

Baltic Forum Conference, Jurmala  
**The EU and Russia in 2008: In Search of New Approaches**  
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In my contribution, ladies and gentlemen, I will focus on opportunities that exist between Russia, the EU and the United States. I will argue on the necessity to move beyond dialogue towards true cooperation and I will present ten recommendations in order for the relationship to improve.

Today the opportunities for an improvement in relations between Russia and the Western world are better than it was before some time. Why? Because new leaders in Moscow seem to understand that what the Western industrialized nations enjoy today can be Russian future, it will need strong economic growth and ability to compete internationally, more law and stable international environment. And because of the new American administration, irrespective of its political color, will better understand the enormous potential of cooperation and collaboration than the present one.

Given the urgent need for the international community to secure Russia's cooperation on the most international problems from Kosovo, Iran, nuclear terrorism, nonproliferation to global warming and intellectual property rights, there is need to deepen Russia's dialogue with the US and for Russia and the West to become truly strategic partners. To become truly strategic partners presupposes two developments. Here are ten recommendations on what needs to be done, some of which are pretty abstract, some – concrete.

Number one:

The West should recognize that Russia matters. The West must engage Russia as an equal partner on the basis of common interests.

Number two:

The Transatlantic community cannot secure Russia's cooperation in important areas while maintain freedom in other priorities. It must also address legitimate Russian concerns, including the exclusion that Russia feels from Western security structures and isolation in the world with only few real friends.

My third recommendation is that Russians, Europeans and Americans talk differently about 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union and the different perceptions they have about the Cold War. These perceptions have had negative impact on mutual cooperation in many fields and there still exists residual distrust. Dimitri Simes in recent issue of Foreign Affairs argues that the United States mishandling of Russia is the belief of Washington that the Reagan administration won the Cold War on its own. That is the consequence. The post-Soviet Russia has been treated as a defeated enemy. Russia, if I understand Simes correctly, maintains treated but not defeated, and I would agree. And this is of political and psychological relevance.

Fourth. The West should include Russia more often in important negotiations on global and regional issues and must play constructive facilitating role and get Russia more involved in conflict resolution efforts worldwide.

Five. Both Russia and the West understand that they can only together match new rising powers, like China and India, politically, economically and culturally. The alliance with China would cut off Russia from Europe for a long time to come. In Asia Russia would play an even more junior role than it has been playing in Europe. Europe and the United States have an interest in preventing a bipolar world with Russia in alliance with China and India against the West.

Six. This recommendation is addressed to Russia itself. Russia needs to develop sensitivity towards why its image abroad is as bad as it is. Why there is suspicion towards it and on what it is based on. The answer is not difficult to discover. It is based on what many perceive to be Russia's new arrogance in the way it treats its neighbours, and on the fact that Russian foreign security leads up to all issues as in old fashion zero sum game, but also on Russia's failure to satisfy unrealistic expectations in the West as to what it should look like, namely a political system mirroring the French, the British or the American ones.

My seventh recommendation is that the US and Russia agree on a new agenda for nuclear arms control and military confidence measures and develop common policy on the reduction of nuclear forces and the shared positions on military nuclear proliferation.

Eight. Russia and the European Union should find a new partnership based on operational agreement, one that has more content than the last one, and that would put trade and economics back on central stage in the EU – Russia relationship.

Nine. The United States, the European Union and Russia should move forward together on the wide area of subjects, for example, the small and medium enterprises sector, given its strategic importance to the economy and civil society. There is potential for cooperation on advanced technology, basic research, IT, aerospace, medical and environmental technology, nuclear terrorism, cyber security, health care, energy and natural resources including Arctics. There is still potential for cooperation in the field of logistics, transport links, tourism, which would benefit Russia's future economical development.

My last and tenth recommendation is that the European Union and the United States cooperate with Russia to turn Russia's resource wealth into exportable products. United States and European Union encourage such efforts by opening their markets, multiplying business student exchanges and increasing the support for the training of lawyers and judges. How far Russia becomes integrated into the world economy and how fast this will happen, depends on building a reserve with experience in business and financial services of the new world trade league.

Let me say in conclusion that the West cannot afford not to work with Russia. Russia will need its partners understanding, good will and also critical judgment and advices. We will have to move beyond dialogue towards true collaboration. There are opportunities and I tried to explain what could be done.