

PEACE & SECURITY - THIS IS OUR BUSINESS!

young experts from the South Caucasus



EDITORIAL

Welcome to our 7th edition - in this issue we continue publishing articles from the Students' Essay Competition and news from our organization's members who attended international schools and conferences this summer and brought unforgettable memories and experiences with them.

As promised, we publish the highlights from our network members about two key events that took place in Baku and in Tbilisi this summer - Baku 1st European game that took place from 12 to 28 June and featured almost 6,000 athletes from 50 countries competing in 20 sports and The European Youth Olympic Festival which took place in Tbilisi from 26 July to 1 August and hosted 2,334 athletes from 50 countries and competed in nine disciplines.

In this issue we publish the article from Kristina Kosatíková, Executive Director of our partner organiza-

tion - IGPN that features the war and peace dilemma of Ukraine and gives food for further thoughts; also we present to your attention the article from our Armenian colleague Knarik Mkrtchyan you kindly shared with us her recent article written on Armenian women in politics. As for the Youth Peace Plan, we are sharing with you the second part of the plan.

And in the end, we would like to remind that you can visit our FB page and Blog at: <https://www.facebook.com/yweps> and <http://youngwomenexperts.blogspot.com/> and get more info in various themes. You can always contact us with question and proposals too.

Best regards,

NINO LAGVILAVA
Chair of the Board



TWO AMAZING SPORTS EVENTS IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS THAT UNITE PEOPLE

Highlights from Milana Ibrahimova, YWEPS



Baku 2015
1ST EUROPEAN GAMES



The countdown salute before the Games in Baku

The 2015 European Games, also known as Baku 2015 were the inaugural edition of the European Games, an international multi-sport event for athletes representing the National Olympic Committees of Europe. It took place in Baku, Azerbaijan, from 12 to 28 June 2015, and featured almost 6,000 athletes from 50 countries competing in 20 sports.

Baku was awarded the right to host the first European Games at the 41st EOC General Assembly in Rome, on 8 December 2012. The European Games will take place every four years thereafter, with the next competition due to be held in 2019.

50 national Olympic committees participated in this European games including Olympic Committee of Kosovo first time at wide multi-sport event and Armenia too which once again proved that sports and joint activities can unite and bring together all people including those in hostility.

I've been at the opening ceremony and some games. All I can say is that it was really wonderful, especially opening ceremony. The history, culture, music and tra-

ditions of Azerbaijan have been reflected in so beautiful and interesting way. I felt so proud of my country and of hosting the first ever European Games. Hope it will turn to a good tradition and other countries will also keep this spirit of flame from Ateshgah.

What is most amazing also is that 12,500 volunteers were recruited to assist during the Games and played enormous role working at sport competitions, providing assistance to spectators or the media. Young girls and boys were volunteering without having a rest and they proved to be one of the energetic and enthusiastic groups to be able to do wonderful jobs and perform outstandingly.



2015 EUROPEAN YOUTH SUMMER OLYMPIC FESTIVAL

Highlights from Naiko SADUNISHI, friend of YWEPS



Opening ceremony, Tbilisi

The European Youth Olympic Festival was opened in Tbilisi, Georgia on 26 July. Tbilisi hosted 2,334 athletes from 50 countries and competed in nine disciplines: volleyball, tennis, swimming, cycling, handball, judo, basketball, athletics and gymnastics. The program of EYOF included 9 sports: judo, tennis, artistic gymnastics, cycling, athletics, swimming, volleyball, handball and basketball.

It was also 6 wonderful days full of joy, love, friendship and understanding. Young women and men, sportsmen from 50 countries competing in various sports disciplines showed that there are no borders and no boundaries if young energy and talent are directed towards rebuilding, revival, to peace and cooperation.

After 6 exciting days, the Olympic flame was extinguished so that it might be rekindled in 2017 in the Hungarian city of Gyor, which will be the host of the 14th summer Youth Olympic Festival.





CURRENT CONFLICT IN UKRAINE

Kristina KOSATÍKOVÁ

Since we are connecting our Ukrainian colleagues to the project on peace-building, I was asked to introduce the current situation in Ukraine.

SAD CONCRETE OUTCOMES OF CONTINUING CONFLICT IN UKRAINE

The conflict is continuing and the damages and devastating impact is growing. Five million people are in need of humanitarian assistance, including 3.2 million who are highly vulnerable. Some 1.7 million people have fled their homes and over one million are internally displaced. Temporary orders to restrict movement of people and goods across the conflict line were severely hampering efforts to get aid to those in need. Residents in affected regions of Donetsk and Luhansk have not received their salaries since July 2014.

