

- Халқаро муносабатлар ва ташқи сиёсат муаммолари ■
- Проблемы международных отношений и внешней политики ■

Kh. Yunusov

The European Union and Central Asia: historical overview, current situation and prospects*

Historical Background. The EU and CA relationships have more than a quarter century history. The issue of recognition of new states that became independent in Central Asian region came forth before European Community¹ in end of XX century. With the “Joint Declaration of Twelve” issued on 31 December 1991, European Community recognized state independence of Central Asian republics [1]. The recognition of the independent statehood of new Central Asian republics developed in the following way: first, new understanding (or approach) with regard to the procedure of recognition of the independence of newly emerged States was worked out. This understanding was a part of the document entitled “Guidelines on the Recognition of New States in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union” adopted on 16 December 1991 in Brussels [2]. Although the Declaration was not of a binding character, it only opened the door for European Community member states to recognize newly independent states of former Soviet Union. With “Declaration of Twelve” of 31 December 1991, independence of 9 member of the Commonwealth of Independent

* This article has been prepared within the project SENECA (Strengthening and Energizing EU-Central Asia relations) funded from the European Union’s Horizon - 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 770256.

¹ When reference is made to the “Community” it is European Community which is generally meant. The other two communities have never been played an independent role since their existence. After July 2003, the European Coal and Steel Community formally, and the European Atomic Energy Community set up in 1957 materially, for all practical purposes have been absorbed into the EC, which explains why the name “Community” is most used in singular in the most literature.

Khaydarali Yunusov, PhD, Senior lecturer of UWED, Jean Monnet Chairholder.

States (CIS) was recognized [3]. “Memorandums of Understanding” between the republic of Central Asia and European Commission were signed in 1992. The first representative office of the EU in Central Asia was opened in Almaty, the capital of Kazakhstan, and then diplomatic relations were established. Later on, the Mission of the CA republics to EU started its functioning in Brussels [4].

Relations between the European Community and the republics of Central Asia started in this manner. Recognition of new independent states by the European Community gave rise to two types of practical and theoretical issues of International Law. The first is the recognition of the primary subjects of international law (Nation-States) by the secondary subject, i.e. intergovernmental regional organization such as European Community and the second problem is the development of new criteria and requirements for the recognition of new independent States.

Until that moment there was no precedent in the history of the international relations when international organization (despite the EU/EC are considered more than international organization) recognized independence of newly created State. The other important point is that there were no any universal requirements regulating the procedure of recognition of new independent States. Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of the States of 26 December 1933 mentions only about the classical selective criteria of States that are necessary for their recognition. But the criteria and the procedure on recognition of new States was always regarded as a matter falling within the internal competence of every State and in practice there were no any specific requirements.

Declaration entitled “Guidelines on the Recognition of New States in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union” put new requirements in this regard. Surely, these new requirements are not traditional and important point here is that “Any member states of Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) did not express any objection to such a policy of the European Community” [5].

One more specific feature of those relations is mutual recognition and establishment of diplomatic relations between the European community and new independent states of Central Asia occurred simultaneously, in parallel but separately, with the mutual recognition and establishment of diplomatic relations between each member states of the European Community and Central Asian republics.

For example, independent Uzbekistan established diplomatic relations with Kingdom of Denmark on 25 January 1992, with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on 18 February 1992, with the

With its rich natural resources, important geographical position and high human potential, the Central Asian region is within the partnership and collaborative interests of the European Union.

Republic of Finland on 26 February 1992, with the Republic of France on 1 March 1992, with Federative Republic of Germany on 6 March 1992, with the Kingdom of Belgium on 10 March 1992, with the Republic of Greece on 16 March 1992, with the Kingdom of Spain on 17 March 1992, with the Republic of Italy on 24 March 1992, with the Republic of Austria on 25 March 1992, with Grand Duchy of Luxembourg on 10 July 1992, with the Republic of Portugal on 12

August 1992, with the Kingdom of the Netherlands on 24 November 1992, with the Republic of Ireland on 7 November 1997.

It is important to keep in mind here that it is not necessary to establish mutual diplomatic relations at the same time with the diplomatically presence in the form of opening diplomatic establishments, and usually latter one depends on procedural, material and financial issues.

Strategic Interests and Dilemma. The relations of the EU with the countries of the Central Asian region have never been linear. The studies of evolution of the relationship between the EU and Central Asia show that EU had to change its strategy, position and policy a number of times. Lack of information about the region in general, and countries of the region in particular, immaturity of common external policy and institutional arrangements at that time could be seen as the main reasons for that. However, pertinent transformations in the region are undoubtedly pushing the EU to modify its strategic priorities in the region.

