

ABSTRACTS

Heinz-Jürgen Axt

The New Greek Government: Election Pledges and Realpolitik

Greece elected a new government on January 25, 2015, led by SYRIZA, a radical leftist party, which formed a coalition with ANEL, a populist rightist party. SYRIZA had promised during the election campaign that it will offer the Greeks, who have been hit by the crisis so bitterly, a better future and that it will enforce a debt relief, so that “the dictatorship” of the lenders’ Troika, composed of the International Monetary Fund, the European Central Bank and the European Commission, will end. It took four weeks until the new government had to acknowledge the bitter realities and asked its partners from the euro zone for financial assistance, as Greece was threatened by insolvency. Much time was lost as the Greek authorities proved to be extremely reluctant to accept the conditions set by the creditors. What the results of all the disputes over intended Greek reforms, political controversies and ministerial meetings will be, remains an open question.

Nicolai von Ondarza and Ronja Scheler

The High Representative as the Voice of the EU – An Evaluation Five Years after “Lisbon”

The office of the High Representative was created in order to increase the visibility and the coherence of EU external relations. Based on foreign policy statements, this article analyses to what extent the first High Representative after the Lisbon reforms, Catherine Ashton, achieved these aims. With an average of more than 400 statements per year, she made active use of this tool as an underpinning of her foreign policy. Most of these statements are, however, event driven and devoid of any strategic initiatives, in particular with regard to the EU’s strategic partners. Despite the High Representative’s “double hat”, the cooperation with the Commission was almost negligible, nor did Ashton visibly link the EU’s external relations with its security and defence policy. After Federica Mogherini’s first 100 days in office as the new High Representative, there are however already signs of a better use of the tools at hand.

Gerhard Sabathil

A New Momentum for the EU-Central Asia Relations

With the European Central Asia Strategy of 2007, the EU’s relations with the region have experienced a dynamic development. This applies to both the trade and the increase in development aid, as well as to contractual relations, sectoral cooperation and security policy dialogue. At the same time, the problems of the region, both within and between countries, did not diminish. Therefore, democracy promotion, human rights, rule of law, poverty reduction and reforming higher education, but also water, environmental and energy diplomacy, curbing crime and corruption as well as strengthening peaceful cooperation are i.a. the focal points of the European commitment. A stronger differentiation and focus in the Central Asia Strategy and a more efficient use of the funds allocated for development aid until the year 2020 give the EU and the new special representative for the region not only new resources but also high expectations on his way.