Elderly homes, psychological centers and orphanages are in need of critical, even lifesaving supplies. Pensions are not being paid, further compounding the suffering of the elderly. Some 1.4 million people

require health care and the centres that are open are struggling to care for the sick who were moved from damaged and destroyed clinics, in addition to treating those wounded from the conflict. In Donetsk, 77 out of the 350 health centres have been damaged or destroyed.

Children living in or forced to flee conflict areas have suffered enormous stress and have witnessed violence, they are also traumatised from the fighting.

BROADER PERSPECTIVE ON CONFLICT IN UKRAINE

Occupation and annexation of the Crimean district of Ukraine and armed support to separatists in Donetsk and Luhansk districts are the end of one phase

of European history. Several binding important international agreements were damaged. Thousands of Ukrainians lost their lives, more than million had to leave their houses. And there are no doubts that in the beginning of this conflict there was a huge disinformation campaign. Russia declared that the rights of Russian speaking citizens in Ukraine need to be defended. But this was not based on real interest of these people. In fact Russia is ruining their country with armed intervention and is keeping the region in permanent conflict.

What Europeans decide to see in the Ukrainian revolution might in the end define Europe. The European system of today is based on the principle of state sovereignty, combined with the international cooperation of the European Union, and legitimated by a historically new attention to human rights. The European Union is based on the premise of learning from history. National Socialism and Stalinism are seen as experiences from which Europeans have learned and extremes to which European politics must be restrained.

Russia has proposed an alternative, in which Russian culture is historically unique and demanding of protection, European fascism and Stalinism are a trove of constructive ideas, and human rights are nothing more than a facade for western imperialism.

These are two different projects of integration and disintegration. Crucial is the attitude towards civil society. One of them is calling for the cooperation of civil society, state and European integration. Disintegration is considering civil society a negative global influence.

TRAGEDY OF MH17 FLIGHT – SPEEDING UP ISOLATION PROCESS OF RUSSIA

Shooting down the plane (with 298 civilians) above Ukraine a year ago speeded up Russia's isolation process from Europe. Suspicion is that the racket which shot down the flight MH17 and killed all the passengers was Russian and was detonated by Russian specialists. Such verdict which is expected in the upcoming months would have huge consequences for Russia which would be convicted for international terrorism and relatives of the victims would jointly ask for financial compensations. The consequences of this tragedy are just one part of the whole process of isolation of Russia from Europe. Freezing of relations with NATO and EU are lasting for a year. Russia is also considering its membership in Council of Europe. Because the European Court for Human Rights is belonging to it. Russia was recently asked by this

Court to pay compensation to former shareholders of petroleum company Jukos in the amount of nearly two milliards Euro. Russian government did not respect this verdict even if the commitment to it was made in 1996. There are much more examples that Russia is not respecting EU institutions any more and is cutting off the relations with the West established in the 1990's. Tragedy of MH17 flight did speed up the process significantly. Putin can not confess Russian participation of the tragedy and has got only one possibility: isolate Russia from Europe, saying West has got no right to judge Russia. This is not at all an optimistic development but it is a reality.

The situation described above is a challenge for the defenders of the European values and promoters of peace-building. I am proud our project on peace-building created network of young people who understand importance of peace-building and EU values and are ready for own activities and efforts to support these. From my perspective it is the only way from this frustrating situation.



ARMENIAN WOMEN IN POLITICS: REALITIES & CHALLENGES

Knarik MKRTCHYAN,

Peace Building Projects Coordinator at Women's Resource Center Armenia



Every country deserves to have the best possible leader and that means that women have to be given a chance to compete.

If they're never allowed to compete in the electoral process then the countries are really robbing themselves of a great deal of talent.



– Madeleine K. Albright, NDI Chairman

The opportunity for all citizens of the certain country to equally participate in the management of public affairs is one of the most prioritized conditions for democracy. Yet, in the majority of countries political life is mostly male dominated sphere with fewer opportunities for women, which is a neglect of the fundamental principles of democracy. Previously women were being fingered out as the main responsible party for their low participation, since they were blamed for not having enough knowledge, capacities or will to be politically active members of the country. Attention is now directed to those institutional, cultural and stereotypic mechanisms of exclusion that prevent women from obtaining equal share of positions in political institutions and decision making processes. Because of this, the mere education of women is not enough and can even result in little change if the institutions and legal mechanisms are not simultaneously changed.

