CIS, CSTO and the United Nations: Could an Active Regional System of Collective Security Be Established?

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1. Introduction
Despite the efforts of international community, a variety of internal and inter-State conflicts on the territory of the former Soviet Union have not been settled. In view of the United Nations (UN) Security Council’s failure to handle and settle conflicts all around the world, regional and sub-regional institutions increasingly assume their responsibility in the sphere of security.

The States that emerged from the disintegrated Soviet Union participate (besides the UN) in a range of regional organisations involved *inter alia* in maintenance of peace and security in the region.1 Efforts and activities of these organisations are,

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however, often dichotomised or duplicated. Lacking a stable, structured mechanism, it often happens that none willing to act could be found. It seems thus necessary to assess the current and potential competences of the Commonwealth of Independent States (hereafter, CIS) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (hereafter, CSTO) to decide on the possibility of establishment of an effective system of collective security in the region. The problem is even more topical in view of the absence of legal studies of the situation in the region. Existing legal studies focus on traditional aspects of regional security with very little regard to the new prospects and challenges.

To answer the question set in the title of the present article it is necessary to explore some general issues of regional cooperation and activity under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter (hereafter, Chapter VIII), and to evaluate the relevant aspects of the status, competences, tasks and activities of the CIS and CSTO.

index.htm>, visited 15 April 2011; five states (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan) are members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (hereafter, ShCO), <www.sectsco.org/RU/show.asp?id=453>, visited 15 April 2011.
