

Debating “War and Peace” behind Closed Doors: NATO’s Riga Security Conference

By [Prof Michel Chossudovsky](#)

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“And what an immense mass of evil must result, and indeed does result, from allowing men to assume the right of anticipating what may happen.” Leo Tolstoy

On the 28th of November, [heads of State and heads of government from the 26 States](#) together with Ministers of Defense and senior military brass of the “enlarged” Atlantic Alliance (NATO) will be meeting in Riga, Latvia.

The venue is being held in a former Soviet Republic, regrouping for the first time all 26 members of the enlarged NATO, including countries previously in the geopolitical orbit of the Soviet Union: Poland, Roumania, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Slovakia, the Czech republic. ([Complete List](#)) The Venue directly challenges Moscow’s influence in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. It signifies to Moscow that NATO enlargement is proceeding on Russia’s doorstep.

Although Israel will not be represented at the Summit, NATO has developed in the last two years a close working relationship with Tel Aviv, which in practical terms provides Israel with a “de facto associate membership” within the Atlantic Alliance. The NATO Riga Summit will launch NATO’s Rome based training program for its Mediterranean partner countries and members of the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI). The latter includes a number of Arab countries as well as Israel.(see map below)



From a US standpoint, this meeting will be used to build a European consensus on America’s “long war”. The purpose of the meeting is to rally support (e.g. in European political circles and in the military-industrial complex) for the US led military adventure in the Middle East and Central Asia, which is intimately related, from a strategic standpoint, to the battle for oil

and oil pipeline corridors.

The US-NATO military build-up in the Persian Gulf and the Eastern Mediterranean as well as Washington's "New Middle East" will be on the agenda.

In parallel with the Summit, a major Security Conference ("The Riga Conference") starting on November 27, will bring together politicians, top military brass, corporate CEOs, defense and foreign policy analysts, "top feeder" media pundits, policy advisers and New World Order academics. (See list of participants below). In many regards, this parallel activity organized by the George Marshall Fund's Transatlantic Center is more important from a strategic standpoint than the official Summit venue. Headed by Ronald D. Asmus, a former deputy assistant secretary of state in the Clinton administration, the Transatlantic Center's task on behalf of NATO is to foster "transatlantic dialogue" between Europe and America as well as actively seek European "cooperation in the broader Middle East and Black Sea regions".

The Conference is intent upon building a consensus within Europe, regarding America's military agenda in the broader Middle East.

The European military-industrial complex will be represented by key figures from the Franco-German aerospace conglomerate EADS, Italy's Finmeccanica. Lockheed Martin's European President Scott Martin, among others will also be attending. Several members of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), the US Senate, will be in Riga for the conference together with representatives from major foundations including Soros, Carnegie, Konrad Adenauer and Robert Schuman.

Among the participants are several key figures, who are known to play a behind a scenes role in international affairs, including Zbigniew Brzezinski, former National Security adviser and the author of [The Grand Chessboard](#), former Mayor of New York Rudolph Giuliani, Uzi Arad, formerly Mossad Director of Intelligence and foreign policy adviser to (former) Prime Minister Netanyahu, Marc Grossman, now with the Cohen Group, who was Under Secretary of State in GWB's first term in office (2001-2005), Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg of the German Bundestag's Foreign Affairs Committee, adviser to Chancellor Angela Merkel and a staunch supporter of Israel, Bruce P. Jackson, who heads the US Committee on NATO and sits on the Board of Directors of the Project for the New American Century (PNAC), the Washington based think tank which formulated the Neocons' "long war" doctrine.

Among the major themes of the Riga Conference are NATO's role in the Middle East, the broader issue of "Energy Security" as well as the "enlargement" of NATO to eventually include the Ukraine and Georgia. Both of these former Soviet republics on Russia's doorstep are increasingly within the US-NATO geopolitical orbit. They are part of GUUAM, a 1999 military cooperation agreement with NATO. They play a strategic role in the structure of oil pipeline and transport corridors out of the Caspian sea basin.

Held in Latvia on Russia's immediate border, the venue is a slap in the face not only to Russia's Vladimir Putin but also to Belarus President Aleksandr Lukashenko. Key figures of the Belarus political opposition are also part of the gathering.

Participants from the NATO's Mediterranean partners in the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) (including Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia and Israel) are also on the list of invitees.

In addition to the formal sessions, which will be covered by the media, the Conference is to hold several behind closed doors [Night Owl sessions](#) focusing on three related strategic issues.