As in many other corners of the world political underrepresentation of women is a very topical issue in Republic of Armenia (RA) as well. Due the low political participation of women national action plans (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security and gender equality in general either implemented ineffectively or periodically delayed, especially those concerning domestic violence. According to the 108 article of Electoral Code of RA in the proportional electoral lists presented by the parties, representation of one sex must not exceed 80%. This is

so women receive 20% of Parliamentary seats. Nevertheless, in practice less than 15% of the seats in the Parliament are occupied by women. Hence, mere existence of the law is important but not sufficient precondition for women's equal participation in political life.

Despite all the stereotypes and misperceptions on Armenian women's political participation, historically women's political rights in Armenia were highly respected. For example back in 1918 when the first Republic of Armenia was founded, women were given the right to vote. After the elections held in 1919, 3 members of Parliament out of 80 were women. First woman ambassador in the world is Armenian. Diana Abgar (real name is AnahinAghabekyan) was delegated to Japan and Far East in 1920 as an Ambassador of the first Republic of Armenia. By the help of her efforts in 1920 Japan recognized independence of the First Republic of Armenia. Today the number of women MPs is 14 out of 131, which is only 11%, approximately twice less than provided by the law on parliamentary quotes. Consequently, after nearly 100 years we had very little achievements in terms of women's political participation.

With less participation women have fewer chances to impact on public affairs and raise their needs and expectations effectively. Experiences of many countries with advanced democracy have already proved that women's active sociopolitical participation fosters well-being of the state and citizens. Particularly:

- Women are highly committed to promoting national and local policies on those socioeconomic issues and challenges facing women, children, people with disadvantages and etc.
- Women are very much committed to peace building (for example the case of Northern Ireland and many other similar cases), since very often they disproportionately suffer the consequences of the conflict.
- At the local level women are strongly linked to positive developments of health standards, education and etc.

To increase Armenian women's participation in po-



» litical life too many amendments are required to be applied at social level. From the very childhood girls are taught to be humble, obedient, and tolerant to restrictions. 'Real Armenian woman' is mainly associated with a good mother and housewife and any other alternative is discouraged either by the family or neighborhood.

The role of mass media should be indicated in this regard as well. Illustrations and comments provided by mass media on women politicians often give misleading information and have negative impact on the overall image of women politicians. In many cases instead of illustrating the issues raised by female politicians, mass media representatives tend to be more focused on women's look, the way of behavior, moral values, private life and etc. Armenian women politicians are often asked whether they succeed to combine family and political activity, child care and etc. These are not relevant questions in case of male politicians. This is another proof that women are mostly associated in Armenia with family and child care rather than with social activity and career growth. Governmental entities still fail to give distinctive

definition to the term 'gender' to prevent any misperception and misinterpretation of the term and the phenomenon 'gender equality' in general. Governmental stakeholders must take immediate and decisive steps to fully implement the provisions of Electoral Code of the quota system and all those international obligations related to women's rights that the Government has taken over. To prevent domestic violence, that Armenian women constantly face, Government must finally adopt a law on the prevention of domestic violence.

Recently some tangible changes have been recorded in Armenia. Youth is more active and engaged in sociopolitical affairs. Young women are keen to think about receiving good education at the country level and abroad, find a good job opportunity. Nevertheless, women's underrepresentation in the politics and decision making processes is undeniable fact. Women's full and equal participation in the politics is significantly important condition to make women's voices heard and needs presented. Besides, in case of being equally represented in the political life, women can also impact on decision making processes.

FROM STUDENTS' CONFERENCE OF TBILISI STATE UNIVERSITY

Georgia's Foreign Policy Dilemma – Euro-Integration or Eurasian Union?

Tamar KESOSHVILI,

*3rd place winner; Student of the Faculty
of the International Relations, Tbilisi State University,*

From the second half of the twentieth century, new international economic system is being formed. The importance of some states has been reduced, while the importance of the organizations such as already well-experienced European Union and the Eurasian Union, which is newly-formed and is still developing, has increased. Today, Georgia is in very difficult geopolitical conditions. Russia has already shown everybody that it will try its best to keep its power and geopolitical influence on the region. For each country all markets are useful whether it is the market of European Union or Eurasian Union. But while discussing this case, we should analyze all the economic-political results and perspectives the countries will face after becoming the member of the union. At the same time, governments should take into consideration public opinion by using relevant ways such as referendum.

