‘New Visions of Partnership & Neighbourhood for Europe’

Sofia, 8-9 October 2015

Meeting Report

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On the 8th and 9th of October 2015, twenty-one leaders from frontline states facing the twin challenges of economic development and a surge of refugees gathered in Sofia to discuss new visions for partnership and neighbourhood for Europe.
Their discussion focused on concrete steps to forge a consensus in addressing the refugee crisis and related economic, political and moral issues facing Europe.
The two-day conference was sponsored and organised by the Nizami Ganjavi International Center, under the auspices of the President of Bulgaria, Rosen Plevneliev. Bulgaria, with thousands of refugees and migrants in transit camps, is one of several South East European countries straining to contend with the refugee crisis.
The question of solidarity was of foremost concern for the conference participants: unity within the EU, with those who are not members of EU, and with the international community, whose support and cooperation are necessary to address the situation in the short and long term.
The conference organisers hope that, with the establishment of consensus over key issues, the outcome of the discussions will help build a basis for solidarity and a road map to navigate the current political, economic and humanitarian challenges.

Disclaimer: this document collects the main points raised at the 'New Visions of Partnership & Neighbourhood for Europe' meeting in Brussels on 8-9 October 2015, as well as the main recommendations and suggestions coming out of the meeting. The views expressed in this paper are not those of the Nizami Ganjavi International Center and should at no point be taken as the official position of either the organisation or the participants.

Leaders' Declaration

The fall of the Berlin wall 25 years ago marked the beginning of a long period of transition in Europe, which is not yet complete and is threatened by disunity on the core values underpinning it.

Europe is still living through the shocks of the deepest financial and economic crisis since the Great Depression, which has profoundly shaken its cohesion and self-confidence. In addition, its neighbourhood to the East and South is in dramatic turmoil, with thousands of lives lost or ruined by war and political upheaval.

The international community, including the UN and regional actors, have not managed to prevent major conflicts and are failing to adequately address their consequences.

The problems of the 21st century cannot be solved with the approaches of the 20th century, driven by national interest and short-term crisis management. Instead, the international community needs a collective early warning capacity and should mobilize all its political will and commitment to prevent conflicts and address their root causes.

Europe needs to open a debate about its core values, as well as to engage with the South Mediterranean and Middle East about their shared value base to allow for constructive conflict resolution in order to find adequate political solutions.

We must not forget the lessons of the Second World War and the Balkan wars that generated traumatic displacements. In terms of the current refugee crisis, we have no choice but to receive refugees and provide them with adequate shelter, amenities, and care until they have the choice to return to their own countries in safety. Not only is this a monumental political task, but also a practical one, which calls for the mobilization of enormous financial and human resources.

The Western Balkan countries aspiring to join the EU should be drawn into the EU debate on illegal migration, while their migration policies should be gradually integrated into a common European strategy.

Just as the refugee crisis is not only a German or a European issue, the conflict in Ukraine is not only a Ukrainian or European issue. International solidarity is needed.

