

# POLITICAL & SECURITY STATEWATCH



Monthly bulletin on Moldova  
issued by IDIS VIITORUL  
www.moldova.org  
No 6, September 2005

The Bulletin is a bilingual monthly publication aiming to provide analysis on various elements of domestic and foreign policy, as well as on some issues of special interest for Moldova. In order to accurately monitor the major trends and developments, the Institute of Development and Social Initiatives (IDIS) "Viitorul" calculates the Political and Security Statewatch (PSS) indicators. The PSS indicators are calculated using a special methodology.\*

## The Dynamics of PSS Indicators for the September, 2005

Indicator	June Average	July Average	August Average	September Average	Dynamics
Domestic Policy	3,7	3,25	3,18	3,41	↓
Foreign Policy	3,6	3,09	2,99	3,32	↓
Security Policy	3,68	3,19	3,11	3,58	↓

*The values are calculated on an inverted scale, where 1 is the highest value and 5 is the lowest*

### 1. Domestic policy

A negative trend in the domestic policy in Moldova was registered by the PSS matrix in September-October 2005. The PSS sub-indicator regressed from 3.18 to 3.41<sup>1</sup> (see the table above). The negative slope can be explained by the absence of institutional dynamism and events that would stimulate the implementation of the government's strategic programs. According to the expert pool, this could be regarded as stagnation, if not regress.

#### The Political Partnership Goes On

The setup, on April 4, 2005, of a constructive cooperation platform between the Communists, the Christian Democrats, the Social-Liberals and the Democratic Party has led to the stabilization of the lawmaking process. The Parliament passed several primarily important laws, such as the law on the Superior Council of Magistrates, the amendments of the laws on the Court of Accounts, of the Election Code, of the law on the Information and Security Service (ISS).

The fruitful lawmaking activity is the result of a lucrative deal between the Christian-Democrats (PCDP) and the ruling party. The PCDP obtained these modifications by convening to support the Communist presidential candidate, Vladimir Voronin during

the presidential elections last April. With the PCDP backing, Voronin was elected president in exchange for the seat of vice-Chairman of the parliament, which got in the hands of Iurie Rosca, the president of PCDP. The Christian-Democrats also handed the Communists 10 amendments – *the Decalogue*. Unlike its biblical counterpart, the Moldovan Decalogue is a set of 10 benchmarks for the Communist rule in 2005. The year has almost come up to an end, but the Communists are still three benchmarks short. The selective implementation of the Decalogue spurs a set of questions. Will the political partnership continue in the next Parliamentary session? If yes, than how will the leader of the Communist party<sup>2</sup> be talked into keeping his promises towards the opposition and vice versa, will the Christian-Democratic opposition change its nature?

Despite the importance the political partnership had before the presidential elections, we can see it has faded. The main reason to create the partnership has been to exclude opposition when adopting strategic laws which affect the European integration process of Moldova. As all the factions in the Parliament are following pro-European agendas, there is no possibility of serious opposition. It seems the European orientation has united all parties. Nowadays, any MP, regardless of his or her political origin, can initiate a legislative project and find it voted, including by members of other parties. In the meantime, hardly any MP would be penalized for voting for a law originating from "the other side". There are no more "other sides" in the Moldovan Parliament.

Therefore, the fear that the partnership can fade is thin in substance. The European vogue entrenched in the masses would make it an act of suicide if a certain party decided to denounce the partnership. It has already become a stereotype to vote only laws that are in the spirit of the partnership. Even the discourse

#### \* The calculation methodology of the Political and Security Statewatch Indicators

The PSS methodology is a synthetic model designed to evaluate the perception of a pool of 10 independent experts on political and security risks in three areas: Domestic Policy, Foreign Policy and Issues of Special Interest. The PSS monitoring contributes to the identification of potential and effective threats that impact the stability of public institutions and assures the coherence of early warning analyses. The PSS rating should not be considered an absolute indicator. The reason for PSS indicator is to form general ideas. The dynamics of PSS indicators can be found throughout the text of the PSS and reflects the rhythm and the direction of democratic changes occurring in Moldova. To find out more about the methodology, check the addenda.

of the President is soaked in mentions of how well is the political partnership performing in building a good image to Moldova in front of the European institutions; of how well it is perceived as a tool in keeping the pro-European consensus in Moldova.

The greatest promise of the political partnership before both the European institutions and the Moldovan people was to remove all political impediments in implementing pro-European reforms. The realization of this promise has been the job of the government as the responsible for the implementation of the Moldova-EU Action Plan and the Strategy of Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction. Unlike the blissful declarations and the blaring pre-election demagogy, these two strategic programs are the only solid indicators for Brussels in evaluating Moldova. The success of the present partnership in energizing the reform is still slim.

#### Economic Strand

The obviously prevalent preoccupation of the Moldovan elites for politics, rather than for public affairs has brought the incumbents before unpredicted problems. Following the unilateral import restrictions set by Russia for Moldovan agricultural goods and wines, the top economic issue was another rise in the price for oil. On September 6, the Moldovans experienced the 6<sup>th</sup> rise of prices for the “black gold”<sup>3</sup>. The 16.3 % boost in the price for gasoline and the 6.3% rise for diesel add fuel on the pre-electoral fire. According to the experts, the gasoline price will shortly

reach \$1 US Dollar per liter, which is a real blow on energy-intensive services such as central heating and urban transportation. The mismanagement of these “hot issues” could trigger social dissent before the elections for the office of Mayor of Chisinau.

