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Original body of text with translation along with
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Author's full details including name, full address and
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Article must not exceed 25 handwritten or twenty typed
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Editorial committee reserve the right to amend articles.

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Editor's Note

Amu Darya, the Russian language journal of the Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS), has been publishing since 1999. The essays and analysis were concentrated merely on the issues related to the former Soviet Union region, Turkey, China and Afghanistan.

Although the aim of this journal remains the same we believe that the variety in the subjects and the new methods of publication are a requisite for improvement. Since Amu Darya is the only Russian language magazine published quarterly by IPIS, we have decided to present Iranian researchers and analysts' viewpoints about regional and international developments to our honorable addressees and readers. In this regard, some important developments in the Middle East and the Islamic World, as well as the Nuclear Issue, and Iran's relations with major powers, and other regional and international matters will also be analyzed.

We hope this publication could take an effective step to materialize this new approach in order to provide more knowledge about abovementioned purposes. Obviously, receiving your suggestions or comments will help us to improve our work.

Leading article

War in the Caucasus and Iran's Security and Interests

Dr. Manouchehr Moradi

Director for Center for Russia, Central Asia and the Caucasus in the IPIS and editor in chief of the Journal of Central Asia and the Caucasus.

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**16th International Conference on Central Asia and
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War in the Caucasus and Iran's Security and Interests

Dr. Manouchehr Moradi

Political dispute between Russia and Georgia which led to a full scale war in August 2008, could be evaluate as the most important event of the first decade of the third millennium after the September 11, 2001. With significant regional and international dimensions and consequences, the war in the Caucasus has changed the geopolitics of the region and opened a new chapter in the Russia-West relations, Russian position in the region and some regional trends including pipeline politics, security arrangements and political attitudes of the regional countries.

For the Islamic Republic of Iran, as a main actor in the region, the war in the Caucasus could affect its security and interests. Any change in the political and security arrangements, developments in the Russian positions and Moscow's relations with the regional and western countries may affect Iran's position, interests and security both regionally and internationally.

This article while evaluating these topics, analyses the consequences of August 2008 war in the Caucasus for the Islamic republic of Iran.

Key Words: Iran, the Caucasus, Russia, the United States, Georgia, Security, Energy

Caspian Energy Resources and Global Energy Security: Challenges of Transfer to the World Markets

Morteza Daman Pak Jami

The geo-strategic situation of the Caspian region and exploration of its huge energy resources are the main reasons for transforming the region into a center of political, military and economic rivalries and tensions in the last two decades. There are many questions to be answered regarding the Caspian energy resources. The main question is the actual share of such resources in the global energy security, and whether Caspian region could meet the concerns for energy security at national, regional and global levels. There are also other questions such as the nature of the new great game emerged on the energy issue in the region, the main players of such game and the role of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as a main transit route and a buyer and consumer of energy products in the Caspian region.

In response to these questions, this article argues that the Caspian region, as a complementary source of energy, could play an important role in securing global energy demand and diversification of production sources, but it could not be considered as an alternative to the Persian Gulf region which still provides more than 60 percent of world demand to hydrocarbon energy resources. In this connection, Iran provides the shortest, safest and cheapest route for absorbing and transferring of Caspian energy resources to the world markets, or consuming them in its local market through the swap program. In this article, issues such as the Caspian oil and gas reserves, programs for production and export, the challenges for transferring the products to the world markets, the role of the region in the global energy security, and finally, the Iranian perspective vis-à-vis Caspian energy security will be discussed.

Keywords: Caspian region, Energy security, Energy demand, Transfer, World markets.

Islamophobia in the West: Causes and Characteristics

Dr. Bahador Aminian

Following the 11/9 events, anti-Muslimism and Islamophobia has raised dramatically in Western Societies. Precise analysis of the media and some Western officials' remarks prove that they seek to introduce Islam as a threat to the West and Western identity by highlighting the activities of some radical groups.

This Article aims at analyzing the historical, social and political roots of Islamophobia in Europe to elaborate the roots of and causes behind the extension of this phenomenon from different aspects.

Keywords: Islamic Uprising, Fundamentalism, the West, Islamophobia, Identity.

Iran, the Middle East and International Security

Dr. Keyhan Barzegar

The research explores Iran's current position in the Middle East as well as in the global security system. It suggests that the new political-security and geo-political developments in the Middle East following the 9/11 events and the Iraq crisis have interlinked and internationalized the Middle East issues and given them a more public scope. Such a condition has tied the Middle East security system to the international security system. It has also transformed the power structures and the politics in the region to Iran's favor. This has resulted in a more elevated position in the region and

enhanced its power bargain over the current Middle East issues. The researcher believes that the growing influence of Iran is, from one hand, due to the country's natural advantageous geopolitical situation, its ideological power and certain cultural elements, and also the emergence of fresh security-political issues at the regional level and redefinition of international security threats on the other. This has resulted in Iran's becoming one of the chains which links the Middle East security to the global one. The article concludes that Iran should seize this opportunity to stabilize its own strategic position in the region.

Keywords: Iran, Middle East Security, geopolitics, 11 September, Terrorism, Al-Qaeda, Regional crises.

Foreign Policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran and New Measures of International Human Rights: Opportunities and Challenges

Mohammad Reza Ghaebi

The issue of human rights is among the significant subjects in international relations. There is clearly a direct increasing connection between the human rights and development, peace and international security. In one of the resolutions of the Human Rights Council of the UN four concepts of "development, peace, security and human rights" are enshrined as the pillars of the system of the United Nations. The same document obliges all the states with different political systems to respect human rights and to establish strong mechanisms for implementation of this obligation.

The present article analyzes the legal aspects of the human rights issue.

Keywords: Peace, Security, Human Rights, United Nations.

The US Perspective of Caucasus Region after September 11, 2001

Dr. Mohammad Hasan Khani
Mohammad Mahdi Nasuhian

The collapse of the Soviet Union provided a good opportunity for the United States to expand its influence in the newly established countries in the region. This was specially the case for the countries in the Caucasus namely Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan due to their geo-economic and geo-strategic significance. This paper is an attempt to explore the perception of the United States of this region and then to evaluate and examine the US foreign policy towards this region. It is also the aim of this article to analyses the response of other regional players such as Iran and Russia in this regard.

Keywords: United States, the Caucasus region, foreign policy, influence.