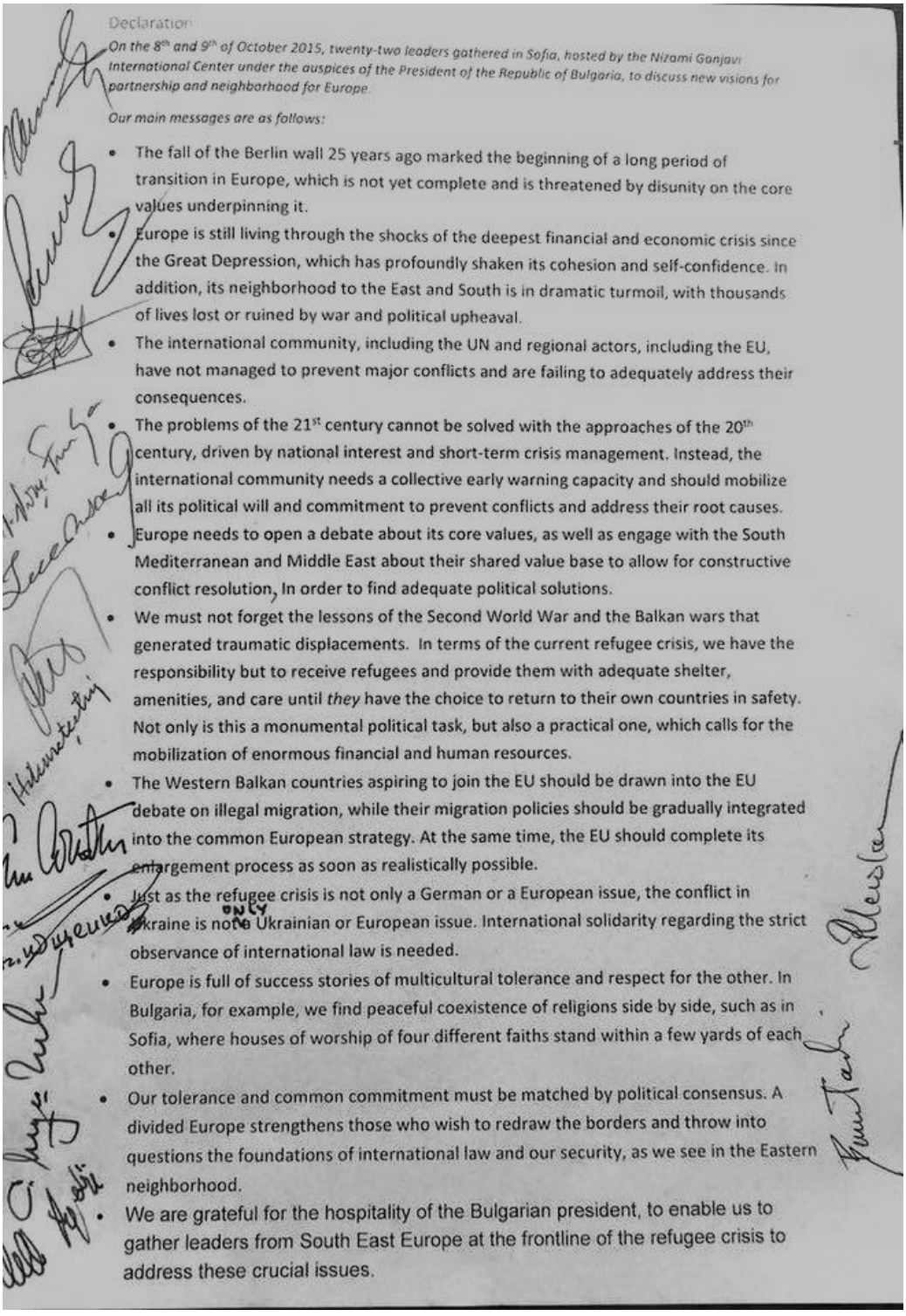
Europe is full of success stories of multicultural tolerance and respect for the other. In Bulgaria, for example, we find peaceful coexistence of religions side by side, such as in Sofia, where houses of worship of four different faiths stand within a few yards of each other.

Our tolerance must be matched by political unity. A divided Europe strengthens those who wish to redraw the borders and throw into questions the foundations of international law and our security, as we see in the Eastern neighbourhood.

We are grateful for the hospitality of the Bulgarian president, to enable us to gather leaders from South East Europe at the frontline of the refugee crisis to address these crucial issues.

