



CPMR BALKAN AND BLACK SEA COMMISSION (BBSRC) 2009 GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING

Thursday, 11 June 2009 (9.30-16.00) - Odessa (UKRAINE)

Speech by **Mr Kostyantyn RZHEPISHEVSKIY**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine

I appreciate an opportunity to speak at an opening meeting of General Assembly of Baltic-Black Sea Regional Commission.

I want to underline that such meeting is held in Ukraine first time.

I am sure it is only the beginning.

With the laps of time it will be good tradition in Commission's practice to hold their meetings in Odessa or other maritime cities of Ukraine on regular base.

Dear friends!

During this two days we, undoubtedly, we will hear many wise speeches, interesting ideas and accurate words concerning today's Black Sea region and perspectives that are opening in the face of it over new circumstances.

This shows again the importance of the Black Sea as for the countries of the region so to the Europe as well.

This region forms strategic importance for Ukraine, the country that examines itself as its integral part.

Ukraine is an active regional player.

It searches and analyses on constant base all processes that occur in the Black Sea region.

We put all our efforts to connect its future with such concepts as "safety", "prosperity", and "development".

And, before we pass to the topic, I want to dwell on key principles that Ukraine's diplomacy is following during determination its basic directions of its policy in the Black Sea region.

First principle: "irreversibility".

Ukraine's policy towards Black Sea region determines by irreversibility of our country's policy to be a full member of European Union (and NATO).

Ukraine as integral part of wide Black Sea region comes off the idea that Ukraine's future is inseparable connected with European Union.

Second principle: "no alternative"

The analysis of current processes in the region shows that there is no any mutually acceptable alternative of prolongation of two parallel and complementary processes of "cooperation deepening between countries of the region" and "further integration to EU".

Third principle: "common property and common responsibility".

Black Sea region is our "common property".

That is why we must bear "common responsibility" for the processes that are going on in the region and for their results.

It is our "common task" to play roles of equal partners who are united by trust and common interest.

It is time to deny practical use of such statements as "leadership" or "sphere of influence distribution".

Obviously they are not corresponding to the time's reality.

On the contrary, they worsen relations that are already strained between some countries of wide Black Sea region.

That is why term "synergy" was used by EU first time not occasionally. It symbolizes the attempt to propose to the countries of the region such superstructure that will unite existing processes and lead them to one common.

And last forth principle: principle "to follow European values".

Ukraine is confident, that the idea of the European integration might be this ground factor that in spite of present "lines of confrontation" will help to "crystal and step-by-step" development of the region.

Common faithfulness to the democratic principles, rule of law, proper governing, respect of the human rights, basic freedoms and human dignity, following the principles of market economy together with the respect guarantee of the sovereignty principles, territorial inviolability, independence and border inviolability must be put into the base of the idea.

As to the main directions of Ukraine's policy in wide Black Sea region, they are:

1st direction: safety

We are talking about peaceful solving of "freeze" and "glowed" conflicts, and, overcoming of its catastrophic results for the region.

2nd direction: economic

We take up the cause of universal free trade zone creation with EU, that will be deprived from artificial exceptions and limitations.

3rd direction: sectoral

We are going to continue using all existing possibilities for more effective use of unique transit potential of the region.

Passing to such energetic policy in our region that will correspond to the norms and standards of EU is our strategically important task.

Also, necessity exists in activation of real actions aiming at improving of ecologic status of safety and proper defense of environmental protection.

And, finally 4th direction: development of people's contacts

We call on all partners to recover efforts in the sphere of humanitarian contacts strengthening, cultural dialog and cooperation in solving problems off all society, support of common democratic processes.

Ukraine put efforts to create proper conditions for the encouragement and promotion to the Ukraine maritime regions to take active part in transborder cooperation.

And, last direction, the 6th: extension of EU by joining Bulgaria and Romania transformed geographical borders of Black Sea region to the borders of EU.

This gains special importance from the view of perspective realization of transborder cooperation projects.

As experience of EU countries-members shows that transborder and interregional cooperation have significant positive influence to the development of relations between countries.

They promote improving of the situation in the region and strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation between its states.

That is why cooperation of separate regions of Ukraine with administrative units of other countries and attraction to the realization of different EU projects are, without overstatement, of primary importance of Ukraine's regional policy in Black Sea.

Speaking of directions of Ukraine's policy in Black Sea region, I want to attract your attention to the evaluation of Ukrainian part of regional initiative realization status "Black Sea Synergy".

Even in spite the fact, that since this initiative was given life not many things were done to fill it with the real projects or interesting ideas, it is not a reason to "lay off the hands".

On the contrary, available critic and analysis of the failure reasons in the synergy realization open new perspectives for the activation of the existing, aiming at concrete process result of regional cooperation.

And we are ready to share our thoughts and ideas with all our partners who are interested in successful realization of this initiative.

It is time to recognize that there is no existing Black Sea regional organization or forum that is all-embracing or able to perform system creative function of regional cooperation on its own and without connection with other organizations and structures.

This consider to be the task of Black Sea Synergy to become "arched initiative" in some way, that will be able to active participation not only of

wide Black Sea regional countries or EU countries-members, but of all interested parts to unite and to lead out current processes on new level of mutually beneficial partnership and economic integration.

Is it necessary to point out what medium class will profit of it?

Ukraine **position** itself as the country that is ready to take with all interested parts the responsibility of Black Sea transformation to the region of peace, prosperity and safety.

The problems of wide Black Sea region is so huge, that I definitely need more than one hour to cover just one of the abovementioned principles and directions of Ukraine's regional policy.

But, I am absolutely confident, that the main sign of the Ukrainian part was noticed.

It consists of the fact that Ukraine was and will continue to be active player and EU partner in Black Sea region, who comes out not from its own ambitions but from the interests of all Black Sea.
