

Preface

The papers included in this volume were presented at the brainstorming conference: 'The Future of the Caucasus after the Second Chechnya Conflict' held at CEPS on 27th/28th January 2000. The idea of holding this event was suggested and supported by Max van der Stoel, OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, who concluded the meeting by reasserting his support for the initiative and expressing the hope that the above event would mark the beginning of a future project on the subject. The purpose of the brainstorming was to think about long-term perspectives for the region and in particular about how to turn trends away from conflict towards normality.

In order to achieve this aim presentations first attempted to provide an informative coverage of the major issues involved, by accounting both for their geographic and thematic dimensions, and were then directed towards possible policy avenues. The papers included in this volume follow the structure of the conference. Papers by Alexandru Liono, Sergiu Celac and Viacheslav Chirikba discuss conflicts in the North and South Caucasus. Thematic papers by Brenda Shaffer, Alexandru Liono, Thomas Waelde, Terry Adams and Bruno Coppieters include discussions on political Islam, economic survival strategies, oil and gas development and security strategies respectively.

Finally, two complementary policy proposals are made by Sergiu Celac and Michael Emerson, CEPS Senior Research Fellow to tackle the inter-related problems in political, economic and security spheres in both the North and South Caucasus through the formulation of an all-encompassing regional initiative. These two papers marked the first building blocks of a new project by a CEPS Task Force to formulate and disseminate ideas for a Stability Pact for the Caucasus. The CEPS Task Force published its first document 'A Stability pact for the Caucasus' in May 2000 which may be accessed from the ceps website.

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