Declaration signed by:

- Vaira Vike-Freiberga, President of Latvia (1999-2007) and Co-Chair Nizami Ganjavi IC
- Boris Tadic, President of Serbia (2004-2012)
- Petar Stoyanov, President of Bulgaria (1997-2002)
- Emil Constantinescu, President of Romania (1996-2000)
- Rexhep Meidani, President of Albania (1997-2002)
- Viktor Yushchenko, President of Ukraine (2005-2010)
- Petru Lucinschi, President of Moldova (1997-2001)
- Zlatko Lagumdzija, Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2001-2002)
- Iveta Radicova, Prime Minister of Slovakia (2010-2012)
- Oscar Ribas Reig, Prime Minister of Andorra (1982-84; 1990-94)
- Stanislav Shushkevic, President of Belarus (1991-1994)
- Hikmet Cetin, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey (1991-1994)



Declaration

On the 8th and 9th of October 2015, twenty-two leaders gathered in Sofia, hosted by the Nizami Ganjavi International Center under the auspices of the President of the Republic of Bulgaria, to discuss new visions for partnership and neighborhood for Europe.

Our main messages are as follows:

- The fall of the Berlin wall 25 years ago marked the beginning of a long period of transition in Europe, which is not yet complete and is threatened by disunity on the core values underpinning it.
- Europe is still living through the shocks of the deepest financial and economic crisis since the Great Depression, which has profoundly shaken its cohesion and self-confidence. In addition, its neighborhood to the East and South is in dramatic turmoil, with thousands of lives lost or ruined by war and political upheaval.
- The international community, including the UN and regional actors, including the EU, have not managed to prevent major conflicts and are failing to adequately address their consequences.
- The problems of the 21st century cannot be solved with the approaches of the 20th century, driven by national interest and short-term crisis management. Instead, the international community needs a collective early warning capacity and should mobilize all its political will and commitment to prevent conflicts and address their root causes.
- Europe needs to open a debate about its core values, as well as engage with the South Mediterranean and Middle East about their shared value base to allow for constructive conflict resolution, In order to find adequate political solutions.
- We must not forget the lessons of the Second World War and the Balkan wars that generated traumatic displacements. In terms of the current refugee crisis, we have the responsibility but to receive refugees and provide them with adequate shelter, amenities, and care until *they* have the choice to return to their own countries in safety. Not only is this a monumental political task, but also a practical one, which calls for the mobilization of enormous financial and human resources.
- The Western Balkan countries aspiring to join the EU should be drawn into the EU debate on illegal migration, while their migration policies should be gradually integrated into the common European strategy. At the same time, the EU should complete its enlargement process as soon as realistically possible.
- Just as the refugee crisis is not only a German or a European issue, the conflict in Ukraine is not ONLY Ukrainian or European issue. International solidarity regarding the strict observance of international law is needed.
- Europe is full of success stories of multicultural tolerance and respect for the other. In Bulgaria, for example, we find peaceful coexistence of religions side by side, such as in Sofia, where houses of worship of four different faiths stand within a few yards of each other.
- Our tolerance and common commitment must be matched by political consensus. A divided Europe strengthens those who wish to redraw the borders and throw into questions the foundations of international law and our security, as we see in the Eastern neighborhood.
- We are grateful for the hospitality of the Bulgarian president, to enable us to gather leaders from South East Europe at the frontline of the refugee crisis to address these crucial issues.

1. Opening session: What does solidarity mean in the face of the current global challenges?

The current refugee crisis is taking place as Europe is undergoing a crisis of confidence and internal unity and while its neighbourhood is in heavy turmoil. Poor governance, socioeconomic stagnation and regional rivalries, sharpened by sectarian rifts, have thrown the Middle East and North Africa into deep crisis. To the East, amidst political and armed conflict in Ukraine and other former Soviet states, EU-Russia relations are at their lowest since the Cold War, sowing doubts about the future prospects for peaceful integration and cooperation in the common neighborhood.

Economic despair and violent conflict are driving millions to embark on a perilous journey to seek salvation in Europe. The refugees testify to Europe's status as a beacon of peace, prosperity and human rights for which the Union received the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize.