Night Owl Session 1: Energy Security: What Role for NATO and EU?

Night Owl Session 2: Ukraine and Georgia: Credible Candidates for NATO Membership?

Night Owl Session 3: Does NATO have a Role in the Middle East?

One would also expect that in addition to the announced behind closed doors sessions, a number of other behind the scenes meetings and consultations will be held, which have a direct bearing on the US-UK-NATO-Israel military agenda in the Middle East and Central Asia.

ANNEX

Full List of Participants The Riga Conference as of 26 November 2006

([word](#))

http://www.rigasummit.lv/nfil/Riga_Conference_Participant_List_26_Nov_06.doc

or ([pdf](#))

Professor Hannes ADOMEIT Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Germany

Mr. Bengt ALBONS Dagens Nyheter, Sweden

Dr. Mohammed Fouad AMMOR Deputy Secretary General and Head of International Cooperation Section GERM: Groupement d'Etudes et de Recherches sur la Méditerranée, Morocco

Mr. Frank AMODEO President and CEO, AQMI Strategy Corporation

Mr. David APTSIAURI Embassy of Georgia to the Republics of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, Georgia

Dr. Uzi ARAD Director, Institute for Policy and Strategy , Israel [former Mossad Director of Intelligence]

Dr. Ronald ASMUS Executive Director, GMF/German Marshall Fund of the United States TransAtlantic Center/Brussels, USA

Mr. Andris AUKMANIS Executive Director., Soros Foundation, Latvia

Mr. Asli AYDINTASBAS Sabah Daily, Turkey

Dr. Stefanie BABST Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Communication Coordination, Public Diplomacy Division, NATO

Mr. Egemen BAGIS Member of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and Foreign Policy Advisor to the Prime Minister of Turkey, Turkey

Dr. Alyson J.K. BAILES Director, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), UK

The Hon. David BAKRADZE Member of Parliament and Chairman of Committee on European Integration – Parliament of Georgia, Georgia

H.E. Ahmet Mithat BALKAN Ambassador, Energy Coordinator, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey

Mr. Toms BAUMANIS Chairman LATO Latvian Transatlantic Organization, Latvia

Dr. Andreas VON BELOW Director of the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Riga Office

Dr. Christoph BERTRAM Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Germany

H.E. Indulis BERZINS Ambassador of Latvia to the United Kingdom, Latvia

[Admiral, ret.] Mr. Jean BETERMIER Advisor to the Presidents and CEOs, EASDS HQ [EADS]

Mr. Valdis BIRKAUS PAREX Bank, Latvia

Prof. Sven BISCOP Senior Research Fellow, Royal Institute for International Relations of Belgium, Belgium

Mr. Hidajet BISCEVIC State Secretary for Political Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Croatia, Croatia

Mr. Peteris BLUMBERG Chairman, Joint Baltic American National Committee, USA

Mr. Martins BONDARS Chairman of the Board, Latvijas Krajbanka, Latvia

The Hon. Zbigniew BRZEZINSKI Trustee and Counselor, Center for Strategic and International Studies, USA

Mr. Omer Can BUHARALI Member of the Executive Board, Centre for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies, Turkey

The Hon. Nino BURJANADZE Speaker of the Parliament of Georgia, Georgia

Ms. Federica CACIAGLI Political Advisor to the Foreign Minister of Italy, Italy

Dr. Iulian CHIFU Director, Conflict Prevention and Early Warning Centre, Romania

Ms. Julie Ann CONWAY NATO Riga Summit 2006 Support Committee, USA

Mr. Michael J. CORKERRY Executive Director, EMEA External Affairs, AT&T, USA

Mr. Ralph CROSBY Chairman and CEO, EADS North America, USA [formerly corporate Vice President, Northrop Grumman Corporation]

Ms. Anja DALGAARD-NIELSEN Senior Researcher and Program Director, “DIIS’s Studies in

Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism” Danish Institute for International Studies, Denmark

Ms Sandra DAUBURE NATO Riga Summit Support Committee, Latvia

H.E. Helena DEMAKOVA Minister of Culture of Latvia, Latvia

Dr. Pavol DEMES Director for Central and Eastern Europe, GMF/German Marshall Fund of the United States, Slovakia

Ms. Judy DEMPSEY International Herald Tribune, USA

Mr. Jackson DIEHL The Washington Post, USA

Dr. Ingemar Nils Hans DOERFER Guest Scholar, Swedish Institute of International Affairs, Germany