Georgia has already made steps towards the Euro-integration and has also made a choice to fight for becoming a well-deserved member of the European Union. After the Georgian-Abkhazian war in 1992, European Union was one of the first among those who gave helping hand to Georgia to revive and develop; this coop-

eration continues and is being deepening and widening. The fact that European Union appointed the representative in South Caucasus in 2003 proved that EU was keen to support Georgia to resolve its frozen conflicts in a peaceful manner. EU monitoring mission to Georgia has been active since 2008. The ceasefire agreement was also achieved with the help of the European Union, which ended up the 2008 August war between Russia and Georgia. In 2009, with Eastern Partnership program the EU once again stressed out the importance of the Region where besides Georgia, also Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine are participating. In 2014, Georgia signed Association Agreement with EU and this fact showed that Georgia has moved to the new stage in Georgian-EU relations. The agreement means that Georgia becomes closer to Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, which means higher possibility of economic and political integration within EU, deepening of the political and economic relations; this way Georgia is getting closer to Europe.

It should be noted that in EU, while decision-making, member states create power balance. After that, all the decisions are made by consensus. The advantages of EU

are: unique institutional establishment, common market, high level of economic and civil development, trade agreements with neighbor states, power balance in decision-making process, financial supporting programs, fiscal decentralization, high level of technological development.

Despite all the priorities, economic system of EU has its disadvantages. It is proved by the cases of economic crisis in some member states. Nowadays, each member of Eurozone get benefits from its advantages, but they also share negative effects with the following: "all for one and one for all". For example, if there are negative signals in France and Germany, then Euro-currency devaluates despite the fact that there are positive economic signals in other members of EU.

One of the disadvantages of EU economic system is that there is no coordination mechanism which will control fiscal politics of member states, which creates serious fiscal instability within EU. The mechanisms which have to control member states' budget policy is ineffective and cannot avoid false information from member states. Thus, EU's disadvantages are: ineffective coordination of fiscal policy, ineffective mechanisms to control budget policy, partly common monetary policy.

What concerns Eurasian Union, the idea of Eurasian Union belongs to the president of Russia, Vladimir Putin and it was first announced in 2010. The main reason why this union was created is that on the one hand Russia wants to take control over the post-soviet countries and on the other hand, this union illustrates the primitive copy of EU. Our society has a very little information about the Eurasian Union and the majority of people think that if Georgia becomes the member of the union, the economic corporation will be established and stimulated among the member states.

In main documents of the Eurasian Union we can read the following: the centre of the union is Moscow. It means to create super-state institutes – common parliament and common executive institutions, common currency by 2022, coordination of foreign policy with Russia, common educational area, common economic and customs area.

What does it mean for Georgia if it becomes the member of Eurasian Union? It means that Russia will take control over the Georgian market, there will also be created some barriers for European, Chinese and American products in Georgia. People in Georgia will have to buy only Russian cars because they will not afford to buy products from other countries due to increased prices. Georgia will have to buy only Russian products not because they are the best choice, but because of high prices of the products of other countries. European and American market will be closed for Georgian products because their prices will not be competitive.

If discussing the advantages of Eurasian Union, one of the main factors is common market and reduction of expenses which will develop trade, and the conditions of consumers and producers. Deepened regional integration will develop their internal economic and political institutes, will sup-

port liberalization of service market, reduce prices of production and will develop competition among states. However, this kind of economic cooperation already existed between the members of Commonwealth of Independent States who were trading among each other without any customs' payments but it has not bring the growth of economy, nothing to say about improved democracy and good governance. This demonstrates that this initiative of Russia is based on political goals and is not oriented on economic benefit.

The disadvantages of Eurasian Union are the following: weak ideological basics, power misbalance in decision-making process, high level of corruption, uncertain future, low level of market diversification, undeveloped technology and ineffective style of management, low quality of democracy, uncompetitive market, constrained rights of property, business and investment freedom.