However, with Europe already in deep economic and social malaise, the arrivals have revealed the gaps in Europe's refugee policy and surfaced fears, prejudices, and rejection from leaders and electorates. Fear is an all too human reaction. However, politicians and prejudices are channeling this anxiety into selfishness and xenophobia, which threaten the Union's founding values, towards which its members have progressed, step by step, over the last decades.

> "Unfortunately, human beings have a biological fear response, to insecurity, about one's own life, one's children and grandchildren."
>
> Vaira Vike-Freiberga

Europe is in dire need of leaders who can reinvigorate solidarity and lead decisive action, in the short term and for the future. The acute refugee crisis leaves us with no choice but to provide shelter, food and care for those who arrive on European soil. Not only is a monumental political task, but also a practical one, which calls for the mobilisation of enormous financial and human resources. It is therefore not a problem for a single country, or even for the EU, to handle alone, but requires international cooperation.

The Balkans are the main corridor from Africa and the Middle East to Europe. People of East and South East Europe remember the refugee flows of the early, mid- and late 20th century wars. And, knowing what it is like to live behind an iron curtain, they aspire to tear down barriers to cooperation and integration. Yet, with the Western Balkans in the EU's waiting room, it becomes more difficult to manage the refugee crisis. The EU should send clear positive signals to preserve the region's fragile progress towards stability and integration and sustain its peoples' aspirations to EU membership.

> "The physical walls we are erecting in Europe are signs of mental walls."
>
> Gjorge Ivanov

In the medium term, the large number of new arrivals of refugees call for active measures to welcome them and allow them to eventually integrate into European societies. Leaders ought to strive to defend the ideal and practice of multiculturalism against those leaders who

proclaim its failure. In this sense, migrants can bring dynamism and youth to infertile and greying European societies.

> "Schengen is not just a law; it is a dream of a borderless Europe, of travel from Krakow to Paris."
>
> Rosen Plevneliev

Beyond handling the acute crisis, it is necessary to address the root causes that drive people to Europe's doorstep. European leaders should take a leading role in addressing the conflicts in the neighbourhood. The international community needs a collective early warning capacity to prevent simmering crises from spiralling out of control.

The rifts unearthed by the refugee crisis show that Europe needs to open a debate about its core values, as well as to engage with the South Mediterranean and Middle East about their shared value base to allow for constructive conflict resolution and sustainable political solutions.

2. Future of the EU Partnership and Neighbourhood Policy in the face of the recent crises

The EU formulated its Neighbourhood Policy amidst the optimism of the historic 2004 enlargement. Now, a decade on, according to the participants, the enthusiasm about Neighbourhood seems to be dimmed. To the South, Middle Eastern and Maghreb countries paid lip service to reform, until economic and political stagnation boiled over into the upheavals of the Arab spring, which quickly turned into a cold autumn. To the East, the EU's offer of gradual association - a light version of enlargement – has been met by Russia with a counter-offer of its Eurasian Union. Feeling increasingly alienated by the increasing rapprochement with NATO and the EU of members of the former Soviet Union such as Georgia and Ukraine, Russia's relations with these countries and the West has deteriorated to the point of economic embargos and armed conflict.

> "Separating 'Europe' and NATO was dangerous because it left pro-Western countries vulnerable to aggression. EU without NATO is only half Europe."
>
> Philip Dimitrov

In retrospect, it seems to some participants that Russian actions seem entirely in line with the Kremlin's doctrine of spheres of influence, which has remained unchanged since the treaty of Yalta. Hence, the EU's offer to knit closer ties with former Soviet republics would inevitably come with the risk of Russian retaliation. The mistake of Europe and of the West, participants found, was to pretend that the choice was not either-or, that the neighbourhood countries could integrate economically and politically with Europe without joining the Western collective security umbrella under NATO. Participants argued that, when NATO stepped back from offering Georgia and Ukraine the prospect of joining the alliance, in order, at Germany's

urging, to avoid inflaming tensions with the Kremlin, Russia's leadership decided to pre-empt the threat by invading Georgia and, a few years later, Ukraine.