Mr. Agris DOLNIEKS Member of Board, Insurance company Tris A Brokers Latvia, Latvia

Dr. Karen DONFRIED Senior Director for Policy Programs, GMF/German Marshall Fund of the United States, USA

Dr. Ahmed DRISS Professor, University of Tunis, Tunisia

Mr. Andrew M. EDISON Sales Vice-President, AT&T, USA

Ms. Anne EDWARDS The Reffe Group, USA

Mr. Konstantin EGGERT Moscow Bureau Chief, BBC Russian Service, Russia

H.E. Kai EIDE Ambassador, Former UN Special Envoy to Kosovo, Norway

H.E. Faisal EL FAYEZ Ambassador, Senator, Chairman of Foreign Affairs Committee, Senate of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Jordan [former Prime Minister and Minister of Defense of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan]

H.E. El Sayed EL REEDY Chairman, Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, Egypt

Dr. Thomas ENDERS Chief Executive Officer, EADS, Germany [EADS is controlled by Deutsche Aerospace, which is a subsidiary of the Daimler Group]

Mr. David Burnham ENSOR Executive Vice President, Mercuria Energy, UK [a subsidiary of the J&S Group]

H.E. Oded ERAN Ambassador of Israel to the European Union, Israel

Mr. Vahit ERDEM Member of Turkish Grand National Assembly, and Vice President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Turkey

Dr. Jonathan EYAL Director of International Security Studies, RUSI, Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies, UK

Mr. Mark-Christian FISCHER Project-Coordinator and Program Officer, GMF/ German Marshall Fund of the United States TransAtlantic Center/Brussels, USA

Mr. Jean FOURNET Assistant Secretary General, Public Diplomacy Division, NATO

Mr. Klaus-Dieter FRANKENBERGER Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Germany

Mr. Troels Kåre FROLING Sec. General, Atlantic Treaty Association, Denmark

Mr. Ivan GABAL Director, Ivan Gabal Analysis & Consulting, Czech Republic

Ms. Viktorija GEINE Head of Office, Latvian-American Financial Forum, Latvia

H.E. Bronislaw GEREMEK Member of the European Parliament from Poland and former Foreign Minister of Poland, Poland

Ms. Brett Ashley GERSON Acting Executive Director, U.S.-Baltic Foundation, USA

Mr. Jean-Dominique GIULIANI Chairman, Foundation Robert Schuman, France

Mr. Rudolph W. GIULIANI Chair/CEO Giuliani Partners and former Mayor of New York City USA

Mr. Paul GOUBLE Senior Research Fellow, Tartu University Estonia / USA

Mr. Charles Peter GRANT Director, Centre for European Reform, UK

Prof. Jeffrey Guy GREY Professor, Australian Defence Force Academy Australia

H.E. Marc GROSSMAN Vice Chairman/The Cohen Group, former Under Secretary of State, former Ambassador of U.S. to Turkey, USA

Mr. Vladimer GURGENIDZE CEO, Bank of Georgia, Georgia

Mr. Armands GUTMANIS Counselor for development to the Chairman of the Board, First Baltic Channel, Latvia

The Hon. Karl Theodor FREIHERR ZU GUTTENBERG Member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Bundestag, Germany

H.E. Hans HAEKKERUP Former Minister of Defence of Denmark, Denmark

Dr. Jean-Yves HAINE Research fellow for European Security, International Institute for Security Studies, Belgium

Dr. Daniel Sheldon HAMILTON Professor, Center for Transatlantic Relations, Johns Hopkins University – SAIS, USA [former Deputy Assistant Secretary for European Affairs, responsible for NATO]

Dr. François HEISBOURG Special adviser, Foundation for Strategic Research [former adviser to the French foreign Ministry]

General Raymond Roland HENAUULT Chairman of the NATO Military Committee, NATO

Mr. Yevhen HLIBOVYTSKYI Consultant for Media and Government relations, Ukraine

Dr. Scott HARRIS President, Continental Europe, Lockheed Martin Corporation, USA

Mr. Henrik HOLMSTROM Svenska Dagbladet, Sweden

Ms. Daiga HOLMA Project Manager, DDB Porter Novelli, Latvia

H.E. Jaap DE HOOP SCHEFFER Secretary General of NATO

Dr. Corinna HORST Deputy Director GMF/German Marshall Fund of the United States
TransAtlantic Center/Brussels

