

The Centre for European Studies,  
the Constantinos Karamanlis Institute for Democracy  
and the Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung have the pleasure of  
inviting you to a conference on:

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## TOWARDS A STRATEGIC EU-RUSSIA PARTNERSHIP:

### Common interests and joint challenges

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**Monday, 30<sup>th</sup> of March 2009**

6.30 pm to 9.00 pm

**Goethe Institut**

Rue Belliard 58  
1040 Brussels

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## Programme

6.30 pm Registration

7.00 pm Welcoming:

**Professor Constantine ARVANITOPOULOS**

Director General, C. Karamanlis Institute for Democracy

**Tommi HUHTANEN**

Director, Centre for European Studies

Introduction:

**Reinhold BOCKLET, MdL**

Former Bavarian Minister of State  
Vice-President of the Bavarian Parliament

Panel Discussion:

*Moderator:*

**Antonio MISSIROLI**

Director of Studies, European Policy Centre

*Statements:*

**H.E. Vladimir CHIZHOV**

Ambassador, Head of the Mission of the Russian  
Federation to the European Union

**Rumiana JELEVA, MEP**

Member of the European Parliament

**Hugues MINGARELLI**

Deputy Director-General, European Commission  
(European Neighbourhood Policy, Relations with  
Eastern Europe, the Southern Caucasus and Central  
Asia, the Middle East and the Southern Mediterranean)

**Georges PREVELAKIS**

Professeur des Universités  
Pantheon Sorbonne, Université Paris I

Closing remarks

**Markus RUSS**

Director Brussels Office of the Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung

9.00 pm Walking Dinner

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## Background

The Russian Federation is one of the world's energy superpowers. It holds the largest natural gas reserves, as well as it is the second and the eighth country in coal and oil reserves respectively worldwide. The geographic proximity with Russia and its increasing energy needs lead the European Union to obtain a quarter of its gas supplies from Moscow. Gazprom is the main energy provider to the European countries, having Germany and Italy among its major trade partners. Hence, it becomes obvious that the EU needs Russian gas almost as much as Gazprom needs European consumers. However, many western scholars and politicians have accused Russia for using its energy superiority as a means of diplomatic leverage, in order to extend its regional and global influence.

The recent crisis in Caucasus and the dynamic response from Russia created a divergence of views among the EU Member States. Furthermore, the gas crisis between Russia and Ukraine, during the last January, affected harshly several EU countries and affirmed their high dependency on the Russian natural gas supplies. Consequently, many analysts question whether it is possible for the EU to balance its need to secure extensive energy supplies, on the one hand, with the adoption of a more decisive diplomatic stance towards Russia, on the other.

**Conference languages with simultaneous translation  
are English and German.**

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