> "The biggest challenge is to convince ordinary Russians not to desire spheres of influence but development and prosperity."
>
> Bronislaw Komorowski

Now, a participant at the Sofia meeting argued, the other neighbourhood countries have understood that Europe without NATO is only half Europe - but only after Russia has fomented a series of intractable conflicts as long-term obstacles to further rapprochement with the West. Many in Europe now call for greater understanding for Russia, in order to at least allow for pragmatic cooperation on common threats such as Islamic terrorism and nuclear proliferation. Meanwhile, others argue that allowing Russian intimidation to prevent the former Soviet republics from coming closer to Europe and NATO would amount to surrender. In this sense, it is felt that Europe cannot be deaf to the aspirations of the people in its neighbourhood.

> "Ukraine has 1.5 m displaced people due to Russia's aggression, the largest displacement in Europe since 1945. But is there even one international programme in place to address this problem?"
>
> Victor Yushchenko

Nor can the EU put off the task of establishing a credible European common military defensive capability. Ukraine sorely needs help to cope with helping up to 1.5 million people forced from their home, due to the war raging in Ukraine, the largest displacement in Europe since 1945. However, so a prominent leader points out, diplomacy and non-military aid alone will not allow Ukraine to resist Russian forces, nor prevent similar conflicts elsewhere.

Above all, the crisis in the Eastern neighbourhood and partnership calls for greater Transatlantic partnership, solidarity and leadership. Participants argued that the dramatic descent into war in Ukraine has revealed a lack of credible leadership in Europe and the US. The West needs to act in concert to stop the violence and push towards constructive solutions to the conflicts in Ukraine and elsewhere in the Eastern Neighbourhood.

> "It's not only Europe that's afraid to alienate Russia. The US also needs to cooperate with Russia on Iran, North Korea, the fight against terrorism - even the international space station."
>
> Salomon Passy

3. The European refugee crisis as a test for European solidarity

A participant pointed out that dramatic migrant and refugee flows are not new in recent history. Witness the displacements and departures resulting from the break-up of the USSR or the Republic of Yugoslavia, or from the wars in Somalia or Afghanistan.

As the world has become more unstable and people more mobile, the number living outside their country has grown, from 70 million in 1970 to over 200 million today. However, European politics and solidarity have not kept up. In the past three decades, the EU has undergone successive enlargements, bringing Southern, Nordic, Central and Eastern countries into the fold. We saw an extension of the common market, yet some argue that enlargement had proceeded without a genuine political unification, which was at the heart of the original project.

> "Until refugees have the choice to return to their own countries, we have no choice but to take them in."
>
> Iveta Radicova

Some feel that by enlarging too far and too fast, the EU has not been able to sustain the political aspirations and values of its founders. In the face of the refugee crisis, we have seen hints of the re-emerging dark side of Europe's political heritage, the values of solidarity in the sense of excluding the other.

The EU's development has also left it with a political machinery ill fit for crisis management and forward planning. If Europe appeared taken aback by the arrival of hundreds of thousands of refugees at its door, argued one speaker, it was so in part due a lack of political imagination for other identities and interests, along with a habit of short-term compromises without long-term sustainable solutions.

> "Europeans, the West, suffers from a chronic deficiency of understanding of other identities and interests."
>
> Boris Tadic

In the same vein, it is rather easy to call for 'solidarity' without a concrete understanding of each country's situation and experience. Bulgaria, one participant argued, a country of 7 million whose average income is among the lowest in Europe, is hardly able to offer migrants a much better future than they would find in temporary camps. Moreover, several participants acknowledged that the influx of refugees also presents a genuine threat of radicalisation, social tensions and even terrorism that place great stress on national administrations and societies. A participant further pointed out that enforcing a system of obligatory refugee quotas for member states, in the name of solidarity, also means the sacrifice of other key

values, such as the right to free movement, to adequate social services and healthcare, which the poorer member states are simply unable to provide without external assistance.