*Moldova does not have a suitable institution to monitor and audit the Moldova-EU Action Plan, nor does it have a functioning procedure to do that.*

#### Moldova presented the first Monitoring Report on the Implementation of the Moldova-EU Action Plan

Since the end of August 2005; the Government’s agenda has been all meetings on how to forge a smooth report on the implementation of the Moldova-EU Action Plan. The report was due mid-September. According to a press report of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration (MFAEI), Vice-Minister Valeri Ostalep went before the European Commission on September 14, 2005 with the first of the long line of trimestrial reports<sup>4</sup>. According to the same press release, the report received positive appreciation from the European government. The reason for good words was that: “...there have been a big number of achievements for such a short period of time”. However, besides the official auto-appreciation, the Vice-Minister was not able to mention a single specific achievement of the Action Plan. Ostalep only mentioned his report just got a general appreciation, while the Europeans will take a better look and follow up with a more detailed feedback.<sup>5</sup>

*The approach taken towards the Moldova-EU Action Plan could come at a very high cost to the Moldovan officials, who haven’t planned a penny for the implementation of the Action Plan in the 2006 state budget.*

The report remained strapped of reactions in both Chisinau and Brussels. When asked about her appreciations of the Report on the implementation of the Moldova-EU Action Plan, the EU Commissioner for the European Neighborhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner declared that: “The EU greets the serious efforts made by Moldova. We [the EC] know these are just the first steps in a long process”.<sup>6</sup> A short notice by lady Commissioner possibly referred to the opening of an EU delegation in Chisinau.

Nevertheless, there is still much to be learned in Chisinau; honesty being the first thing in the list. The reserves towards the honesty of the Moldovan report are vividly proven by the PSS sub-indicator on domestic policy (see the table – Q8). The steep slope between 3.15 in August and 3.95 in September shows a severe downturn in the success of Moldovan reforms. Even compared to the

June 2005 EU-Ukraine AP, the Moldovan report is a list of shortcomings.

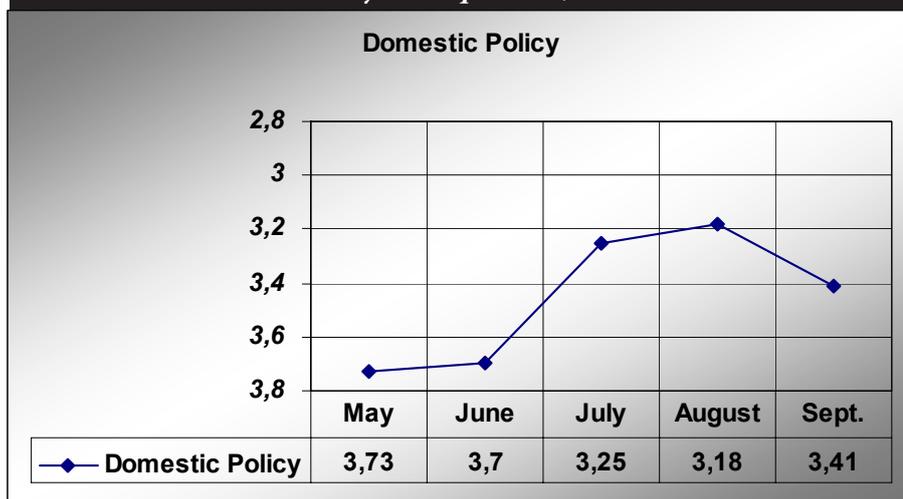
The first among them is the confusing structure. The dual: narrative and chart structure of the report is mentioned in the

introduction. Nevertheless, there is barely any chart, nor addendum to be found. The report lacks description on the methodology of the report. The big bunch of similar shortcomings allows us to grade low the authors. The low quality of the report shows the Moldovan Government does not have a proper institution, nor a functional procedure to approach the evaluation and audit of countrywide developments relating to the implementation of the Moldova-EU Action Plan.

It is not a surprise, though. The discussion floor on the priority aspects of the European integration process does not exceed the walls of the National Commission on European Integration. In the meantime, the responsible reporting agency is the MFAEI, an institution created to work solely on bilateral affairs with various states and organizations abroad. The MFAEI cannot, as it has so brilliantly proven, lead the planning of domestic policy.

The fact that the report was elaborated based on the reports of individual ministries and central

*The PSS indicator reflects the stability level in the Domestic Policy for September, 2005*



The values are calculated on an inverted scale, where 1 is the highest value and 5 is the lowest

administrative bodies, rather than on the reports of an independent agency, is another hole in the structural and methodological design of the report. The frequent incidence of inaccuracies proves a poorly-worked integration of the ministerial reports in a single piece. Once in a while, one can find abstracts of text that are not related to the Action Plan whatsoever. For example, page 4: "The local public elections in 11 locations in Moldova were appreciated by the observatories as corresponding to the standards of OSCE and Council of Europe". So what? There is not a single reference to the local public elections in the Moldova-EU Action Plan. The Plan refers only to parliamentary elections. Apparently, the authors have done poor job writing and have severely and inaccurately abused the copy&paste functions. As result, the report raises more questions than answers.

The bulk of the questions arise from the difficulty of tracing specific realizations in the implementation of the Action Plan. The report is plain of facts. It is difficult to differentiate between the actions taken by the executive authorities in the framework of the MAEP and their routine responsibilities. Apparently, the individual ministries have been interested in this confusion, so as not to reveal their inactions. The CE could have the impression the Moldovan government has always been implementing the plan, even before it was elaborated. Nevertheless, there is a reason for the Government to sell its routine activity as implementation of the Moldova-EU Action Plan. The reason is that the government in Chisinau hasn't allocated a penny for the implementation of the Plan in the 2006 budget. This severe misdoing could come at very high cost to the Moldovan officials. Moldova could be relentlessly punished by the European institutions, including by limiting the funding Moldova is supposed to receive in the framework of the European Neighborhood Policy. These funds are very important, as the sum allocated by Europe will rise from 8.5 Billion Euros in 2000-2006 to 14.9 Billion between 2007 and 2013.