Historically, CA has a centuries-old tradition of bringing Europe and Asia together as it lies at a strategically important intersection between the two continents. The Central Asian states have undergone serious political and economic transformations since the beginning of their independence. When Central Asian countries entered into the international scene as independent states 27 years ago, a number of European countries started establishing a permanent dialogue with them.

The break-up of the Soviet Union and emergence of new independent states in CA in the 1990s led to significant geopolitical changes. The formation of the republics of CA was taking place during a crucial moment in the history of international relations and encouraged to change the geopolitical situation on the Eurasian continent, adjusting the interests of world powers. With its rich natural resources, important geographical position and high human potential, the Central Asian region is within the partnership and collaborative interests of the European Union. Particularly, the EU Commission made a special emphasis on the EU strategic interests

in CA in its “Communication on relations with Newly Independent States of Central Asia” [6] already in 1995. It’s voiced in the Communication that “Union has important interests in Central Asia. These interests are of economic and geopolitical significance. Especially, based on the fact that European Union being the provider of services, various products, and investment capital to Central Asia, and at the same time potential consumer of the region’s energy products, it is particularly interested in development of energy sector in Central Asia”.

The interests of the EU in Central Asia are manifested in the following points:

First, with its territory of about 3.5 mln. km² and 70 million populations, CA is a great consumer market for the EU. The continued increase of population and high consuming capacity of the region makes it even more attractive. In other words, there is a diversified market for all of the products produced in Europe.

Second, the EU member states are massive consumers of Central Asian energy resource products. Especially, the region’s gas, oil, uranium and precious metal deposits have long been of keen interest to European business. Central Asia’s richness in gas and oil reserves makes the region especially attractive. The EU seeks to secure energy supplies, especially in view of its dependency on Russia, which delivers substantial part of its oil and gas imports.

Third, located among Russia, China, India and Iran, the region is the most sensitive part of geopolitical balance of the Eurasian continent. The disturbance of this balance may provoke strategic threats of various kinds. For example, the potential threats within the region: extremism, separatism, nationalism, parochialism, drug traffic, and other kinds of threats could constitute a source of threat for Europe’s security as well. That includes the situation in Afghanistan, which is integral part of regional security of CA.

Finally, with its rich history, traditions, national and local peculiarities, enlightenment and other features, CA is an attractive region to Europe. The increasing flow of tourists to the region is the best proof for such a statement. This region has promising chances of becoming “spiritual and cultural resort” or “relaxing base” for Europe in near future.

In its turn, having united 28 states, with a half billion people and 4.324.782 square km, third by its population number, after China and India and appeared seventh biggest by its territory, the EU has a significant rank in foreign policy of Central Asian republics. Multilateral and bilateral relations with the EU and its member states is considered one of the main foreign policy directions of the countries of the region.

The significance of bilateral relations for Central Asia is reflected on the following statements:

First, the leading states (Germany, France, Italy, Spain and so far Great Britain) of the European Union constitute the source of high technologies to CA. Applying modern western technologies in aircraft construction, mechanical engineering, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, construction and generally, in all aspects of production is of vital importance in developing medium and small business in CA.

Second, the EU, taken as a whole with all its member states, represents the second biggest, after CIS, consumer-market for supplies of Central Asian countries.

Third, Western Europe is not only the main commercial partner of the region, but also the main source of investments. From initial periods of independence, one of the central concerns was to attract foreign investments into the countries of the region, and favorable investment environment has been created for them.

Finally, ensuring and maintaining common stability and security in Eurasia is an urgent task for both respective parties. The EU and Central Asia are equally concerned with fighting threats such as international terrorism, drug trade, extremism and other kinds, and providing regional stability. However, along with this, US, Russian, Chinese and Iranian interests are also at stake. This means the region is also a place for fierce competition for the EU, which defines the place of Europe in the 21st Century World Politics.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the time has come for a new partnership between the EU and Central Asia states in a globalized world. The common goal to achieve stability and prosperity by means of a peaceful inter-action made Europe and Central Asia relations for increased cooperation. The strong EU commitment towards its Eastern neighbours within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy has also brought Europe and Central Asia closer to each other, both in terms of political cooperation and economic development.

