, but merely a reference point, a long-term goal. Based on this, it should be kept in mind that the military defense segment of security remains a determining factor.

With respect to GUUAM's prospects, we also need to mention the development of Baltic-Black Sea Cooperation, since political and economic relations along the North-South axis are making Europe

geopolitically stable as a whole. In this context, BBC looks quite promising. Based on this, and also taking into account its geographical location, Ukraine should fulfill its own natural function as communicator.

But the situation could radically change after Bulgaria and Rumania join NATO, and Turkey joins the EU. It is possible that this will help to form a new unifying center, even a new arc between North and South, which will pass through the Baltic countries, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria. Of course, this development scenario will have a very negative effect on Ukraine's interests. In order to prevent this, Kiev should develop the idea of strengthening cooperation between BBC and GUUAM. After all, the states of Western, Northern, and Southern Europe are trying to create reliable communication routes with Asia as a whole. Based on this, it is very important that our country form a Caucasus-Central Asia link, since in Moscow's other alternative (Russia-Kazakhstan), Ukraine and the Caucasian countries will find themselves left out of this partnership.

If this happens, the situation will have threatening geopolitical consequences: Russia will gain control over the continental communication systems and GUUAM's foreign economic policy, and Moscow will have greater opportunities to engage in speculative behavior on their domestic markets. In this respect, it is strategically important for Ukraine and the other GUUAM members to recognize the obvious threats to their common economic interests from Russia, which is trying to monopolize the reforming Eurasian communication system. This is turning GUUAM into something more than just an international organization not only for our country, but also for the other participants in the organization. In this way, in the medium term, GUUAM is an effective vector for realizing Ukrainian strategic interests, so this organization should become the focal point of Kiev's foreign political and foreign economic attention. Our country currently has all the necessary conditions for carrying out this assignment.

An analysis of the state of interstate cooperation in the GUUAM format makes it possible to determine the top priority political problems which require urgent attention. They are the following:

- ensuring an appropriate political climate by intensifying the dialog among the GUUAM member states (at present, interaction with Moldova is being activated to ratify the agreement on creating a free trade zone for the organization, and with Uzbekistan to clarify Tashkent's current standpoints and come to terms on the areas of further cooperation);
- creating a standing Secretariat (this requires extending the authorities of the organization's Office), under which it would be appropriate to form a separate expert group for strategic planning (with consultative and advisory functions), the activity of which should be directed at removing the shortcomings of administrative management;
- carrying out corresponding consultations for making Yalta the organization's official headquarters;
- strengthening political and economic cooperation with Euro-Atlantic partners, primarily with the United States, and proposing an acceptable model for coordinating the plans of the U.S., EU, NATO, OSCE, U.N., and other parties with constructive attitudes toward GUUAM;
- analyzing the possibility of appointing a special European commissioner on cooperation with GUUAM or asking the European Union to send a special representative to the Council of Foreign Ministers for strengthening ties with the EU. The U.S., OSCE, and the SCO (as a whole or only China) should also be asked to do this. In light of the "surprise agreement" with the Russian Federation on "reverse use" of the Odessa-Brody oil pipeline, Ukraine must reassure those parties, primarily Poland (with whom Kiev has come to terms on political and business partnership with respect to implementing this energy project as it was originally planned) of the inviolability of the agreements reached;
- holding corresponding consultations with Poland, Germany, and Kazakhstan on institutionalizing relations with GUUAM (with respect to giving them the status of observers in this organization);

- exerting efforts, along with the Euro-Atlantic community, to resolve the problems of stability and security within GUUAM. This primarily refers to settling ethnic, confessional, and interstate conflicts in the Caucasus and Central Asia. In this respect, a separate pact should be introduced (as in other similar situations). GUUAM must urgently draw up a plan of measures (in the form of recommendations) for stabilizing assistance to Georgia;
- expanding and strengthening military-political and military-technical relations in cooperation with NATO, and raising them to a strategic level by creating a reliable system of regional security for ensuring stability in the region; drawing up a general strategy for the GUUAM member states to facilitate their membership in NATO and the EU (or cooperation with them);
- creating a Committee on GUUAM's Security Policy within the Council of Foreign Ministers, by making it responsible for expert and procedural (consultative and advisory) support in resolving this problem;
- actively joining the political efforts of the parties concerned to ensure reliable formation of an oil and gas market infrastructure and implementing transportation and energy projects which constitute the backbone of regional integration;
- entrusting the organization's business council with drawing up and introducing a long-term program for ensuring trans-regional ties among the representatives of business, government, and academic circles (with orientation toward applied research). This will help to attract the investments needed for developing cooperation. Instituting a permanent exhibition of commodities, technology, investment projects, and joint venture projects of the GUUAM member states under the Business Council, as well as a specialized information system for businessmen of the organization's countries to find partners and draw up business plans and corresponding proposals;
- making the events of ideological, economic, political, scientific, and cultural life some of the priority areas in the activity of GUUAM's Interstate Information Analytical System (IIAS);
- holding regular (annual) scientific practical conferences in Yalta for analyzing the problems of the organization's political and economic development;
- accelerating the formation of GUUAM's Parliamentary Assembly with subsequent development and intensive implementation of a specialized action program;
- analyzing the expediency of seeing GUUAM as a priority component in Kiev's European choice strategy with corresponding amendments to our state's foreign policy in the context of the geostrategic situation;
- in the context of Ukraine's participation in the SES, declaring the need to follow the European model of institutional development of interstate organizations when forming the SES and, on this basis, indicating the need to execute preceding agreements on the creation of a corresponding free trade zone;
- due to the risk of possible geostrategic and geoeconomic losses from forming a "meridian arc" of Baltic-Black Sea Cooperation, which could extend further west than Ukraine, on the one hand, and a "latitudinal arc" of Eurasian communication lines (an alternative Russia-Kazakhstan route), on the other, Ukraine must initiate in GUUAM (with the participation of its Baltic and Black Sea partners) a set of measures for preventing this development in events and, in particular, look at the idea of developing cooperation between BBC and GUUAM;
- making use of their good interrelations (even their gravitation toward each other), Ukraine should try to intensify political, and then economic interaction between BSEC and GUUAM, which will have a positive impact on reviving cooperation and on the development of the Black Sea-Caucasian-Caspian region, and will be favorably perceived by the EU.

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So GUUAM's further progress (with Ukraine assuming a leading role in this structure) requires urgent and comprehensive consultations with the U.S. and the EU, as well as a more intensive political dialogue with the organization's other member states, in order to search for ways to coordinate their interests and distribute obligations. If this task is put off, Kiev faces the undesirable prospect of losing its political authority in the region.