The Report states: "The reform of the public administration was started with the forming of a new

government on April 19, 2005. The new government comprised 15 ministries and 13 bureaus and agencies, as opposed to 16 ministries and 17 departments in the old government". The reform resulted in considerable staff cuts, mostly affecting the lower ministerial personnel. The fact that the fired people were soon rehired somehow eluded Moldova's report for the EU. It is difficult to understand how this zero-sum HR move and the reconfiguration of the administration could be called reform. As result all personnel remained in place. As for the restructuring of the executive apparatus, it did not result in the dismissal of some of its constituent bodies. The bodies were conglomerated in the newly-formed structures. So same people, same numbers, different structures.

We can also see that the phrase: "According to the European standards" was replaced throughout the report with "In line with the initiative of the President of Republic of Moldova". The phrase is referred to the reformation of the state apparatus on the basis of three principles: assuring a good level of remuneration of public officials, which would eliminate corruption; reduction of the number of personnel and implementation of a new system of recruitment of new personnel on technocratic bases. Since when are ideas of the head of state equivalent to the EU criteria of good governance? Again a declaration with no coverage in deed.

Another paradox of the report is the omnipresent praise of the civil society for its realizations in the areas adjacent to the implementation of the Moldova-EU Action Plan. It is a true paradox, because the Government has steadily ignored and derided the role of the associative sector in the EU integration process. Besides, the Government failed to efficiently include the civil society in the implementation process. Nowadays, only one member of the civil society is member of the National Commission for European Integration. Thus, the mentions about the civil society in the report are at least cynical.

The good thing about the report is that it is the proof of political will of Chisinau to continue with the reforms

in the judicial and political reform, the articulation of the Moldovan legislation with the European one. By the means of this report, Moldova has also declared its interest in integration on various grounds, such as: economics, trade, energy transportation, environmental policy and transport infrastructure.

### Forecast:

*Moldova has taken low grades during September. This happened because of the lack of specific results in the implementation of the strategic programs: the Moldova-EU Action Plan and the Strategy for Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction. The majority of the political forces in the country are unsatisfied with the quality of the government lead by Vasili Tarlev. Regardless of the political misunderstandings among the political groupings in Moldova, the legislation has to be harmonized with the European one. It is, however, unlikely that discrepancies appear among the groups. We could be experiencing the implosion and, finally, the disintegration of the Parliamentary formation of Serafim Ureachean: Alliance "Moldova Noastra". The disappearance of the only remaining opposition in the Parliament will not benefit the small parties, outsiders in the parliamentary elections.*

*The social unrest is becoming more and more acute because of the first prospects of recession. The elections for the office of Mayor of Chisinau, programmed for November 27, 2005 could be a good chance for the population to vociferate its desires and concerns to the power.*

### (Footnotes)

<sup>1</sup> The measurement is done on a 1 to 5 scale, where 1 is the highest value.

<sup>2</sup> The President of the Communist Party of Moldova is also the President of the Country.

<sup>3</sup> [www.azi.md/news?ID=35803](http://www.azi.md/news?ID=35803)

<sup>4</sup> Press release by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration: <http://www.mfa.md/Ro/Comunicate/2005-09-21VostalepConfPresa.htm>

<sup>5</sup> „Europe will be there for Moldova”, interview with Benita Ferrero-Waldner, „Moldova Suverana”, October 7, 2005, p. 1

<sup>6</sup> can be found at [http://www.kmu.gov.ua/control/en/publish/article?art\\_id=17827784&cat\\_id=12853974](http://www.kmu.gov.ua/control/en/publish/article?art_id=17827784&cat_id=12853974)

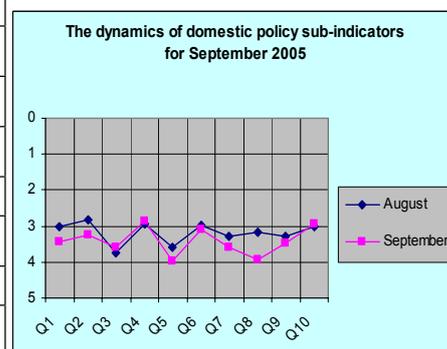
### What is the PSS Indicator ?

The indicator denotes the basic trends of the democratic changes happening in Moldova, through a qualified evaluation of the variables representing concepts of domestic and foreign policy, as well of some special interest issues. The PSS indicator is calculated in function of the answers given by a group of independent experts. The role of the expert group is to assign values of 1 to 5, to the variables measuring the above-mentioned concepts. The value 1 represents the highest level of intensity of a variable, 5 being the lowest. The evaluation of the results was done by using an evaluation table.