> "Solidarity is a nice idea, until the moment thousands of refugees arrive in your country."
>
> Philip Gunev, Deputy Minister of Interior of Bulgaria

Yet, on the other side, some leaders proposed, East and South European member states also have work to do to foster greater civic feeling and solidarity with the other. Former communist countries are accustomed to solidarity against communist regimes, against Moscow, for everyday survival. As exemplified by xenophobic statements and reactions in many countries, the notion of solidarity as openness, a being able to make mutual cause with foreigners, needs to be nurtured in these societies.

The current situation presents a choice for Europe: between excluding refugees and letting marginalisation and radicalisation ferment on Europe's doorstep, or learning to integrate foreigners into European societies and providing more development aid and support to allow source countries to develop and stabilise over time.

4. How will the refugee and migration flows change the face of Europe?

Faced with the current refugee crisis and the muddled reactions to it, panel participants drew attention to the further flows of people we can expect in the near and more distant future. Simple economics and geography teach us that, as populations grow relative to the territory and natural resources, growing scarcity engenders conflict and forces people to move. For the last half century Europe's population has remained remarkably constant overall, while in the rest of the world, and especially the least developed countries, it has exploded. Looking ahead at the next five decades, several leaders warned, with climate change an unavoidable fact, the inhabitable land and natural resources available to these new generations will only grow scarcer. The trends therefore point towards radical increases in migratory pressures.

> "In the near future, conflict refugees will be joined by climate change refugees fleeing disease and dwindling food supplies."
>
> Hikmet Cetin

A participant argued forcefully that such scarcity, and the differences between new migrants and prior inhabitants, invariably lead to tensions, arising from the universal human tendency to fear and exclude the other. Nizami Ganjavi taught tolerance, but he also taught that human beings change very little. Hence, the European Union's ambition to build an open polity, combining free movement with multiculturalism, is a radical proposition. The EU is a project to unite a continent of well-defined national identities while preserving their national particularities. In this respect, Europe differs from the immigrant nations of the Americas, whose identity is woven by the continuous flow of new arrivals. This difference, leaders felt, makes it all the more challenging for Europe to respond to the present refugee crisis.

Not having the habit of integrating large numbers of foreigners in our societies, participants argued, Europe lacks an effective policy to deal with the present large-scale refugee flows. Indeed, we lack an institutional framework fit for agreeing on such a policy.

> "Europeans were late, not because we underestimated the problem or failed to foresee it, but because we were unable to reach a decision. The solutions, such as a single border guard, are clear to everyone. The question is whether we are able to decide on them."
>
> Rumyana Kolarova

Being ill prepared to accept large numbers of migrants, Europe should step up its efforts to prevent and resolve the conflicts that drive large-scale flows of refugees. Today we face 500,000 refugees, corresponding to one tenth of a per cent of Europe's population. However, a participant pointed out, the current wave is just the tip of an iceberg. There are another 60 million refugees seeking a safe and better life, with 4 million in war-torn Syria alone.

The United Nations were created as a great power compromise with veto powers that make it unable to address the wars of the day, and has, felt many, totally failed in the case of the Syrian war. Europe and the international community urgently need to intervene, in a pragmatic manner, to support local players which can defeat the Islamic State, even if this means a temporary accommodation with the regime of Bashar al-Assad, which bears responsibility for the civil war in the first place.

> "The operating manual of the international community says you should be neutral and place yourself in between the warring sides to make them negotiate an agreement. In reality, halting the fighting without addressing root causes and injustices amounts only to delaying the reckoning and further bloodshed."
>
> Zlatko Lagumdzija

In the absence of decisive intervention, the international community has in recent wars, such as with the Dayton agreement two decades earlier, mustered only a 'neutral' interposition. The idea is to allow the warring parties to negotiate and reach a settlement. Yet often, halting the fighting and forcing a settlement without addressing root causes and injustices amounts only to delaying the reckoning or further bloodshed. This was arguably the case in the Balkans, and would evidently also apply to Syria or any other conflict in the Middle East. In this context, it is worth also to consider the need for more effective intervention to tilt the balance against the Islamic fanatics in the hope of reaching an outcome which would allow for building a political settlement. However, these challenges involve difficult choices, which, to many observers today, Europe seems unable to make.