Up to present days, these relations have significantly developed and revealed closeness of values, economic and security interests. The growing dynamics of bilateral relations between the EU Member States and the countries of Central Asia also confirmed that there is a significant potential for strategic cooperation between the EU and CA region.

However, EU-CA relationship has not reached its peak yet. Within the framework of current relationships there are many unutilized spaces, and these are the areas of opportunity. Prospects of the future cooperation will depend on the effective utilization of those missed opportunities.

Particularly, many challenges facing the globalized world affect Europe and Central Asia alike, and warrant a common response. Security questions and regional economic development require close cooperation of the EU with each Central Asian state, considering their geographical location, in particular with respect to Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran. This applies to developments in the areas of border management, migration, the fight against organized crime and international terrorism, as well as human, drugs, and arms trafficking.

The dependency of the EU on external energy sources and the need for a diversified energy supply policy in order to increase energy security open further perspectives for cooperation between the EU and Central Asia. EU efforts to strengthen local energy markets will help to improve investment conditions, increase energy production and efficiency in Central Asia and diversify energy supply and distribution in the region.

At the time of the European Union's recognition in the international arena as a major economic and financial institute, the necessity of uplifting Central Asian political, economic, trade and cultural relations with this organization and its member states to a new stage requires elaboration of a thorough analysis of politico-legal and economic bases of these bilateral relations. New prospects of partnership and cooperation relations have exposed the prerequisite necessity for broadening and consolidating treaty-legal foundations of bi- and multilateral relations. These types of situations determine the pressing need for examining all aspects and legal sources of the European Union–Central Asia interactions.

Within the framework of current relationships there are many unutilized spaces, and these are the areas of opportunity. Prospects of the future cooperation will depend on the effective utilization of those missed opportunities.

Treaty-based Foundations: Partnership and Cooperation Agreements.

The Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCAs) are the main instrument regulating the relations between the EU and new independent states of CA appeared after the collapse of the former Soviet Union. They replaced the Agreement on trade and economic cooperation signed in December 1989 between the EEC and the Soviet Union.

The PCA with Uzbekistan was signed on June 21, 1996¹, with Kazakhstan on January 23, 1995 [7] and with Kyrgyzstan on February 9, 1995 and all

¹ On November 22-23, 2018, during working visit of the Uzbek government delegation of the Republic of Uzbekistan led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdulaziz Kamilov, an agreement was reached on the beginning of negotiations on an **Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (EPCA)** between Uzbekistan and the European Union, which will replace existing from July 1, 1999 the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the European Communities and their member states.

of them entered into force on July 1, 1999. Partnership and Cooperation Agreement establishing a partnership between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Tajikistan, of the other part has been signed on November 11, 2004, and came into force as of first January 2010. The PCA with Turkmenistan, it was signed on May 24, 1998.

PCAs cover a broad spectrum of issues such as trade in goods, economic cooperation including investment promotion and protection among others, energy, environment, transport, tourism besides financial cooperation, cross-border supply of services and others. From the point of view of some authors, "...despite this broadness the established relations are not very deep, e.g. the PCAs do not create a free trade area, but contain at most a "prospect" of it. [8]

Moreover, all PCAs include human rights and democracy clauses which still have been a topic of endless discussions. Human rights and democracy clauses so-called "essential element clause" have similar wording in use among the twelve PCAs including PCAs with Central Asian republics. The PCAs with Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan contain the following "essential element clause": "Respect for democracy, principles of international law and human rights constitute an essential element of partnership and of this Agreement".

The PCA with Turkmenistan mentions in Art.2: "Respect for democratic principles and fundamental and human rights constitute an essential element of this Agreement". In addition to the "essential element" clauses the PCAs also contain a "suspension" or "non-compliance" clauses, lying down the procedure to be followed in cases of human rights violations. These clauses are identical in all PCAs.

This type of suspension clause was first used in 1994 in the association agreements with Bulgaria and Romania. Later, it replaced the so-called "Baltic suspension clause", used in the treaties with the Baltic states and Albania, which did not refer to the possibility of negotiations and demanded "serious violations" of human rights. Consequently, the "appropriate measures" referred to in the clause mean a partial or complete suspension or termination of the agreement.

Although the EU uses human rights clauses for several years, no treaty so far has been suspended solely due to human rights violations. There were some cases of treaty suspension with some states like Rwanda, Somali, Sudan but the suspension was not only due to human rights violations, but due to a general non-fulfillment of a treaty mixed with human rights violations e.g. civil wars [9]. As for Central Asian republics, this practice has not been real case so far.