## Addendum

I. Domestic Policy		Points		
List of Questions:		August	September	Dynamics
Q1.	Is the political system in Moldova democratic, pluralist and viable?	3,03	3,43	↓
Q2.	How efficient are the central public authorities (the Parliament, the Government, etc) of Moldova?	2,83	3,23	↓
Q3.	How transparent are the decisions taken by the central public authorities in Moldova?	3,75	3,58	↑
Q4.	How efficient is the cooperation between the Government and the opposition in Moldova?	2,95	2,85	↑
Q5.	To what extent is the Television in Moldova objective and professional, when covering public and political issues?	3,58	3,98	↓
Q6.	To what extent are the fundamental human rights and freedoms protected in Moldova?	2,97	3,08	↓
Q7.	Is the Justice impartial and objective in Moldova?	3,27	3,58	↑
Q8.	How would you rate the progress in the implementation of the Poverty Reduction strategy and the Moldova-EU Action Plan?	3,15	3,95	↓
Q9.	How would you rate the living standards in Moldova?	3,28	3,48	↓
Q10.	How would you appreciate the role and initiative of the civil society in Moldova?	3,03	2,93	↑

*The values are calculated on an inverted scale, where 1 is the highest value and 5 is the lowest*



## 2. Foreign Policy

The active involvement of the European Union in the Black Sea Region raised new hopes for the settlement of the frozen conflict in the breakaway region of Transnistria in Eastern Moldova. The advantage forged by the Moldovan Parliament on July 22, by passing the Law on the status of Transnistria, giving the enclave the status of autonomy, caused a crisis of method in the conflict settlement process. The adoption of the law was not exactly happy news for Russia.

The Kremlin has other plans for Transnistria, regarding it as a Kaliningrad-like Russian far-post in Eastern Europe.

The Russian officials would rather prefer federalizing Moldova and securing Transnistria the status of subject of federation. Such a status would keep the Russia-installed separatist government in the Eastern region of Moldova secure. Russia needs the separatists in place to keep its influence in Eastern Europe. It does so by keeping its 14<sup>th</sup> Army and a humongous stockpile of ammunition in Transnistria. The uncontrollable and reticent separatist government is the only viable excuse for Russia to violate a number of international commitments<sup>1</sup> to withdraw its armament and troops from Moldova. More destabilization in the region – more stability for Russia’s interests in Moldova and Eastern Europe.

A good way to keep the instability is to let the status of Transnistria unresolved. That is why Russia defends, since 1997, a pentagonal format to solve the territorial dispute. The format is one of the most unfair and biased instruments of conflict resolution the world has seen. Moldova on one side, Ukraine, swinging both ways occasionally driven by its interests, while Russia, with

its docile Transnistria and the OSCE on the other side. The latter is a prisoner of Russia’s veto (consensus rule). So it is a 1-4 or, in the best configuration, a 1-1-3 format.

The 22<sup>nd</sup> July law was intended to diminish the Russian dominance in the 5-side conflict resolution format by a sheer exercise of sovereignty by Moldova. The law set an intransigent framework for future negotiations.

In September 2005 Moscow responded by delegating a cohort of state officials to attend the “Independence Day” ceremony in Tiraspol. The delegation was headed by Serghei Baburin, the Vice-Speaker of the Russian Duma and included important officials from the Duma, the government and the academics. The delegation was very vocal about Russia support to the *de facto* existing Transnistrian state, thus, granting unofficial recognition to the enclave. The visit was a hostile to Moldova, and to the negotiations format, PR move by the Kremlin, aiming to minimize the popularity of the idea of Transnistrian autonomy<sup>2</sup>.

In the start of October, Russia continued the political press by elaborating a new conflict settlement plan. The plan is a hybrid of the Yushenko Plan and the Kozak Memorandum<sup>3</sup>. It was immediately rejected by Moldova.

The negotiation process was resuscitated by the EU. The EU involvement was a long time waiting for Moldova and Ukraine. The start of October was also marked by the signing of the memorandum on the start of the Border Control Mission of the EU on the frontier

of Moldova and Ukraine. The memorandum was signed by Benita Ferrero-Waldner, the EU Commissioner for the Neighborhood Policy and officials of the two states. The Mission, the *raison d’etre* of which is countering smuggling and customs inspection, will kick start on December 1, 2005. The EU Border Mission is a serious blow to the separatist government in Tiraspol. For over fourteen years the illicit government of Igor Smirnov subsisted on smuggling and illegal trafficking in people, weapons and narcotics. The EU Border Mission is a serious threat to the existence of the Russian enclave on the bored between Moldova and Ukraine. The self-proclaimed government will have a hard time receiving assistance from its patrons in Moscow. The Kremlin has no control on the Border Mission, as the memorandum was signed independently from Moscow and

its political creature in Transnistria.

Apparently, Russia will not accept losing its grip on Moldova. The Kremlin tried to overcome its frustration by initiating repressive policies against Moldovan exports. The

restrictions started in August, when Russia barred the imports of agricultural goods from Moldova. In September, Russia followed by a shut down for Moldovan wines, thus depriving the country of its traditional export markets. Moscow blackmails Moldova with lifting the prices for fuels up to the world prices. These policies are apparent responses to the lately pro-Western orientation of Chisinau.

These agonic moves are not very likely to hamper the active implication of

*For over 14 years the economy of the separatist government in Transnistria has survived on arms trade, smuggling and illegal trafficking of people and drugs.*

EU and the United States in Moldova. Constrained by objective geopolitical facts, Moscow accepted, on September 26, the widening of the negotiation format on Transnistria by including the EU and the US as observers. Does that change anything? The role of observer “per se” does not give any substantial influence to the EU and the US to impact the negotiations on Transnistria. The move is widely regarded in Chisinau as being a non-event, a change that does not imply changes.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, the political thinkers consider that the presence of the EU and the US will quickly change the rules in the negotiation process, if not through instant results, than through the shifts in the geopolitical *status quo* in the region of concern.