H.E. Toomas Hendrik ILVES The President of the Republic of Estonia, Estonia

Mr. Barry Steven JACKSON The White House, Executive Office of the President USA

Mr. Bruce P. JACKSON President, Project on Transitional Democracies, USA

Mr. Vratislav JANDA Senior Consultant, PAN Solutions, Czech Republic

Mr. Pavle JANKOVIC President, International and Security Affairs Centre (ISAC Fund),
Republic of Serbia

Mr. Pascale JOANNIN Gen. Manager, Foundation Robert Schuman, France

Gen. James L. JONES Supreme Allied Commander in Europe

Dr. Karl-Heinz KAMP Security Policy Coordinator, Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Germany

Dr. Sergey KARAGANOV Chairman of the Presidium, Council on Foreign and Defence Policy,
Russia

Mr. Rems KARGINS Vice President, Parex Asset Management, Latvia

Mr. Valerijs KARGINS President and Chairman of the Board, PAREX Bank, Latvia

Mr. Andres Ilmar KASEKAMP Director, Estonian Foreign Policy Institute, Estonia

H.E. Ojars KALNINS Director, The Latvian Institute, Vice Chairman/LATO – Latvian
Transatlantic Organization and former Ambassador of Latvia to the United States, Latvia

Mr. Frederick KEMPE President-Elect, The Atlantic Council of the United States, USA

Mr. Craig KENNEDY President, GMF/German Marshall Fund of the United States, USA

Mr. Suat KINIKLIOGLU Ankara Office Director GMF/German Marshall Fund of the United
States, Turkey

The Hon. Bert KOENDERS Member of the House of Representatives of The Netherlands,
President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly

Ms. Iryna KRASOUSKAYA President, We Remember Foundation, Belarus

Dr. Ivan KRASTEV Board Chairman, Centre for Liberal Strategies, Bulgaria

Mr. Janis KARLSBERGS Deputy State Secretary for Defence Planning, Ministry of Defence of
Latvia, Latvia

Mr. Ilgvars KLAVA Under Secretary of State and Political Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia, Latvia

The Hon. Girts Valdis KRISTOVSKIS Member of the European Parliament, Latvia

Mr. Grigorijs KRUPNIKOVs Board member, LATO/Latvian Transatlantic Organization, Latvia

H.E. Mamuka KUDAVA Ambassador of Georgia to France, Georgia

Mr. Janis KUKAINIS Chairman, World Federations of Free Latvians, Latvia

The Hon. Batu KUTELIA Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Georgia

Dr. Taras KUZIO Senior Atlantic Fellow, Visiting Professor/Eliot School of Intl Affairs, George Washington Univ., USA

Mr. Janis KUZULIS Consultant, DDB Porter Novelli, Latvia

H.E. Miroslav LAJCAK Ambassador, Director General for Political Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic

Mr. Remzi LANI Director, Albanian Media Institute, Albania

Dr. F. Stephen LARRABEE Corporate Chair in European Security, RAND Corp., USA

Ms Antra LAUMANE Advisor to the President and CEO, PAREX Bank, Latvia

Dr. Atis LEJINS Director, Latvian Institute of Foreign Affairs, Latvia

Mr. Marc LELAND Co-chairman GMF/The German Marshall Fund of the United States, USA

The Hon. José LELLO Member of the Assembly of the Republic of Portugal, Vice President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly

Mr. Robert Glenn LIBERATORE Group Senior Vice President, Daimler Chrysler Corporation

H.E. Imants LIEGIS Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Latvia to the European Union, Latvia

Mr. Kadri LIIK Magazine Diplomaatia, Estonia

Mr. Tod LINDBERG Fellow, Hoover Institution, Stanford University, USA

Ms. Dace LODZINA Marketing Department Manager, LATVIA STATOIL SIA, Latvia

Dr. Raimundas LOPATA Director, Institute of International Relations and Political Science of Vilnius University, Lithuania

Mr. Fabrizio William LUCIOLLI Secretary General, Italian Atlantic Committee, Italy

Mr. Edward LUCAS Deputy Editor International Section and Central and Eastern Europe Correspondent, The Economist, UK

The Hon. Richard G. LUGAR United States Senator and Chairman of the US Senate

Committee on Foreign Relations USA

Mr. Simon LUNN Secretary General, NATO Parliamentary Assembly

H.E. Peter MACKAY Foreign Minister of Canada, Canada

Mr. Viktors MAKAROVŠ Baltic Forum

Mr. Mikhail MARYNICH Former Ambassador of Belarus to Latvia, Belarus

H.E. Maurizio MASSARI Ambassador, Counselor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy, Italy