Last eastern enlargement [10], the European integration enhancement and its impact on the EU-CA relations, internal and external factors requiring some changes that are necessary to make this agreement work more effectively, need thorough investigation from the perspective of the European Union and International Law. One of the main problems here is that after the last enlargement, all new member states became part of the PCA (Central and Eastern European countries in 2005, Bulgaria and Romania in 2008 and Croatia in 2014) under the requests of the EU Law without considering its complex nature. The point of this problem is that since then all of the EU member states have been seeking replacement of the bilateral agreements with given country of the region (Central Asia) by the PCA, as far as the European Union Law (including international treaties) is supreme over national legal systems. The serious questions that lawyers and politicians encounter today and are required to find a clear answer to are: *Does the PCA cover all scope of bilateral agreements? What kind of implementation instruments compatible with their national interests exist? How to achieve the main goals of the PCA and take benefits from it? What would be differences between Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCAs) and Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (EPCAs)?* etc. Due to particular status and legal nature of the PCA both the European and Central Asian scholars and practicing lawyers have been definitely seeking the best solution but things still go in the non-identified direction.

Institutional system of bilateral relations consists of diplomatic, conventional, and unilateral (non-conventional) institutions.

The current process of revising bilateral agreements between new member states of the European Union and Central Asian republics and then promoting those relations, replacing previously bilateral treaty-legal frame by the so-called multilateral “mixed agreements” where the EU and the Member States act jointly, still remains a main point of discussion.

Institutional Frame. The relations between the EU and Central Asian republics are put into a stable institutional system. Such institutions are responsible for prosperous development of mutual relations, as well as taking care of every day related issues.

Institutional system of bilateral relations consists of diplomatic, conventional, and unilateral (non-conventional) institutions. Diplomatic institutions are meant to realize diplomatic missions and are formed at a high level. The conventional institutions comprise of the institutional frame of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements. Unilateral institutions are formed for assisting and developing bilateral relations

within various ministers, governmental bodies and agencies of each part. They also perform other related tasks.

Diplomatic institutions comprise of all diplomatic representative offices, delegations and missionaries of both parties. In majority parts, Central Asian Republics' Embassy to Kingdom of Belgium also serves as the mission to the European Union.

Conventional institutional system includes all institutions or other bodies established on the basis of mutual consensus within bilateral or multilateral agreements among parties. As pointed out above, PCAs are the main bonds in bilateral relations of the EU and Central Asia. In example of Uzbekistan, since the enforcement of PCA starting July 1, 1999, there has been formed a number of institutions that are responsible for implementation and monitoring of this agreement.

The PCA's XI Chapter ("Institutional, General and Final Disposition"), articles 78-85 and 89 speaks about bringing solutions to issues related to institutions [11]. In particular, articles 78-79 give directions on formation and duties of the Cooperation Council (CC). According to these articles, the Cooperation Council is "an administrating body for realization of the agreement". The CC oversees all international issues and issues within its mission, and gives directions where necessary. The CC's actions are supervised by internal Regulation of the Cooperation Council of the Republic of Uzbekistan, on one side, and European Union and its member countries, on another side, signed on September 13, 1999.¹

PCA's article 80 stipulates about forming of the Cooperation Committee under the Cooperation Council. The Cooperation committee is responsible for preparing for Cooperation Council meetings, effectiveness of the Cooperation Council, and other related issues.

Another important institution mentioned in PCA with Uzbekistan is Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation Committee. The articles 83-85 of the Agreement are dedicated to explaining this committee's formation, mandate, duties and responsibilities. The committee comprises of the members of the European Parliament and Parliament (Oliy Majlis) of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Its meeting can be organized as the committee itself decides.

The Inter-Parliamentary Committee has an authority to request reports on activities of the Cooperation Committee and give its recommendations accordingly. The Cooperation Committee is obliged to provide with the requested information. The committee can organize meetings at any time

¹ For the text of the Internal Regulation, see: Règlement intérieur du Conseil de coopération entre les communautés européennes et leurs Etats membres, d'une part, et la République d'Ouzbékistan, d'autre part, en date du 13 septembre 1999 - Règlement intérieur du comité de coopération. Journal officiel n° L 265 du 13/10/1999 p. 0031-0035, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/FR/ALL/?uri=OJ:L:1999:265:TOC>. (Date of Accession : 29.09.2018).

as necessary. Each party takes turns to appoint a head to the Inter-Parliamentary Committee.