There are some optimistic attitudes about Eurasian Union in Georgian society today and in many politicians and experts too. Some experts say that Europe and America are unable to defend Georgia from Russian aggression and it's better to present the following ultimatum to Russia: if Georgia becomes member of the Eurasian Union, Russia has to return occupied territories to Georgia. They question which will be better for Georgia: to lose Abkhazia and South Ossetia forever or to have these territories back by Russia itself if Georgia becomes part of Eurasian Union. People are also loyal to this idea. Recent NDI survey also shows that 31% of Georgian population sees future integration with Eurasian Union profitable. By comparison with the previous surveys, percentage of people who are willing to integrate with the Eurasian Union has increased because of the following reasons: the population has not enough information about the Eurasian Union and they think that after becoming member of this organization, they will be able to improve their economic conditions and they will live in the Soviet-like system. This is most probably a past nostalgia and a Soviet too.

Although the representatives of Georgian government do not exclude that Georgia can cooperate with the Eurasian Union, Georgia's foreign policy is firmly directed towards Euro-Atlantic integration, as it is believed that European Union guarantees to keep economic and political independence and stability in Georgia, while Eurasian Union means returning back to the Soviet system.

After analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of both organizations, it is anticipated that if Georgia wants to be the part of civilized, advances and democratic society, it should aspire the EU type of system and strictly follow all reform instructions to achieve standards adequate to European Union.



YWEPS MEMBERS AT THE INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

Dutch Diary

Tamar CHKHAIDZE, YWEPS member

It is a common knowledge that Den Haag is a city of justice and peace .It is all a young women (like me) interested in peace and security needs. Even in the street peace is among people, peace in the governmental organizations, peace as the main topic of the conference, peace all around.

Though stunned by the Dutch pantry , Rembrandt and Steen atmosphere hanging in the air , I will stop on the idea of the conference and many interesting topics that were discussed during it . It should be mentioned that the financial side of totally supported by Dutch side and the level of organization was the highest possible.

The program was indeed engaging and full of fruitful thoughts. For me one of the highlights was personally getting acquainted to Professor and Ex Minister of Defense of Netherlands Mr. Joris Voorhoeve. We were all welcomed in an amazing Peace palace by Steven Van Hoogstraten, director of the Carnegie Foundation. Another highlight was a very pleasant one, seeing Georgian ambassador Mr.Surguladze and Georgian consul Miss Gvinadze on the opening. Their welcome was very warm and friendly, this was a huge motivation for me to represent Georgia as good as possible. The best part of the conference was dedicating to actual and peaceful ideas like saying NO to weapons, discussing the threats and fatal damages of terrorism. A lot of attention was paid to international architecture of global peace and justice – the role and structure of UN. All the participants listened to wonderful of talk about major substantive changes: from negative to positive peace, from military towards comprehensive security, From cold war human rights rhetoric to towards universality, from economic towards sustainable development. The current problems in global governance were discussed from a very interesting angle. Another highlight I would say was discussion of Security Council Reform and its recent proposals. Modernizing the Geneva conventions was a subject worth analyzing



as well as IAC VS NIAC dichotomy, Asymmetric Conflicts VS Law enforcement Paradigms, Cyber weapons.

My favorite part was prevention and peace building after War by Mr. Voorhoeve. It was very close to me as Georgian in the light of Russia-Georgian conflict. This conclusion is that Peace has no alternative.

Film "We are the Giant" deserves mention, very moving narrative of reality we all live in – terrorists, blood, pain and victims... Victims !

Humanity house was another amazing location where the atmosphere talked itself about humanity, pain of people, and vanity of war. I was lucky enough to be a part very famous Hague Talks, that took place during the Peace Conference. Hague Talks implied exceptionally private painful life stories of people who themselves faced war, lost family members and psychologically traumatized for the rest of their lives. Their narratives could not have left anyone untouched. Each of the conference participants were becoming more and more confident that peace is the way. Our goal, my goal is making peace go viral, taking the part of this responsibility.



UNAOC – EF SUMMER SCHOOL MEMORIES

Mariam KHUROSHVILI,

YWEPS Network member, UNAOC-EF Summer School Alumnae

The global world tends to be more developed and modernized than it was before. In this process, youth are one of the most significant catalysts, who can play a huge role in world policy formation. Empowerment of youth can drive society to the better, more diverse, more peaceful system. Considering above-mentioned issues, United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and EF Education Firsts hold third International Summer School, in Tarrytown, 13-21 June, New York, USA, 2015. In this year, from 14 000 applicants, there were picked up only 75 Participants by the selection committee, as well as by representatives of UNAOC and EF. I was very excited and honored, to be a representative of Georgia at this important international event.