The limited status of the EU is, in anyway, better than its absence from the region. EU is in the crucial moment of shaping its policy in the Black Sea region. The main dilemma here is: Ukraine or Turkey? Although EU is still hesitating in picking the candidate for the next accession round, to the benefit of Moldova, Brussels has much less cons for Kyiv than for Ankara.

Nevertheless, Turkey is a strong competitor. Unlike Ukraine, Turkey is more interdependent with the EU, which is Ankara’s number one trade partner. Turkey is also less dependent on its non-European neighbors. Turkey has good control of all its borders, is a fully-fledged NATO member and an undisputed regional leader. By contrast, Ukraine, whose trade with EU makes barely 35 percent of the total is heavily dependant on Russia and other non-European neighbors. Ukraine is destabilized by an extra-territorial and one regional conflict: Crimeea, both depriving Ukraine of control over its borders. Ukraine is fully dependant on Russia for trade and energy.

The officials in Brussels make it public that the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict is Ukraine’s key to Europe. Ukraine has to stop regarding the group interests of its oligarchy as national interest. As a first step, Ukraine can bring a qualitative change into the negotiations format on the conflict in Transnistria. Ukraine could accept becoming the “voting tool” of the EU in this format. That could decrease the handicap the pro-European and pro-settlement forces (Moldova, Ukraine, EU and US) have against the pro-stagnation parties (Russia, Transnistria).

The lately political developments that shattered the pro-European course of

Ukraine rang the alarm bell for Moldova. On important happenstance was the Kazan Summit in the end of August 2005. Contrary to the three months agenda of the Ukrainian government, and to the will of the groups that had supported him since October 2004, President Yushenko agreed to get Ukraine into the Single Economic Space of the CIS<sup>5</sup> also known as “anti-EU” space. By that, Yushenko sent an encouraging message for the Russian plans in the entire western CIS, and set new questions on the speed of Ukraine’s integration to NATO and EU.

The other alarm was the governmental disarray in Kyiv, followed by the demise of the Timoshenko government as consequence of the sound corruption scandals that discredited the Orange Revolution. It looks the EU turned towards Turkey. Can this dismay retain EU’s plans towards for Ukraine and, subsequently, Moldova?

The delay would be convenient for the EU, which is a new actor in the region. The European officials refrain from making quick decisions on the Transnistrian conflict and hope to use the pause to gather more information on the situation in the conflict region. The EU needs some time in the field to consolidate a position on Moldova and Ukraine. This stems from the need of reliable, first-hand information on what is really going on in Transnistria.<sup>6</sup> The European officials have concerns regarding the assertions made by the

paragraph denouncing the smuggling of drugs from the EU Border Control Memorandum, as there has been too little evidence on that. The Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, Andrei Stratan could not deliver specific data confirming the emergence of smuggling of

drugs on the borders. In fact, it has been noted that the Moldovan officials always deviate when asked for details in this matter. The Ukrainian side, alike the OSCE remained silent on the issue. The official silence on smuggling from all sides could be a serious

impediment for the functionality of the EU Border Control Mission, if continued.

The EU’s cautious behavior in the Eastern European neighborhood could be explained by the need to shape a new type of regional policy towards Russia. Now, the EU is lead by its European Neighborhood Policy and Javier Solana’s Security Doctrine. None of these documents is designed to deal with Russia’s interests in the region. The European Neighborhood Policy precludes a large-scale agenda of stabilization and political and economic inclusion. The EU sees this process through the lens of elimination of instability clusters, democratization and Europeanization.

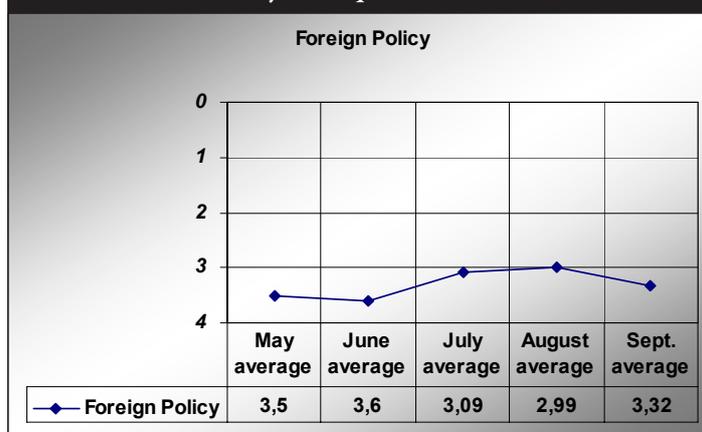
Russia has its own “neighborhood policy” in the same region, which brought Moldova and Ukraine into two different and mutually-exclusive neighborhoods. The Russian neighborhood is an anti-EU neighborhood. The main difference between the two is that the

Russian version is post-imperialistic by concept. Notorious for its low democratic standards and miserable economy, Russia has created and supported insecurity enclaves throughout the post-Soviet area to block the advancement of Euro-Atlantic structures into its “vital space”. The plan used to work out well, until the wrap-up of the EU strategy towards Romania and Bulgaria. The EU wants their neighborhood secure by the time these two accede into the Union. The main problem is that Brussels sees the source of insecurity as steaming from

the proliferation of uncontrollable separatist governments, then the interest groups in Moscow use the same concepts, but only to define their security.