Recent developments. As of beginning of the XXI century, the necessity of raising the relations between the EU and CA to a new level was felt by the leaders of the two sides, and the EU's new initiatives were evident.

The Council of the European Union, in its document entitled "The European Union and Central Asia: Strategy for a New Partnership", adopted 23 June 2007, made the European Union's strategic interests in the region even clearer [12].

This strategy for a new partnership with Central Asia developed during Germany's EU Council Presidency, discussed at 2809th External Relations Council meeting, in Luxembourg on April 23, 2007 [13], drafted by Permanent Representatives Committee on May 31, 2007, adopted at 2809th External Relations Council meeting in Luxembourg on June 18, 2007 [14], and finally adopted during the Brussels European Council on 21 and 22 June, 2007 [15].

This strategy for the first time sets out political guidelines for a considerably enhanced the EU commitment in Central Asia. With its Central Asian concept, the EU underlines the region's growing strategic significance due to its location between Europe, Asia, Russia and South Asia. The EU shares a broad spectrum of interests with Central Asia, ranging from efforts to achieve peace in Afghanistan, via the fight against drugs transit and extremism, improved regional cooperation, to the diversification of energy supplies.

The EU's strategy on Central Asia favours a balanced bilateral and regional approach which takes due account of the specific requirements and performance of each individual country. Regular political dialogue with the countries of the region will aim not only to increase cooperation in the various fields such as economics, transport, energy, the environment and education, but also to create a broader foundation of shared values based among other things on the rule of law and human rights. According to this document, the European Council would evaluate the implementation of the Central Asia strategy for the first time in June 2008 and at least every two years thereafter.

As for content, it is possible to say that its political significance is even more important than previous ones; it was for the first time that such a document for Central Asia has been adopted by Europe. Unlike

The EU shares a broad spectrum of interests with Central Asia, ranging from efforts to achieve peace in Afghanistan, via the fight against drugs transit and extremism, improved regional cooperation, to the diversification of energy supplies.

the ones considered above, this document is aimed at long-term, concise (19 pages), and mainly determinant of EU's political relation to the region and sets forth the ways of its implementation.

The document contends that "In the beginning of XXI century, and in the conditions of globalization, it is time for European Union to engage in partnership relations of a new quality with Central Asian countries". It's stated in the document that Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCAs) signed between the EC and Central Asian countries should be fully implemented. To this aim, more active, than before EU's approach to Central Asia was proclaimed and it was intended to improve institutional basis of the dialog.

A closer analysis of these allows us to reach the conclusion that for the first-time synergetic interrelations appeared between conceptual political position, legally-binding acts and European external assistance. That is unique and most important feature of the last development of mutual relations.

In other words, at bilateral level, the EU's relations with Central Asian states are based on the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCAs). The PCAs are built upon three pillars: political dialogue, trade

According to Council's statement, alongside high-level political dialogue support to education, intercultural dialogues, cooperation between civil society entities, people-to-people contacts between the EU and CA should be emphasized in the new strategy.

and economic relations and cooperation in a variety of sectors. They are based on common values of respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law and include commitments to align their respective legal frameworks with that of the EU, and to undertake regulatory convergence in economic sectors. These PCAs provide a common regional framework for the EU's cooperation with all five Central Asian Republics. On the other hand, a large

number of important issues facing Central Asia can only be addressed at regional level. This is why it is a core priority for action in the EU Strategy towards this region and that is why these elements take place in the "The EU and Central Asia: Strategy for a New Partnership".

Also, it was declared that in each Central Asian country representative offices of European Commission would be established. The document provided also the political engagement with the region with more permanent character, and it noted that new special dialog on human rights and energy partnership issues would be constructed.

All in all, this document marks EU's relations with Central Asian countries with newer, more important appearance, provides refreshed

grounds to develop these relations in practice, and in this regard, displays the decisive political will of European side.

Over the last decade the EU-CA relations have been developed under this strategy of the EU. The EU Strategy for Central Asia which has been implemented for more than 10 years foresees that progress made on implementing the Strategy be reviewed in 2008 and every two years thereafter. Four implementation progress reports have been prepared in 2008, 2010 and 2012, 2015 (13 January) respectively. The conclusions adopted by the Foreign Affairs Council on 25 June 2012 approved the latest progress report and confirmed that all priority areas of the Strategy remained important [16].