At the Opening Ceremony, we were welcomed by distinguished speakers NassirAbdulaziz Al-Nasser – UN High Representative of the Alliance of Civilizations and Iris Hormann, Asia Language President of EF International Language Centers, who made interactive speech with participants. In the beginning of the School, participants made showcase, I made a presentation about main activities of Tbilisi State University Student Forum and Young Women Experts for Peace and Security. Our showcase lasted more than expected period, because all presentations were very stunning and interesting. Daily discussions in the small circles were a good chance, for expressing ourselves and sharing our ideas about different global issues. It was very responsible to be a part of community, which tries to bring positive social change, break downs barriers and facilitate capacity building among their nations.

UNAOC – EF Summer School was diverse and complex with topics of its workshops. We discussed about different methods of Building Alliances, split into small groups and focused on various approach such as reconciliation, interfaith or integral dialogue and human rights education. One of the most inspiring session was Design Thinking (lead by Daniel Paccione, EF Education First,) which helped us develop new strategies and methods, while working collaboratively in small different groups, which helped us to think about alternatively, how to accomplish our goals and reach a broader audience more meaningfully. Another workshop was about Strategies for Advocacy, from local to Global stakeholders, where trainers share their experience and initiatives to lead social change and intercultural dialogue in their communities. Exciting as well as Inspiring was the Workshop about Creative Multimedia: Developing your Message (lead by Thomas Werner, Parsons – The New school) we



Meeting UN Secretary General Bang-Ki-moon and discussing Youth's global responsibilities

learned much about the role of effective messages that can reach across boundaries and affect on local, national and International Level.

The biggest experience for me and all other Participants of UNAOC-EF Summer School was Panel on Youth and Peace building at the United Nations Headquarters. We were met by The Secretary General H.E. Ban Ki-moon who declared: "You are the first generation that can end poverty and the last generation that can avert the worst impacts of climate change". H.E Secretary General and other representatives, made us believe, that we are the leaders of today, not the leaders of tomorrow and called us think more about our responsibilities. At the panel we discussed examples how the UN works in the areas of Peace building, prevention of conflicts and extremists, how to improve youth organizations and etc. Before graduation we created a project on youth engagement. I worked on #HeShouldntHave Campaign, which was against acceptance of rape within a specific culture. Last day we met for one final circle and shared our thoughts to each other.

During UNAOC-EF Summer School we had Boat tour in New York, picnic in Central Park, sight visits and walk through New York City that gave participants opportunity to get to know each-other and explore amazing sights of NYC. Except of meeting and workshops, we were pleased to play soccer, do Yoga and use all Sports and Recreational facilities of historical Campus of Tarrytown.

UNAOC-EF Summer School was an unforgettable opportunity that affected positively on my professional as well as personal development. I would say, Meeting with 74 motivated young leaders from 74 different countries was a brilliant, once-in –a-lifetime- experience for me.



YOUTH PEACE PLAN

In previous edition we presented to you attention the Youth Peace Plan of Georgia which was a joint initiative of young people from various organizations and in February-March 2015 YWEPS members also participated in the process of drafting the Plan which is an attempt of Georgian young women from various parts of Georgia including those areas bordering conflict divided lines and directly affected by armed conflicts to create a plan for peacebuilding to help move forward rapprochement process with their peers in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The document is widely shared among interested parties and those involved in peace planning and strategy developments, we are also trying to spread the information as wider as possible to reach out more stakeholders and interest them to participate in peace planning processes that may advance peacebuilding issues in our country and the Region, as a whole, that's why we are publishing this document here in this electronic newsletter and harness your opinions and ideas too to improve as this is the live document and can change any time to achieve tangible results.

PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE DIPLOMACY

People-to-people diplomacy (P2P) is the number one mechanism among social confidence-building measures which works effectively, especially among the youth.

- In order to cover more youth segments, it is important that the P2P initiatives involve youth NGOs, women's unions and organizations, other groups such as young academics, young scientists, young journalists, young artists and religious leaders, young teachers and doctors and other professional groups who can interact with their counterparts with similar professional interests and encourage new approaches

to reconciliation in order systematically and effectively collaborate with each other;

- Inviting Georgian, Abkhazian and Ossetian students to joint cultural, sports, humanitarian or social programs is also P2P diplomacy component; therefore these initiatives should be promoted maximum way; the events may be organized in Georgia as well as in the third countries to maintain neutrality.

ECONOMIC DIRECTION

Among confidence building measures, economic relations are named as the most effective mechanism for re-establishing ties.

