

# REFLECTIONS ON EUROPEAN UNION'S OPENING PROCESS TO THE REGIONAL AND GLOBAL SCALE

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The opportunity and understanding of the deep philosophy of world evolution at the crossroads of centuries and milleniums, that allows the interpretation of great ideas of universal economic and socio-political thinking on the international relations evolution, undoubtedly implies a vast multidisciplinary activity, mixed efforts in scientific, academic and universitary research.

In the context of deep interdependence between globalization and regionalization, the European Union is objectively determined to promote an offensive strategy, through viable ways of intensification of cooperation with the other geoeconomic and strategic areas of the world: American (from the North-American Free Trade Agreement to Latin America), Asia-Pacific, former Soviet, Africa and Middle East.

In a multipolar world, that will bring into the first line of international relations new big actors of regional and universal vocation (China, Rusia, Brasil, India), the European Union will play an extensive role in participating at the geostrategic, regional and global equilibrium, through promotion of an „open diplomacy" that will allow - by dialogue and cooperation - the resolving more rapidly and efficiently the great challenges of the beginning of the century and millenium: the reduction of the great development gaps, the regional and global security, in a very solid economic background.

I believe that the European Union has also major responsibilities in revitalizing the activity of international organisms and institutions, in giving the United Nations Organization the vocation of universality.

- An objective priority of the European Union is and will be to maintain peace and stability in the Balkans, by an increase of the technical and financial assistance, and by intensification of the collaboration projects in the fields of justice and the adoption of the *acquis communautaire*.

- Through the partnership and cooperation agreements, the European Union grants financial assistance to the members of the Community of Independent (CIS), in order to support the reform and privatisation process, the modernization of the environment infrastructure and the development of the rural economy. The assistance programme takes into consideration the promotion of the bilateral and interregional cooperation, including the disarmament and observing human rights.

Part of the EU's opening strategy towards the former Soviet area is represented by the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements with two economic and strategic powers, Russia and Ukraine.

The democracy, rule of law, the public institutions represent goals as well as exigencies of the European Community towards the new independent states in the perspective of the acceleration of the integration process into the common European economic and social area.

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It should be emphasized the role of the European Union in maintaining peace and security in the Middle East, that, undoubtedly, implies a fair and long lasting solution, on the basis of pertinent resolutions adopted by the United Nations Organization.

The cooperation relations with Africa (in the context of geographic proximity), Asia and Latin America will continue to present, in my opinion, an important component in the foreign policy of the European Union.

The European Union will promote actively the development of economic relations with Asia - region represented by the main economic powers - Japan, China and the „four dragons group" (South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore) - region that will become a powerful area with sustainable economic growth in the perspective of the years 2010-2020.

The strategic options of the European Union will have to be defined to a greater extent taking into account the architecture of the Asia-Pacific area, that constitutes the greatest world economic cooperation and integration project.

I would like to emphasize, at the same time, the philosophy of the process of rethinking the economic and political-diplomatic strategy of the European Union towards the Mediterranean region, with an opening to the African and the Middle East world. The Euro-Mediterranean Conference in Barcelona (November 1995) introduced a new concept of the Euro-Mediterranean policy, namely The North-South partnership, with mutual rights and obligations: "The Barcelona Declaration" represents, indeed, an outstanding point in defining an Euro-Mediterranean policy, that, in my opinion, must know a pragmatic approach in promoting the economic reforms in the South-Mediterranean region, relaunching the peace process in the Middle East and opening towards the global economy. I believe that achieving regional stability and security will represent the main pillar of the future regional free trade area. The development and modernization of the economies of the South-Mediterranean countries is, nevertheless, influenced by an increased domestic and foreign investment effort. Despite any endogenous or exogenous difficulties, the setting up of the Euro-Mediterranean economic area -through progressive stimulation of industrial cooperation, trade and investment - is in deep connection with the objective process of integration of developing countries in the world economy.

A new dimension of the EU enlargement policy at regional scale is represented by the cooperation relations and the attraction into the European circuit of material and spiritual values of the countries in the Central and Eastern Europe, strategy put into place through the accession, on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2004, of a number of 10 states, that will be followed, at the beginning of 2007, by Romania and Bulgaria, leading to a European union of 27 and not only. The opening of the European Union towards the Central and Eastern European area reflects the realistic character of the strategy of the European integration process, through the recognition of a common Europe, of the same civilization.

In my opinion, in the context of deepening the interdependence and complementarities at regional and global level, more focus should be put on the viable ways and modalities to intensify the cooperation in the Danube-Black Sea and Euro-Mediterranean geo-economic and strategic areas. The analysis and reflections should be focused on the development of a long and efficient relationship that would evolve from concept to pragmatic approaches, taking into account: the geographic proximity, the cultural-human potential, the trade, investment and technological flows, the necessity to

connect the national entities to the new European and global architecture, the increase of the negotiation power at the interregional level in the international relations field. The two big geo-strategic regions of the world belong to the same civilization and are subject to similar changes as the other regions of the world, despite some specific features of history and culture.

The intensification and diversification of the cooperation at the Central and South-Eastern European level, as well as the Euro-Mediterranean and Danube-Black Sea region, does not represent an alternative to the general objective process of integration into the Euro-Atlantic structures, but a complementarity meant to support the material and human efforts of the participants to the cooperation agreements, to a more rapid development and modernization of the economic-social structures.

It is my belief that, despite some contradictory approaches on the globalization and regional stability processes, only a consolidated cooperation between the European Union and the USA will reorient the world economy towards a sustainable growth.

The Euro-Atlantic unity undoubtedly reflects the new dimensions of the interdependence process between globalization and regionalization and it is compulsory that this should be transformed into viable poles of stability in the world. The consolidation of the Euro-Atlantic unity, on the basis of democratic ideals and a common vision on the world evolution, at the beginning of the millennium, will allow the North-Atlantic Alliance to have a decisive role in the regional and global security process.

Next to the world issues - stated the great Romanian diplomat of universal vocation, Nicolae Titulescu, elected twice President of the Society of Nations -there are the regional issues that form its elements, namely the regional interests of what is called Europe.