*Will the EU be able to conciliate the imperative of strategic partnership with Russia with the need to secure its neighbourhood in Eastern Europe?*

*The PSS indicator reflects the stability level in the Foreign Policy for September, 2005*



The values are calculated on an inverted scale, where 1 is the highest value and 5 is the lowest

Moldovan officials regarding the exorbitant arms and drug trade on the Moldo-Ukrainian border. The EU Commissioner for the European Neighborhood Policy, Benita Ferrero Waldner, excluded the

Although the EU has all the advantages to urge the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict, it hesitates. Brussels refrains from defining long-term objectives. The reason for that is that Russia is defined as “strategic partner” in the Solana Doctrine. The same doctrine stipulates that the settlement of the regional problems in the Russian vicinity can only be solved with Moscow’s cooperation. For the EU, just like for the US, Russia is an important partner for countering terrorism and indispensable source of fuels. In the meantime, Russia depends on Europe exactly because of the same reasons.

The formulation of an EU policy towards Russia is the key to the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict. The main question is whether the EU will succeed in conciliating the imperatives of the strategic partnership with Russia with the not less important imperative of securing its borders?

EU’s interest towards Ukraine is the main factor for these decisions.

The uncertainties around Ukraine required that the state leaders of Moldova seek for alternative doors to the EU decisions regarding Transnistria. Since the beginning of the month, the Chisinau officials raised the number of contacts with the Baltic states. Two months before, when the agreement was reached to provide an Individual Moldova-NATO Action Plan (IPAP), Chisinau heard voices of support from the Estonian government. On September 6, Latvia replicated its neighbor through the declarations of the State Secretary of the Defense Ministry of Latvia, Edgars Rinkevics, during his visit in Chisinau.

Once the EU was admitted into the negotiations process on Transnistria,

the support of the new EU members has become crucial. The President of Moldova paid visits to all Baltic states in the period right after the widening of the negotiation format. On September 26, Vladimir Voronin signed an agreement with the Latvian President, Vaira Vike-Freiberga a common declaration regarding the need of cooperation in the fields of countering illegal trafficking of weapons, drugs and people. Latvia declared support in the cause of denouncing the Russian military presence in Moldova. Lithuania, the third Baltic state, agreed to support Moldova in awareness-building on the Transnistrian issue in Europe.

This is a very important commitment, as the EU optic on Moldova and Ukraine is crucial for the European integration of both countries.

Besides, even if “the Europe of the 15” is too cautious towards Russia and would rather prefer a cooperation scheme with Russia, rather than a firm step in the settlement of the Transnistrian crisis, Chisinau should intensify the relations with the new European members. They tend to be more sensitive towards the security space in the Eastern Europe and interested in the shattering of Russian influence on their Eastern borders. “The Europe of 25” could become a crucial partner for Moldova. The new EU members are also victims of Russian geopolitics and the most interested parties in the stabilization of Moldova and Ukraine.

#### Forecast:

*The active involvement of the EU in the Black Sea environment will bring up the need for consolidation of a new policy of the EU towards Russia. Europe will have to make some important choices as a common security platform of EU and Russia for the*

*West NIS is impossible due to conflicting interests, goals and methods.*

*Moldova has to make a better use of the relations and common experience with the new Europeans, especially with Poland, Slovakia and the Baltic states. Moldova should focus on promoting its own security model for its borders, as part of the European neighborhood. The relations with Poland and the Baltic states have a special strategic significance. Being the least supporters of Russia, these could influence Brussels’ decisions towards Moldova.*

*Chisinau should also continue to militate for the inclusion of the US and the EU as fully-fledged mediators in the negotiations over Transnistria. Nonetheless, it is little probability that the EU take substantial action before the start of the Border Monitoring Mission. I*

*It is also hard to believe that the US will be happy with the role of observatory in the issue of Transnistria, deeming its proximity to the future military bases in Romania. The US, like the EU is aware of the need of more active involvement in the process of stabilization of a new European Black Sea zone and will foster their new allies in the region: Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and Moldova).*

#### (Endnotes)

<sup>1</sup> The 1999 OSCE Istanbul Summit

<sup>2</sup> <http://azi.md/news?ID=35764>

<sup>3</sup> The 2003 federalization plan rejected by Moldova.

<sup>4</sup> Socor in Moldova Press

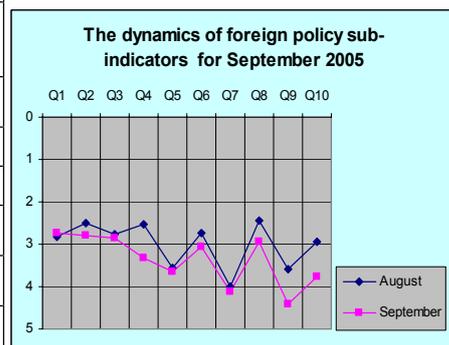
<sup>5</sup> CIS: Commonwealth of Independent States formed by the ex-Soviet states in 1992 to replace the Soviet Union.

<sup>6</sup> <http://rferl.org/featuresarticle/2005/10/05F3742A-1C2D-4E1A-A57F-0E9780549795.html>

### Addendum

II. Foreign Policy		Points		
List of Questions:	August	September	Dynamics	
Q1. Is the foreign policy of Moldova more stable and efficient now than several months ago?	2,83	2,73	↑	
Q2. To what extent is Euro-Atlantic integration a priority of Moldovan foreign policy?	2,5	2,80	↓	
Q3. To what extent is the foreign policy connected with the national interest of Moldova?	2,75	2,85	↓	
Q4. How would you appreciate the role of international and regional organizations in fostering the state of law and the economic reform in Moldova?	2,53	3,33	↓	
Q5. How would you rate the image of Moldova from an outside perspective?	3,55	3,65	↓	
Q6. How would you rate the relations between Moldova and Ukraine?	2,73	3,05	↓	
Q7. How would you rate the relations between Moldova and Russia?	4	4,13	↓	
Q8. How would you rate the relations between Moldova and Romania?	2,45	2,95	↓	
Q9. To what extent are the interests of Moldova connected to its membership in the CIS?	3,6	4,40	↓	
Q10. Is Moldova protected by international agreements and strategic partnerships?	2,95	3,75	↓	

*The values are calculated on an inverted scale, where 1 is the highest value and 5 is the lowest*



### 3. Issues of Special Interest

The Transnistrian conflict remains the greatest threat to the national security of Moldova. During the last month's time the government of Moldova became very active in revigorating the negotiation process on the status of the breakaway enclave in the Eastern regions of the country. Nevertheless, the restart of the talks was conditioned by whether the approach to the conflict was going to change.