- Supporting capacity building of youth in economic and business management and business skills development; creating special educational infrastructure where Georgian, Abkhazian and Ossetian young women and men will get together education and knowledge may help increase their inter-communicability and willingness to do business together and boost joint business initiatives.
- Tourism is one of the promising fields of economic development for entire Georgia and Abkhazia especially. Youth tourism development will facilitate not only development of tourism industry but establishing friendly and business relation between all parties involved; joint interest, joint planning, exchange of experience and knowledge will help establish business communication and more economic ties.
- Supporting small and medium business development with the participation of young people, young women and men interested in cross-border trade, entrepreneurship, and agribusiness development should be supported by Georgian special government program which will offer different taxation regimes and provide soft credits to young people to help develop joint ventures and joint business initiatives.
- For Georgia including Abkhazia and South Ossetia the agriculture is the field the most number of the population is involved in, however not the youth - they try not to be part of it. Though this is the sphere where Georgian, Abkhazian and Ossetian youth representatives can find common language - if correctly taught and explained, if skills and resources provided including access to land, agricultural inputs, access to financial resources, access to knowledge and especially young women will be invited to participate in these initiatives, the agricultural productivity of the country will increase, the employability of the youth will increase simultaneously as well as trade and joint business activities;
- It is known to all that there is some cooperation going on especially in petty trade, where mainly women are involved, so if free and unimpeded trade relations are supported between Georgian, Abkhaz and Ossetian young women and men, this will boost business relations and cooperation between them;



- In order the effective exchange of goods and services takes place and all societal groups participate including young women and men, it is viable to create a special zone for trade or even more, for entrepreneurship and production of various products which will boost the young people's workability, economic effectiveness; strengthened ties based on joint ventures, joint economic entrepreneurship etc., which will lead to more stronger economic relations Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The approximate place for this type of economic zone between Abkhazians and Georgians was identified by the project participants through Google map - a vast non-populated area between two bordering villages - Ganmukhuri and Nakargal was identified through Google map, which they think will be convenient for this kind of business activities. Given the geographical proximity, for both Georgian and Abkhazian population this place would be much handy and appropriate, they think. The same can be said about South Ossetia. It has been mentioned many times by local population that Ergneti (a small village) type of market was beneficial for all communities across ABLs and the locals were advocating for reinvigorating this kind of trade activities. If the youth are involved effectively in this kind of activities, they can play a pivotal role in empowering the new type of economic zones.

The establishment of free economic zones across ABLs with both Abkhazia and South Ossetia is expected to effectively strengthen economic ties and boost business connectivity. Young people's participation in joint economic projects, SME development, agricultural production and trade will speed up cooperation and communication between the divided communities, which will lead to reestablishing trust and confidence and stronger ties and better communication.

ICT DEVELOPMENT, MEDIA AND SOCIAL NETWORKING

Media has a strong role in building trust and confidence; it can break stereotypes and change people's attitudes. Georgia has an enemy image especially among the Youth of Abkhazian and South Ossetia, who never had any relations with Georgians, never coexisted or cooperated with them; therefore no surprise that they are estranged, especially at the background of anti-Georgian propaganda. This is why Georgian media should double its work to break this stereotype and change the negative attitudes of Ossetian and Abkhazian youth towards Georgia and Georgians. Georgian young women and men can play an important role too to influence positively their Ossetian and Abkhazian peers' perceptions and use mass media effectively for that purpose.

- Georgian media should permanently deliver peace-oriented programmes in Abkhazian and Ossetian languages and the broadcasting should cover both breakaway territories; These programmes should involve young women and men in preparing the media

themes and also invite Abkhazian and Ossetian youth to participate in the programs.

- Internet resources and social media is the most effective way to reach out the youth in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, this instrument should be used effectively too and involve young people in social media activity so that they are able to contact their peers from Abkhazia and Ossetia and establish friendly and also working relationship;
- It is very important that internet communication and internet technologies are developed not only in Georgia proper but in both Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions so that internet connectivity gets better and young people are able to discuss online, negotiate, increase the dialogue, plan together, analyse and so on. This mechanism may be used for leading peace, security and development discourse with participation of young women and men which will push forward the reconciliation process for sure.
- The Georgian Government should create special computer literacy programme for those young women and men living in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, so that they get computer knowledge free of charge, also free PCs. Through acquiring computer skills and knowledge, Abkhazian and Ossetian youth will get better connectivity with their Georgian peers. The internet communication and social media is extremely active in the entire territory of Georgia so this instrument may play a decisive role to open up discussions and debates, plan joint initiatives, learn from each other and so on.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Common environmental challenges and environmental impact are the issues that may unite the communities at both sides of ABL. The youth must be in the centre of all events to tackle these challenges. The young women and men should participate in all joint initiatives to respond to the man-made or natural disasters that cause environmental hazards and risks.