Mr. Alyaksandr MILINKEVICH Leader of the United Democratic Forces, Belarus

Dr. Ognyan Dimitrov MINCHEV Executive Director, IRIS – Institute for Regional and International Studies, Bulgaria

H.E. Rihards MUCINS Ambassador of Latvia to Estonia, Latvia

Mr. Igor MUNTEANU Executive Director, Institute for Development and Social Initiatives (IDIS) “Viitorul”, Republic of Moldova

Mr. Kenneth A. MYERS III Majority Staff Director, U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, USA

Mr. Alexander NICOLL Director of Defense Analysis, International Institute for Strategic Studies, UK

Mr. George NODIA Chairman, Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, Georgia

The Hon. Pierre Claude NOLIN Senator, Senate of Canada, Vice President, NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Canada

Mr. Saso ORDANOSKI Program Director, FORUM Center for Strategic Research and Documentation, Macedonia

Dr. Zaneta OZOLINA Chairperson, Strategic Analysis Commission under the Auspices of the President of Latvia, Latvia

Mr. Kaspars OZOLINS Director of Security Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia, Latvia

H.E. Artis PABRIKS Minister of Foreign Affairs of Latvia, Latvia

Ms Sally PAINTER Principal/Dutko Worldwide, Latvian NATO Riga Summit Support Committee, USA

The Hon. Ioan Mircea PASCU Member of Parliament of Romania and Observer to the European Parliament, Romania

Dr. Carlos E. PASCUAL Vice President and Director of Foreign Policy Studies, The Brookings Institution, former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine, USA

Mr. Valdis Vilnis PAVLOVSKIS Director of Public Affairs American Latvian Association Latvia/USA

Mr. Normans PENKE State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia, Latvia

The Hon. Jan PETERSEN Member of Parliament of Norway, Norway

H.E. Andris PIEBALGS Energy Commissioner of the EU and former Ambassador of Latvia to the EU

Mr. Andrejs PILDEGOVICS Head of the Office of the President of Latvia, Latvia

Mr. Andrei POPOV Executive Director, Foreign Policy Association of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

Ms. Sabine PROHOROVA Accounts Manager, DDB Porter Novelli, Latvia

H.E. Ivars PUNDURS Ambassador of Latvia to Turkey, Latvia

H.E. Dr. Zalmay RASSOUL Ambassador, National Security Advisor, Government of Afghanistan, Afghanistan

Mr. Pauls RAUDSEPS Commentator and columnist, Diena, Latvia

Dr. Tomas Herbert RIES Director, The Swedish Institute of International Affairs Sweden

Mr. Paige REFFE President and Founder, The Reffe Group, USA [former assistant to Bill Clinton]

H.E. Maris RIEKSTINS Ambassador of Latvia to the United States, Latvia

Mr. Edgars RINKEVICS State Secretary of the Ministry of Defence of Latvia Director of NATO Riga Summit Task Force, Latvia

Mr. Joseph ROBINSON Chief of Staff, AQMI Strategy Corporation, USA [AQMI has directly assisted the White House in strategic planning for U.S. participation in the Riga summit]

Mr. Alexander RONDELI President, Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies, Georgia

H.E. Aivis RONIS Co-Chairman of the NATO Riga Summit Support Committee, Chair, Latvian American Financial Forum, Former Ambassador of Latvia to the United States, Latvia

The Hon. Adam ROTFELD Chairman of the International Advisory Committee Polish Institute of International Affairs, Poland

Ms Baiba Anda RUBESA CEO, Latvija Statoil SIA, Latvia

Mr. Oleh RYBACHUK Advisor to the President of Ukraine, Ukraine

Mr. Abdulaziz O. SAGER Chairman, Gulf Research Center, Saudi Arabia

Mr. Andrei SANNIKOV International Coordinator/Formal Deputy Foreign Minister, Charter 97,

Belarus

Mr. Randall SCHEUNEMANN Owner and President, Orion Strategies LLC, USA [former advisor to Donald H. Rumsfeld on Iraq, president of the Committee for the Liberation of Iraq, created by the Project for the New American Century (PNAC)]

Mr. Karl-Heinz SCHLAISS Senior Manager, International Relations, DaimlerChrysler AG, Germany