The political maneuvers orchestrated by the government in Chisinau during the summer of 2005 offered new hopes of settling to protracted territorial dispute, but not without the help of the west. The newest developments raised unrest in Russia – the homeland of those interested in the internal destabilization of Moldova. The absence of a sound, locally-inspired settlement plan for Transnistria provoked the emergence of alternative private solutions to end the territorial conflict that has kept Moldova disintegrated for over fourteen years. These were the Ovidiu Sincai Institute plan, recommending a Cyprus scenario for Transnistria and Moldova and the Bertrand Russell University plan that preserves elements of typical Russian chauvinism. Those plans received minor attention in the press and were subsequently ignored by the negotiating parties.<sup>1</sup>

The only private initiative to stay was the "3D"<sup>2</sup> strategy, so industriously advocated for by the civil society in Moldova. The "3D" strategy was one of the main inspirations for the so-called "Iushchenko plan". The "3D" also helped in formulating the position of the EU and the US and spurred their interest towards getting involved in the stalled negotiations over the immediate future of the separatist enclave.

The firm will of the Moldovan officials to follow the forged by the local civil society "3D" logics is vividly proven by the legislative acts enacted during the summer of 2005: the laws on the democratization of Transnistria and on the status of the settlements on the left bank of the Dniestr River.

The demise of the Timoshenko government in Ukraine did not shatter the process of settlement conflict in Transnistria. The intention of the Moldovan government to follow the prescriptions of the Iushchenko Plan proves a more consolidated approach towards the conflict by Chisinau. The approach is, nevertheless, not far from

being orthodox to the Ukrainian plan. The Moldovan President, Vladimir Voronin has his own scenario, which is a hybrid of the Iushchenko plan and the "3D Manifesto" of the civil society.

After the enacting of the law on the status of Transnistria on July 22, 2005, the next goal became the widening of the negotiation format. The old format, comprising Moldova, Ukraine, Russia and its docile OSCE and Transnistria, was the reason for the protraction of the conflict settlement process, which benefited the separatist government in Traspol and its sponsor, Russia. President Voronin declared, on September 25, in Iasi, Romania that Moldova will boycott the future negotiations if the EU and the United States are not invited to mediate the conflict settlement. The president had to step back, apparently. Voronin told BBC: "We [Moldova] are ready to live in cold, to freeze without Russian gas... However, we will never step back on the integrity, sovereignty and the independence of our motherland, whatever costs it might incur."

The fact that the President recognized that the conflict in Transnistria is the only problem between Moldova and Russia shows a radicalization of the hostilities between Putin and Voronin, but also proves the maturity in Chisinau's approaching the problem.

Nevertheless, the agreement to widen the negotiations format over Transnistria, reached during the

determined by the decision of the EU and the US to cooperate in diminishing the insecurity in the post-Soviet space. Russia's step back is a new venue in the more than 14 years-long negotiations. Chisinau should regard Russia's concessions with a great deal of reserve. Unlike their Moldovan counterparts, the Moscow officials hardly ever make poorly thought moves. Could these concessions be a part of a bigger plan set by Moscow? An inkling to that is the reaction of the separatist leaders. They greeted the reformation of the negotiation format by including the EU and the US as observatories. Is it because Russia still has great possibilities to team up Ukraine and form an opposition in the negotiations format? Or maybe it was the only choice of the separatist leaders to gain the good respect of the newcomers? It could be that Russia will use Transnistria and Moldova as exchange currency when dealing with the EU. One thing is sure: the separatists still count on Russia's support not to leave much maneuver space for the newcomers in the new negotiation format and, therefore, make their presence obsolete.

Ukraine will play the key role in the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict. President Voronin knows that. Possibly this was made clear to him during the set of bilateral meetings he had earlier in the month in New York, where he was at the UN Summit. It is not a surprise that Voronin visited Viktor Iushchenko, the Ukrainian president, right upon returning home from New York. The two presidents

elaborated a common letter to the Slovenian Foreign Minister, Dmitrii Rupel, who is also the acting President of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The two presidents urged the OSCE to start coordinating actions towards organizing internationally-controlled democratic elections for the Supreme Soviet (the legislative body of Transnistria). According to the letter of the two presidents, the elections in Transnistria can be organized upon a thorough evaluation of the elections

climate in the enclave by an internationally-lead mission of the OSCE. The presidents requested that the mission should "...evaluate the situation on the field and provide recommendations on the measures

*The PSS indicator reflects the stability level in the Security Policy for September, 2005*



The values are calculated on an inverted scale, where 1 is the highest value and 5 is the lowest

Odessa summit on September 26, was a great success. The win should not be subscribed entirely to president Voronin. Russia's retreat on the matter stems from a set of objective geopolitical constraints

needed for ensuring free and fair elections, on the role and mandate of international organizations and on the time frame.” The mission also has to elaborate the project of election procedures.