Toward a New Strategy. Step by step Central Asian issue became a persistent subject in the foreign policy agenda of the EU. In the EU Global Strategy for Foreign and Security Policy, entitled “Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe”, announced and elaborated by the High Representative Federica Mogherini in 2016, has been emphasized that “The EU internal and external security are ever more intertwined: its security at home depends on peace beyond European borders. ...It is in the interests of our citizens to invest in the resilience of states and societies to the east stretching into Central Asia, and to the south down to Central Africa. ...In Central and South Asia, we will deepen cooperation on counter-terrorism, anti-trafficking and migration, as well as enhance transport, trade and energy connectivity” [17]. In the EU Global Strategy, the High Representative Federica Mogherini paid a specific attention to EU-Central Asia relations and defines the priority of the inter-regional cooperation such as fight on counter-terrorism, anti-trafficking and migration, as well as enhance transport, trade and energy connectivity.

As a next step, the EU Foreign Affairs Council adopted conclusions on the EU newest strategy for the region on June 19, 2017. The Council therefore asked the High Representative and the Commission to come forward with a proposal for a new Strategy by the end of 2019 in accordance with the EU Global Strategy. According to Council’s statement, alongside high-level political dialogue support to education, intercultural dialogues, cooperation between civil society entities, people-to-people contacts between the EU and CA should be emphasized in the new strategy. The Council also underlines the importance of support to education. Education programmes provided by the EU and individual Member States should play a key role in helping Central Asian institutions to build capacity to offer modern and inclusive curricula that respond to the needs of the labour market and contribute to the promotion of the values of democracy, human rights, fundamental freedoms and intercultural dialogue, by making

full use of the existing Education Initiative and its Platform. On the tenth anniversary of the original Central Asia strategy the Council believes that it is time to review and renew our relationship, considering new geopolitical realities and the evolving needs and capacities of the Central Asian partners [18].

On November 10-11, 2017, HR/VP Federica Mogherini paid a visit Uzbekistan for the first time to participate in EU-Central Asia Foreign Ministers' Meeting "EU and Central Asia: Working for a Safer and More

Past twenty-seven years have been the period of test in the relationship between the EU and CA countries. Thus, at this stage, it is very essential to review and evaluate the results, and to establish an agenda for further strengthening the relations.

Prosperous Future Together" during which she officially called CA partners for a partnership for change, for development and for security. According to the HR/VP Federica Mogherini "The European Union and Central Asia are partners for change...But this isn't just about business, as it wasn't just about the trade route. Diversity and pluralism are written in this region's history, and there is no reason to

fear them, be it on Central Asian territory, in Europe or elsewhere. On the contrary, diversity and pluralism can only make our States and our societies stronger. With independent media, an open space for civil society, human rights for all, institutions are more credible, States more resilient in times of crisis – and you know that we are crossing times of crisis - and economies are more solid and attractive. This is another interest we share. A partnership for change is a partnership for innovation, for research and for human growth" [19]. At this meeting she announced the call by the EU Foreign Affairs Council for a new EU Central Asia Strategy by the end of 2019, which should be based on mutual interests, common approaches and values of the EU and countries of the region.

In its turn, the high officials of the Central Asian countries focused on the potential for enhanced economic relations between the EU and the Central Asian countries. Strengthening the nexus between security, migration, climate change and economic sustainable development could contribute to stronger economies. Transparent rules and regulations, as well as increased use of e-governance solutions, are important for a favourable investment climate and private sector development in the countries of Central Asia, which will promote the region's further sustainable economic development [20].

Perspectives of Mutual Relations and Conclusion. Hence, nowadays present conditions themselves require a more constructive and comprehensive discourse on the history, current status and future

prospects of the EU-CA relationships. Indeed, in order to effectively solve the issues at hand and set a right path for the future development of cooperation, we need to look back to the history and carefully re-assess it. Past twenty-seven years have been the period of test in the relationship between the EU and CA countries. Thus, at this stage, it is very essential to review and evaluate the results, and to establish an agenda for further strengthening the relations.