Mr. Vladimir SCHMALZ Directors of Mergers & Acquisitions, CEZ, Czech Republic

Brig. Gen. Steven P. SCHOOK (ret). Principal Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General, UN Mission in Kosovo UNMIK

Mr. George SCHWAB President, National Committee on American Foreign Policy, USA

The Hon. Karel SCHWARZENBERG Member of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, Czech Republic

Mr. Ilja SEGALS Board Member, Liepajas Metalurgs, Latvia

Mr. Shannon SENTELL Legislative Fellow, Office of Senator Sessions, USA

The Hon. Jeff SESSIONS U.S. Senator and Member of the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee, USA

Dr. Stephen R. SESTANOVICH George F. Kennan Senior Fellow for Russian and Eurasian Studies/Council on Foreign Relations Columbia University, USA [member of the Council on Foreign Relations]

Dr. Jamie P. SHEA Director of Policy Planning, Private Office of the Secretary General, NATO, UK

Mr. Pavel SHEREMET Minsk Bureau Chief, Channel One TV, Russia

H.E. Radoslaw SIKORSKI Minister of National Defence of Poland, Poland

H.E. Atis SLAKTERIS Minister of Defence of Latvia, Latvia

Mr. John V. SLAMECKA President, AT&T Business EMEA

The Hon. John SMITH Member of the British House of Commons, UK

Dr. Eugeniusz SMOLAR President, Center for International Relations, Poland

Mr. Vladimir SOCOR Senior Fellow Jamestown Foundation, USA

Mr. Gerhard SPORL Der Spiegel, Germany

Mr. Steven SPRINGFIELD Member of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, USA

Mr. Wilhelm Karl STAUDACHER Secretary General, Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Germany

Dr. Constanze STELZENMUELLER Director Berlin Office GMF/The German Marshall Fund of US, Germany

Mr. Philip STEPHENS Associate Editor, Financial Times, UK

Dr. Aivars STRANGA Head of History Department, Latvian University

The Hon. Veton SURROI Head of Party ORA/Member of Assembly of Kosovo

Ms. Jelena SUSKEVICA Managing Partner, BDO Investment, Latvia

The Hon. Goran SVILANOVIC Chairman Working Table of Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, Serbia

Mr. Michael THUMANN Die Zeit, Germany

Ms Karen A. TRAMONTANO Principal, Dutko Worldwide, USA

Dr. Dmitry TRENIN Senior Associate, Deputy Director, Director of Studies Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Carnegie Moscow Center, Russia

Mr. Peteris USTUBS Foreign Policy Advisor to the Prime Minister of Latvia, Latvia

Dr. Pieter VAN HAM Director, Global Governance Program, Clingendael Institute, The Netherlands

Mr. Ari VATANEN Member, European Parliament, France

Dr. Ivan VEJVODA Executive Director, U.S.-Balkan Trust For Democracy, GMF/German Marshall Fund of the United States, Serbia

Mr. Paolo VENTURONI VP International Affairs, FINMECCANIA, Italy

Mr. Peteris VINKELIS Riga Summit Foundation

H.E. Aleksandr VONDRA Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, Czech Republic

Dr. Radovan VUKADINOVIC Professor, University of Zagreb, President of Atlantic Council of Croatia, Croatia

Ms Julie WADLER NATO Riga Summit 2006 Support Committee

Mr. Sergiy YEVTUSHENKO Chief Executive, Institute for Euro-Atlantic Cooperation Ukraine [Member of the Political Council of PORA]

Mr. Aleksejs ZAHARJINS Vice Chairman, Liepajas Metalurgs, Latvia

Mr. Sergejs ZAHARJINS Chairman of the Board, Liepajas Metalurgs, Latvia



Michel Chossudovsky is the author of the international best [*America's "War on Terrorism"*](#) Second Edition, Global Research, 2005. He is Professor of Economics at the University of Ottawa and Director of the Center for Research on Globalization.

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About the author:

Michel Chossudovsky is an award-winning author, Professor of Economics (emeritus) at the University of Ottawa, Founder and Director of the Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG), Montreal, Editor of Global Research. He has taught as visiting professor in Western Europe, Southeast Asia, the Pacific and Latin America. He has served as economic adviser to governments of developing countries and has acted as a consultant for several international organizations. He is the author of 13 books. He is a contributor to the Encyclopaedia Britannica. His writings have been published in more than twenty languages. In 2014, he was awarded the Gold Medal for Merit of the Republic of Serbia for his writings on NATO's war of aggression against Yugoslavia. He can be reached at crgeditor@yahoo.com

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