

**Conclusions of the seminar**  
**«Dialogue on European security architecture»**

**Prepared by the Institute for International Studies, MGIMO-University**

International experts, including former senior officials, discussed the evolving situation in Europe, including continuing crisis in Ukraine, and the absence of agreed principles for handling challenges such as the relationship between NATO and the European Union and the Eurasian Union, Russia and territories of the former Soviet Union. Some participants highlighted the lack of a clear or shared strategic vision for the EU.

Those of this view pointed to what they consider to be ad hoc, piecemeal responses that eschew hard decisions about further integration.

Participants also discussed the deterioration of the security environment in the Middle East, and the associated rise in human suffering, refugees and international terrorism (recent tragic events in Paris), all of which also affect Russia and Europe.

Participants agreed that the current state of relations between Russia and Europe was not satisfactory, and that cooperation between them was not adequate, even in the face of common threats.

Thus the new principles and institutions are necessary to provide for continuous and successful regional governance. It was noted that even in the economic sphere the dominant paradigm was one of “lose-lose”, despite the significant economic challenges currently faced by both Russia and Europe. It was felt that a concerted policy effort should be made to change the dynamic of the relationship.

The following general conclusions were agreed that:

1. *A political road-map for Russia-European relations*

Relations between Russia and Europe are of a political nature, rather than of a purely technocratic nature, and that there should be a political process and agreement on the nature of the relationship: the common goals which will be pursued, the architecture which will be used to advance those goals, and the mechanisms that will be used to resolve issues that arise. Russia is not only a “Eurasian” but a great European country with common history and shared common interests with European nations which should be treated on an equal basis. However, given the number of potential actors the complexity of managing a large process, and the current challenges facing official processes it was felt that private informal discussions such as those along the lines of the HD-RIAC and MGIMO format should continue. The results of these may be channeled into policy making circles. If progress were made, then more inclusive, official formats would be proposed.

2. *Security*

Two main areas of concern need to be addressed. With respect to Ukraine, and to other territories of the former Soviet Union, there is a need for Russia and Europe to agree on “rules of the road” on how and when Russia and Europe will consult. It was underlined that the Minsk Agreements in this context are considered as important milestone. Without attempting to apportion responsibility for the crisis in Ukraine, participants agreed that the absence of such “rules of the road” in the context of the elaboration EU—Ukraine Association Agreement had been harmful. In any case, the set of specific proposals on the transparency and confidence-building measures is to be worked

out in the course of this project in order to avoid such crises in the future and to stabilize the situation on the continent when the mutual trust is currently lacking and there is an urgent need for new ideas and agreements on establishing a zone of cooperation and common comprehension.

With respect to the Middle East, it was noted that both Russia and Europe had much to lose from further instability in the region, and that the current state of relations made cooperation difficult. . A framework for identifying common threats, and for establishing common goals, should be a shared foreign policy priority. The recent meetings in Vienna on the subject send an encouraging signal on the possibilities of concerted actions of international community in this regards.

### 3. *Economic cooperation*

The over-riding goal in Russia-European relations should be the establishment of close and mutually advantageous economic relations and, perhaps, the collaboration between the Eurasian and the European integration projects in the future. However, even without considering the current sanctions issue, there are a number of impediments to closer economic relations. The first step towards developing a framework for closer economic relations would be to identify the main opportunities for closer economic relations, and the main impediments, and to consider possible frameworks within which opportunities could be realized and impediments could be removed.