However, there are many internal and external factors that might impact on the course of bilateral and multilateral relations. But it is also to acknowledge that past years have seen a wide range of positive developments in the EU-CA relations. So, problems and successes usually come side by side. Therefore, we should work on these problems in order to find a constructive solutions to them in the future. The followings could be the areas to start:

First, although the official level relations (i.e. diplomatic and intergovernmental) have been developing steadily, unofficial relations i.e. public diplomacy (relations between nongovernmental structures, civil society institutions) remain underdeveloped and need to be given serious attention;

Second, EU-CA relations have not been noticed (or, unpopular) in “lower” levels of society. Ordinary public is not well informed about the contributions of such relationships in their lives. Recent developments in EU’s internal and external policies, Brexit and other events have increased a necessity for reliable and unbiased information about the EU and its’ consequences in other regions like CA;

Third, academic and scientific exchanges are also insufficiently developed. Scientific publications and scholarly works on the European Union remain underdeveloped in Central Asia. The EU-CA academic networks, scientific communities, joint projects and grants well below their actual potential. Fostering relations between academic communities may contribute to the further development of other areas like cultural and scientific cooperations, mutual understanding between peoples, business-touristic cooperaton in, etc. Therefore, it is very important to convene non-officials, civil societies and academic representatives around the table through the joint workshops and seminars, and to increase the amount and quality of publications (both public and scientific) in order to provide policy makers as well as general public with reliable and necessary information.

Therefore, it is high time to re-assess the 27-year old history of the relationship between the EU and CA, to identify existing problems and areas of inefficiency, and help find solutions to the issues through the academic and scientific instruments. In doing so, the EU newest strategy

To this aim, it is proposed to conclude bilateral and unilateral treaties between the EU, and its members and Central Asian republics on the new spheres of cooperation and partnership such as agricultural and inoculums products trade, education, intellectual property, and different types of tourism.

on Central Asia should concentrate on two interconnected factors: fostering the dialogue between the academic world, policy-makers, public servants, and civil society institutions, on the one hand, and disseminating information among the general public at large, on the second hand.

As a conclusion to this article, the following points can be made:

First, despite the fact that interrelations between the EU and CA were established

not long ago, relations between European and Central Asian people have long historical roots. Devoting attention to historical factors and taking into account historical experience on analysing present and future perspectives of mutual relations can prove effective for both sides. In fact, the EU should keep it in mind that it is engaging in relationship with the region, which was considered ancient cultural hotbed of human history. Scholars such as Ibn-Sino (Avicenna), Al-Khorazmiy (founder of algorithm), Al-Biruniy (founder-father of geodesy), Al-Farobiy, and Al-Farghoniy refined in the region had greatly contributed to the development of European science. In addition, it should be remembered that Europe owes it to Amir Timur (Great Tamerlan) and his historic service for saving it from inevitable invasion of Ottoman Turks;

Second, the process of mutual recognition and establishment of diplomatic relations between the European communities and independent states of CA is a legal precedent of theoretical and practical significance. This process paralleled in harmony with special procedures of recognition of new independent states by the EC and the process of establishing diplomatic relations with them by the EU member states;

Third, as a matter of scope, the relations between the EU and CA are developing in bilateral (European Union – each republic of CA) and multilateral-regional (European Union – Central Asia) ranges. Some Central Asian republics, such as Turkmenistan, while actively participating in European Union's bilateral programs, their participation in European Union-Central Asian interregional dialog remains particularly weak.

Fourth, economic partnership, mutual trade and human rights issues are the most priority and main directions of the EU-CA relationships.

Fifth, the further prosperity of relationships between the EU and CA is as well connected to the legal grounds of these relations. As a result of analysis of contractual grounds of mutual relations, it was concluded that it was necessary to widen and strengthen the conventional basis of bilateral

and unilateral relations. To this aim, it is proposed to conclude bilateral and unilateral treaties between the EU, and its members and Central Asian republics on the new spheres of cooperation and partnership such as agricultural and inoculums products trade, education, intellectual property, and different types of tourism. It is time to conclude treaties on the spheres of partnerships within the scope of European Union Law, and in particular on terrorism, fighting against various kinds of international crimes, interregional security, as well as judiciary and police issues.

Finally, bringing together the legislations of the EU and CA could prove most effective mean to implement bilateral and multilateral, and especially, Partnership and Cooperation Agreements. In this regard, mutual harmonization of the EU and Central Asian states“ legislations, creating detailed methodology of their legal approximation, and adopting corresponding laws are appropriate ways to attain this goal.

To sum up, Central Asia, from geographic, geopolitical, economic and cultural point of views, is the region detaching Europe from Asia, and at the same time, the region connecting it to Asia. Enlargement of the European integration to the East and intermediating factor of Turkey at the thresholds of the eventual EU membership will foster the mutual understanding and cooperation between Europe and Central Asia and results in even deeper perceiving of Eurasia’s integrity.