5. The Transatlantic perspective on solidarity in times of crisis

The transatlantic relationship has always rested on overall American leadership and Britain's Atlanticism and willingness to take the lead in Europe. These days, one leader felt, neither

seems to hold true. There is a widespread perception that the current Obama Administration is reactive and risk averse. Many feel that the White House has sent negative signals by snubbing NATO allies at several top-level summits. Some argue that the Administration seems to have internalized the idea of US decline, and to follow the growing isolationism of its voters in the wake of the traumatic wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and domestic political and economic problems.

Taking a step back into history, the American commitment to Europe embodied in NATO was always more precarious than the Russian resolve. Russia's participation in the grand alliance with the West against Nazi Germany left Russians with a sense of heroic glory, a participant proposed, and a willingness to suffer for the motherland. Next to this notion of historical glory, the transatlantic solidarity enshrined in NATO was a mere technicality, a reaction to the Soviet threat.

> "The extraordinary growth of national democracy in Europe has not led to a growth in international solidarity."
>
> Emil Constantinescu

Indeed, following the collapse of the Soviet Union and apparent evaporation of the common threat, NATO, and the transatlantic alliance it embodied, seemed to many to lose its *raison d'être*. Although the 9/11 attacks brought brief declarations of collective defence these sentiments evaporated in the subsequent rifts over the Iraq war.

Meanwhile, Russia felt provoked by NATO and EU ties with former Soviet states and eventually entered into political, economic or military conflicts with several countries. Today, some participants argue, it feels as if Russia is also beginning to contest the NATO membership of the Baltic states and reveal cracks in NATO's commitment and claim to the former Soviet sphere of influence.

> "The moment Russia actually cross over a border – just a few hundred meters in the Baltic countries, God forbid – and the US does nothing, it will be the end of NATO."
>
> Katheryna Yushchenko

For the countries caught in the middle, are there any alternatives to NATO? Moldova followed in the footsteps of the other neutral European countries; some might argue that a belt of neutral countries between Russia and the West would dampen the zero-sum game. However, others argued, the Baltic States' experience with self-declared neutrality, which ended with their invasion of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia, showed that neutrality without a credible external security guarantee amounts to little more than good intentions. Even the supposed guarantees on Ukraine's sovereignty accorded to Kiev by the US, UK and Russia in the 1994 Budapest agreement turned out to be empty words on paper.

> "Only a tragedy would lead to greater solidarity. Whereas the UN was established to safeguard world peace, in the least decades we have heard only the language of national interest."

Petru Lucinschi

Hence, many participants agreed that Ukraine, and other countries, have learnt through hard experience that full NATO membership offers the only protection against Russian aggression. Therefore, transatlantic partnership and solidarity remain vital for the European security order for the foreseeable future.

> "Yeltsin knew he needed to be close with America. Belarus knew this too, even if Americans would sometimes confuse Belarus with Romania."

Stanislav Shushkevic

6. The EU future of the Western Balkans. A test for solidarity and partnership?

Soon after being sworn in, the new European Commission of Jean-Claude Juncker declared a pause to enlargement during its five-year term, for the EU to focus on its internal problems. Cheered by some member states and electorates, the move was seen as a profoundly negative signal in many Western Balkan states aspiring to candidate status.

> "The crisis over Greece is having a deep psychological impact. Greece used to serve as an example to other Balkan countries of transformation into a modern European country. Now Greek politicians are openly advocating leaving the Union."

