

EUROPE RUSSIA CONTACT GROUP

Exploring New Vehicles for a Strategic European Engagement with Russia - Brainstorming Meeting -

Italian Foreign Ministry, Rome, 3rd March 2009

Agenda

11.30 Registration

12.00 **Opening Session**

US-Europe-Russia State of Play: New Challenges and Opportunities

Looking from the European, Russian and US perspectives, this session will investigate the impact of recent financial and political developments on domestic political climates as they relate to the potential for constructive bi- and trilateral relations. The session will further consider latest developments initiated by the Obama Administration and explore their impact on trilateral relations and on how wider geo-strategic issues might be handled.

Welcome by **Lord Weidenfeld** and **Pasquale Ferrara**

Opening remarks: **Lord Owen**

Chair: **Mark Medish**

Speakers (5min each): **Thomas Gomart**
Rory Macfarquhar
Dmitry Trenin

13.30 **Working Lunch**

Energy, Trade, Investment and Beyond: Finding the focus for a new strategic approach

Touching on what has gone wrong with European approaches to date, this session will explore how Europe might more effectively balance trade, investment and energy interests vis-à-vis Russia with a view to better leveraging its strengths and to engaging at a strategic-level. The discussion will assess priority fields for engagement and look at what the core focus of a body such as a Europe Russia Contact Group should be.

This event was facilitated in cooperation with Aspen Institute Italia.

Welcome by **Sandro de Bernadin**

Chair: **Boris Biancheri**

Speakers (5min each): **Philippe Boisseau**
Lord Kerr
Joe Stanislaw

15.10 Mini Break

15.30 **Closing Session**

New Vehicles for Engagement: The way forward

Exploring the political feasibility for the creation of a Europe Russia Contact Group as a vehicle through which to improve engagement, this session will consider the appropriate level, make up and membership of such a group (i.e. formal vs. informal, Russia in or out, EU only or inclusive of Turkey and Norway?), define its terms of reference and policy scope (i.e. energy or a mix of policies to include trade, broader neighbourhood and security policies etc), as well as its means of delivery. The discussion will look at the role of the European Institutions in such an initiative and may ultimately touch on whether such functional groups could be the shape of EU foreign policy making to come.

Chair, Introductory Statement
and Closing Remarks:

Lord Owen

Keynote Speaker:

Minister Franco Frattini

Speaker:

Minister Carel von Schwarzenberg

17.00 End