- The youth environmental protection centre may be created to participate in environmental risk assessment and management. Environmental impact of man-made (business activities for e.g.) or natural disasters, such as pollution of sea, water, land, air, etc are common for all communities living at both sides of conflict divided lines, so they should think together how to manage these risks. Young generation with adequate knowledge and skills may be of help here; they can a joint assessment as well as plan for joint activities to mitigate these risks;
- Environmental education is an excellent mechanism for connecting young women and men from both sides of ABLs, where they will be not only the recipients of this education but the distributors of the knowledge and messages to their local communities of how to take care of the nature they are living

in and how to manage environmental risks and challenges. For e.g. the uncontrolled forest cut or mining may cause land degradation and avalanches, change the climate, etc. which may affect all communities irrespective of where they live. Local young people can monitor these activities and negotiate with local business the correct management of resources including planning, implementation and monitoring aspects, this can be done by all youth representatives jointly.

The joint management of Enguri Hydroelectric Plant is an example how the communities who are in conflict take care of common problems; these kind of activities should continue and move on to other fields such as managing agricultural problems, sea, land and forest protection, water management and others. The young women and men can effectively participate in all these aspects if they get adequate knowledge and skills to manage environmental issues that are common for all communities at both sides of ABL.

HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL ISSUES

Health care of younger generations should be a priority for all governments so no debate is needed on whether the Georgian government should equally care about its young citizens in Georgia proper as well as Abkhazia and South Ossetia. It is well known that Georgian government is covering the health care of Georgian citizens living on the territory of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, so this trend should be encouraged and the assistance increased so that Georgian citizens from Abkhazia and South Ossetia including youth is fully and equally able to enjoy all benefits of this program.

- Conducive environment should be created so that young women and men from Abkhazia and South Ossetia are able to refer to Georgian emergency services or respective doctors and health care facilities for medical assistance without hindrance;
- Reproductive health care is an important issue which must be taught to all young people; in addition they should have unimpeded access to free-of-charge reproductive health care. The service centers should be established right at the ABLs so young people from Abkhazia and South Ossetia can timely refer to the doctors in Georgia proper and get the relevant medical services;
- Drug abuse is also one of the acute issues among the youth, similarly the educational campaign is very important along with the provision of respective information about this disease and all young people including young women and men from Abkhazia and South Ossetia should be able to receive free of charge treatment and the consultation services. Also other diseases such as HIV, STD, Hepatitis and others should be treated free of charge and the related services also provided accordingly to all young people including the young women and men from Abkhazia

zian and South Ossetia;

- The young women and men from Abkhazia and South Ossetia should have all social benefits which are offered by Georgian government and the information about it should be spread systematically in their native languages so that the young people from Abkhazia and South Ossetia know about it and enjoy the benefits effectively.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure and transportation is an important mechanism for improved communication especially when cooperation is being established and cultural and social ties get strengthened. If it will be possible to arrange administrative and legal procedures in relations with dual citizenship or people from Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions have longer visas to travel all over Georgia (keep Georgian passports, keep dual citizenship, offer longer visas to Georgia proper to those with Abkhazian or Russian passports etc.), then infrastructure projects will play a crucial role in the rapprochement and confidence building process.

- Bridges and roads should be reconstructed/renovated across ABLs so that all children and students in-

cluding young women and men from Abkhazia and South Ossetia can reach the educational institutions without impediment;

- Schools, sports facilities, cultural centres and health care institutions should be rehabilitated and new ones built across ABLs so that all children and students including young women and men from Abkhazia and South Ossetia have equal opportunities to enjoy all services provided by these facilities;
- Infrastructure for sanitation and hygiene should be also built especially at the conflict divided lines to give respective knowledge to the all girls and boys including those from Abkhazia and South Ossetia so that they all enjoy the benefits of this kind of infrastructure;
- School busses should be appointed with the license to cross the ABLs if necessary so that all school children from both sides of conflict divided lines are able to attend the schools they prefer to enroll and have all opportunity to get complete education.
- To improve trading and industrial relations, it would be very important to improve the infrastructure, which is a precondition for achieving major economic developmental projects.



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