

Note from the Editor-in-Chief

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It is a great pleasure to present the next Winter 2008 issue of the Caucasian Review of International Affairs (CRIA). We are extremely glad to be able to publish again after a brief intercession. In September 2007 the Review was renamed, started again accepting submissions and presented its new and updated webpage (www.cria-online.org).

The CRIA is committed to promote a better understanding of the regional affairs by providing relevant background information and analysis, as far as the Caucasus in general, and the South Caucasus in particular are concerned. The CRIA also welcomes lucid, well-documented papers on all aspects of international affairs, from all political viewpoints.

Thanks to its favourable geo-strategic location at the crossroads of Europe and Asia and its vast energy resources the South Caucasus has gained in importance tremendously in the world politics right after the collapse of the former Soviet Union. The September 11 terror attacks and the following shifts in the global politics have increased the strategic importance of the South Caucasus as a crucial area. However, the region is plagued by conflicts and still remains a potential zone of instability. Given the increased attention to the region, there is still a great need for profound academic research concerning various political, security and economic and other issues of the region.

In this issue the major emphasis is put on the regional security questions in the South Caucasus, conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, impact of the surrounding regional powers on foreign and security policy of the region's states, their cooperation with NATO, as well as Russian and Iranian policies towards the region and Russian defense reforms.

Experts from Austria, Canada, Greece, Iran, Spain and the US have kindly contributed to the current issue. Moreover, a review of a book (published by the Washington-based Carnegie Endowment for International Peace) on nuclear, biological and chemical threats and an interview with Harvard University's senior fellow concerning current global military-security questions are also presented. I thank all the contributors for their interesting analyses.

Each issue of the CRIA, which is a free and non-profit online publication, is a result of voluntary and hard work of the affiliated persons. Therefore, I'd like to express my deep gratitude to all the members of the Editorial Board and all mobile interns of the CRIA for their consistent and profound engagement.