Literature

1. Bulletin de CE, n 1-2/ 1992, <http://ec.europa.eu/archives/bulletin/en/welcome.htm>, (Date of Accession: 25.09.2018).
2. “Guidelines on the Recognition of New States in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union”, John P. Grant-J. Craig Barker, ed., *Encyclopaedic Dictionary of International Law*, Oxford University Press, 2009, p. 208-213.
3. Charpentier J., “Les déclarations des Douze sur la reconnaissance des nouveaux Etats”, *Revue General de Droit international public (RGDIP)*, Paris, 1992., p. 348.
4. “Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan №162 - On opening the Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the Kingdom of Belgium”, 6 May 1995, <http://www.lex-uz> (Date of Accession: 25.09.2018).
5. Lukashuk A., Saidov A. *Bases of the Modern International Law Theory*. Academic textbook. – Tashkent: “Adolat”, 2006. – P. 106.
6. “Les relations de l’UE avec les nouveaux états indépendants d’Asie centrale: Communication//UE/Commission européenne”: <http://ec.europa.eu/archives/bulletin/en/welcome.htm>, (Date of Accession: 27.09.2018).
7. “European Parliament ratifies Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) partnership with #Kazakhstan”, *eureporter*, 12 December 2017, <https://www.eureporter.co/frontpage/2017/12/12/51104>, (Date of Accession: 30.09.2018).
8. Berdiyev Berdi. “ECHuman rights and democracy clauses in the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements with states of Former Soviet Union”, *Central Asian Journal*, Volume: 3, No: 2., p. 31.

9. Idem., p.39.

10. Ronald Inglehart, *Modernization and Postmodernism: Cultural, Economic and Political Change in 43 Societies*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey 1997; Piotr Sztompka, *The Sociology of Social Change*, Blackwell 1993; Kjell Goldmann, *Transforming the European Nation-State*, Stockholm University, Sweden, 2001; Norman Davies, *Europe: A History*, The Bodley Head, London 2014.

11. "Partnership and Cooperation Agreement came into force on July 1", 1999: http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/ceeca/pca/pca_uzbekistan.pdf, (Date of Accession: 28.09.2018).

12. "The EU and Central Asia: Strategy for a New Partnership", *Council of the European Union*, 31 May 2007, Brussels, <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&f=ST%2010113%202007%20INIT>, (Date of Accession: 29.09.2018).

13. "General Affairs and External Relations", *Council of the European Union*, 23-24 April 2007 http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/gena/93798.pdf, (Date of Accession: 29.09.2018); "Council Conclusions on Central Asia", *Council of the European Union*, 23 April 2007, Luxembourg,

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/gena/93790.pdf, (Date of Accession: 29.09.2018).

14. "General Affairs and External Relations", *Council of the European Union*, 18 June 2007, Luxembourg, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/gena/94804.pdf, (Date of Accession: 29.09.2018).

15. "Brussels European Council 21/22 June 2007", *Council of the European Union*, 20 July 2007, Brussels, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/94932.pdf, (Date of Accession: 29.09.2018).

16. "Progress Report on the Implementation of the EU Strategy for Central Asia Implementation Review and Outline for Future Orientations": http://eeas.europa.eu/central_asia/docs/20120628_progress_report_en.pdf (Date of Accession: 30.09.2018).

17. "Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe - A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy", *European Union Global Strategy*, June 2016,

<https://europa.eu/globalstrategy/en/shared-vision-common-action-stronger-europe>, (Date of Accession: 30.09.2018); "Progress Report on the implementation of the EU Strategy for Central Asia - Implementation Review and outline for Future Orientations": http://eeas.europa.eu/central_asia/docs/20120628_progress_report_en.pdf (Date of Accession: 30.09.2018).

18. "Council conclusions on the EU Strategy for Central Asia", *Council of the European Union*, 19 June 2017, Brussels: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2017/06/19/conclusions-central-asia> (Date of Accession: 30.09.2018).

19. "Speech by HR/VP Federica Mogherini at the opening ceremony of the International Conference on Security and Sustainable Development under the auspices of the United Nation", *European Union External Action*, 10 November 2017: https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/35422/speech-hrvp-federica-mogherini-opening-ceremony-international-conference-security-and_en, (Date of Accession: 30.09.2018).

20. "Joint Communiqué: European Union - Central Asia Foreign Ministers' Meeting "EU and Central Asia: Working for a Safer and More Prosperous Future Together", *European Union External Action*, 10 November 2017: https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/35423/joint-communic%C3%A9-european-union-central-asia-foreign-ministers%E2%80%99-meeting-%E2%80%99CeU-and-central-asia_en, (Date of Accession: 30.09.2018).