Designed to hamper the retaliations of the Big Brother (Russia), Voronin’s scenario also included making new friends in the ranks of the new Europeans and acceding countries. The President’s trips to Romania, the Baltic countries support came into supporting this objective. The positive attitude of the new EU member states has helped the Moldovan leadership gain confidence. The newly Europeans are also NATO members and regard with dismay the post-imperialistic policies conducted by Russia abroad. Voronin’s visits to the Baltics, Greece and Croatia give new leeway to Moldova’s foreign policy, especially in the new format.

Nevertheless, it is unlikely that the separatist leaders would be deterred by such soft means and give up their economic havens. Therefore, the pressure on the oligarchic interests must be intensified. When the profits of the separatists will start to decline as result of EU monitoring on the Moldovan-Ukrainian border, the separatist leaders in Chisinau will have no choice but accepting the autonomy status. This will still not remove the criminal self-proclaimed leaders from power, which is a reason for more effort from the part of Moldovan and international community.

The Chisinau officials have done their job: they managed to sign a trilateral

agreement between Moldova, Ukraine and the EU on the monitoring of the EU border. However, there is a risk that the EU mission will not reach its goal. The reason is in how Europe defines the smuggling it is supposed to monitor. Besides from looking only for drugs and weapons, the EU observers should also stop the transportation of all goods that are not certified by a Moldovan customs stamp.

One of the missed opportunities of the month is the international conference on Transnistria, planned before for the end of September 2005. The conference was delayed for unknown reasons until December. Be it a simple coincidence, but it is the supposed period for the self-proclaimed elections in Transnistria. December is also the start period for the border monitoring mission on the Moldo-Ukrainian frontier.

The conference would host Javier Solana, the High Representative for the EU Foreign and Security Policy, the Ukrainian and Russian vice-Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Special Representative for Eurasia of the US Department of State. The highly-placed OSCE officials have also been invited.

The conference was planned to cover a wide spectrum of matters spanning from the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict in the spirit of the “Iushchenko Plan” to the organization of elections and the border monitoring mission. The importance of the conference is great. We believe the real role of the conference

id to set the new strategy in tackling the separatist conflict in Moldova. The government in Chisinau already stated clearly, by the means of the summer 2005 laws on Transnistria, its position towards the settlement process. Moldova now needs to gain international support for implementing its own decisions. The conference could be a good time to sign a common declaration on Transnistria, which could serve as a written engagement form the parties at the conference.

### Forecast:

*The Transnistrian conflict continues to be the main preoccupation of the political elites in Moldova. The implication of the west could trigger negative reactions from Moscow and Tiraspol. That would not be news, though.*

*The EU will be more interested in securing its eastern borders, deeming the accession of Romania and Bulgaria in 2007. The settlement of the Transnistrian conflict becomes, though, a hot issue for the European Institutions. Moldova should seek benefit from this geopolitical configuration in its best interests.*

*The EU initiatives have to be channeled towards the democratization of the Transnistrian region, as well as towards imposing a more strict control on the Russian military and separatist militia in the Region.*

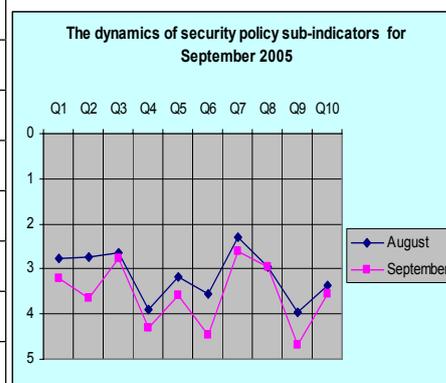
### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Democratization, Demilitarization and Decriminalization

III. Security Policy		Points		
List of Questions:		August	September	Dynamics
Q1.	How would you rate the stability of the security sector in Moldova (the SSC, SIS, the Ministry of Defense, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs)?	2,78	3,20	↓
Q2.	Is the security of Moldova sufficiently protected by the international and regional agreements and treaties signed by Moldova?	2,75	3,65	↓
Q3.	How would you grade the course chosen by the public authorities in Moldova in the matter of settlement of the Transnistrian conflict?	2,63	2,78	↓
Q4.	To what extent is Moldova protected from „energy blackmailing” from the part of other countries?	3,9	4,30	↓
Q5.	Are the Moldovan institutions able to counter the contraband, smuggling, illegal arm and drug trade?	3,17	3,57	↓
Q6.	Is Moldova able to deal with a foreign aggression or military intervention from abroad?	3,55	4,45	↓
Q7.	How would you rate the place of Moldova within the Euro-Atlantic collective security space?	2,3	2,60	↓
Q8.	To what extent does Moldova need to develop its internal defense capabilities?	2,95	2,95	↔
Q9.	To what extent the „neutrality clause” corresponds to the national interest of Moldova?	3,95	4,70	↓
Q10.	How would you rate the efficiency of the policies countering corruption and organized crime, including the transnational crime?	3,35	3,55	↓

## Addendum

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This bulletin is published with the generous support of GMF (German Marshall Fund of the United States). GMF is an American institution promoting exchange of ideas and cooperation between the United States and Europe in the spirit of the post- World War II Marshall Plan. The opinions expressed by the means of this publication belong solely to its authors. The PSS Team: Ghenadie Mocanu, Timur Onica. In order to subscribe to the distribution list of Political and Security Statewatch bulletin, please contact our Publications Department by: Email: info@politics-security.info or call: + 373 22 22 18 44, www.moldova.org