Petar Stoyanov

The link between internal EU problems and enlargement is particularly stark in Greece. Leaders at the Sofia meeting deplored that the Greek crisis has had deep political and psychological reverberations across the region. Greece used to serve as an example of a poor country emerging from civil war and dictatorship to become a stable democracy overseeing sustained social and administrative progress, not least thanks to generous EU cohesion transfers. Such images evaporated with the onset of the sovereign debt crisis, troika austerity and political backlash against membership of the euro and the EU itself.

Fortunately, polls shows that a majority of Greeks still believe that their country' future is within the EU. Yet for aspiring would-be EU members in the region, the arduous process to meet technical criteria as well as political favour is wearing down popular support for EU accession. Serbia experienced a spectacular drop in support, first for NATO after Kosovo's declaration of independence, then for EU in the face of the ongoing crisis and receding prospects of joining the club anytime soon.

> "Building cross-border railways that unite the Balkans physically will do more good than any high-level meetings."

Mladen Ivanic

In that context, some participants warned, the current refugee flows, for which the Balkans serve as a corridor to the EU, create a volatile environment that could produce an explosive crisis. They are placing a heavy burden on the administrative and social systems of states that suffer from a lack of coordination and decision from the EU's side.

What is the answer? In the short term, leaders agreed, the Western Balkan countries aspiring to join the EU should be drawn into the EU debate on illegal migration, while their migration policies should be gradually integrated into a common European strategy. In the medium term, the EU needs to set out a clear perspective of membership, along with a set of unambiguous criteria. The process could proceed in stages, with gradual accession to the Single Market and institutions, to sustain the dynamic of reform and popular support. Some criteria may have to be re-thought in light of the current challenging environment. On their side, the Western Balkan countries need to make unequivocal commitments to undergoing the necessary efforts to join the Union.

> "The EU should give clear guidelines to Western Balkan countries and help them meet them as soon as possible."

Rexhep Meidani

Others argue that the EU should focus on unification before further enlargement. Although the Western Balkans would present less than 4 per cent of the EU population, the current member states are struggling to apply their own rules, manage solidarity in the face of economic crisis, enact new policies and contain separatist movements within several member states, to mention just some challenges. According to this argument, the Union has no spare capacity for inducting new members.

What is certain is that the EU needs to agree on and pursue more principled policies. A participant evoked a powerful saying: Great nations first decline economically, then politically, and finally morally. It is important to remember the moral impetus for founding the Union. Once our principles start to erode, there is no hope of surviving politically or economically.

List of Participants from abroad

Hikmet Cetin	Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey (1991-1994)
Emil Constantinescu	President of Romania (1996-2000)
Antje Herrberg	CEO, MediatEUr
Maya Hristova	Ambassador of Bulgaria to Azerbaijan
Nazim Ibrahimov	Minister of Diaspora, the Republic of Azerbaijan
Gjorge Ivanov	President of the Republic of Macedonia
Bronislaw Komorowski	President of Poland (2010-2015)
Zlatko Lagumdzija	Prime Minister of Bosnia & Herzegovina (2001-02)
Petru Lucinschi	President of Moldova (1997-2001)
Peter Medgyessy	Prime Minister of Hungary (2002-2004)
Rexhep Meidani	President of Albania (1997-2002)
Rovshan Muradov	Secretary General Nizami Ganjavi International Center
Rosen Plevneliev	President of the Republic of Bulgaria
Iveta Radicova	Prime Minister of Slovakia (2010-2012)
Oscar Ribas Reig	Prime Minister of Andorra (1982-84; 1990-94)
Stanislav Shushkevich	President of Belarus (1991-1194)
Petar Stoyanov	President of Bulgaria (1997-2002)
Boris Tadic	President of Serbia (2004-2012)
Vaira Vike-Freiberga	President of Latvia (1999-2007), Co-Chair NGIC
Filip Vujanovic	President of Montenegro
Viktor Yushchenko	President of Ukraine (2005-2010)
Katherina Yushchenko	President Ukraine 3000 Foundation
Francisco Guadamillas Cortes	Managing Director, ANDBANK