The Young Ambassador

ekin beyzadeoğlu • idil daloğlu • alican ertaş • orçun can • dünya değirmenci • derya yakupoğlu • dilek keyf • nil acar • menekşe koca • hande mutlu • ece ayda akgün • dilşah teker • alican ergür • sercan topcu • çise mıdoğlu • sena döver • semih sancar • sarp ulaş ocak • ekin beyzadeoğlu • idil daloğlu • alican ertaş • orçun can • dünya değirmenci • derya yakupoğlu • dilek keyf • nil acar • menekşe koca • hande mutlu • ece ayda akgün • dilşah teker • alican ergür • sercan topcu • çise midoğlu • sena döver • semih sancar • sarp ulaş ocak • ekin beyzadeoğlu • idil daloğlu • alican ertaş • orçun can • dünya değirmenci • derya yakupoğlu • dilek keyf • nil acar • menekşe koca • hande mutlu • ece ayda akgün • dilşah teker • alican ergür • sercan topcu • çise mıdoğlu • sena döver • semih sancar • sarp ulaş ocak • ekin beyzadeoğlu • idil daloğlu • alican ertaş • orçun can • dünya değirmenci • derya yakupoğlu • dilek keyf • nil acar • menekşe koca • hande mutlu • ece ayda akgün • dilşah teker • alican ergür • sercan topcu • çise mıdoğlu • sena döver • semih sancar • sarp ulaş ocak • ekin beyzadeoğlu • idil daloğlu • alican ertaş • orçun can • dünya değirmenci • derya yakupoğlu • dilek keyf • nil acar • menekşe koca • hande mutlu • ece ayda akgün • dilşah teker • alican ergür • sercan topcu

• çise mıdoğlu • sena döver • semih sancar • sarp ulaş ocak •

DEDIATED SPECIAL REPORT: WORLD AFFAIRS AN ARTICLE: ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE EUROPEAN UNION In this issue : MEP Warsaw MEP Budapest MUNESCO Ankara Debate Club Spring Day I believe in diplomacy.

Many people believe that diplomacy doesn't help us in the peaceful settlements of the issues. It does not go further than what words can promise or realize. It does not have the power to stand against the threats of our era. Unfortunately, given the political turbulences in the last 5 years, I have so little to prove these people wrong.

In Iraq we have witnessed a violation of the UN Charter, and a watershed of the decade. There are still nations who have not signed the disarmament treaties and becoming even more threatening to the international security; North Korea, Iran and on the other hand curious relations between Russia, Iran and China prevail. Poverty rules the world; approximately 820 million people in the developing world are undernourished. 42 million people are living with HIV/AIDS in the world and 92.8 percent of them in developing countries. All these are topics of highest priority on the agenda of the UN; the heart of diplomacy.

Given these circumstances, we have no reason to believe in diplomacy. Yet, an English politician, Tony Benn once said: "All war represents a failure of diplomacy".

Diplomacy is negotiation between nations in a delicate manner proving the wisdom in political affairs. With my 18 friends, each special and luminous, we tried to prove this right. If this network of young people continues to grow, in the future we might have some reasons to believe in diplomacy.

I would like to express my gratitude to Mr.Süha Günel for him being the firm believer of this idea and also to Mrs Melike Toklucu for her endless support. My special thanks to Mrs. Bürçek Dinçler for her constant trust on me and for making this all meaningful.

It is an honor to be a part of such a special network of people with knowledge, creativity and interest in world problems. I would like to deliver my thanks to each member of the Debate Club, my teammates, for making this all true.

Zeynep ULUS

The Debate Club began its voyage in 2004 with four courageous and dedicated students in attendance at "Spring Day in Europe" at TED Ankara College High School and MEP (Model European Parliament) Conferences in Warsaw. I clearly recall the expression on their faces as they took the floor for the first time in their young lives; anxious and excited, but above all enthusiastic about the challenge before them. This year I was fortunate enough to be witness to another group's confident determination when they were asked to accept the great responsibility and privilege of representing not only their friends and school, but also the nation of Turkey, in another MEP Conference in Budapest. Indeed, these kids were chosen to study the art of diplomacy, before experiencing its functions for themselves on an international stage, as they spoke on behalf of the Turkish Republic.

In time, more students were added to their number and as a whole they grew steadily evermore confident and able. Their debating skills refined, the group went further by undertaking detailed research projects concerning the issues of greatest relevance to the EU and wider world in general. In this way and through attempting to find sensible solutions, each student attained experience in the writing of a resolution.

In a short while they learned a great deal. Through participating the Conferences they significantly developed the concepts of tolerance and sensitivity; they have been given the opportunity of interacting with other cultures and sharing the ideals. Furthermore, our students have achieved unique and everlasting friendships.

Today there are sixteen members of the Debate Club. As the director of this group I feel it necessary and fitting to congratulate each delegate for their courage and to thank them for their confident work in taking on such a responsibility in the way that they have.

I would also like to convey my gratitude to Mr. Süha GÜNEL and Mrs. Melike TOKLUCU for their everlasting support and my special thanks to Zeynep ULUS, who played an important role in encouraging the members to enter the world of diplomacy, to be successful delegates and who aided their growth as young ambassadors.

In closing I would like to add that it has been an honour for me to accompany these students on such a journey. They have proven themselves a creditable source of pride for all those associated with TED Ankara College, both past and present, and based upon my own experiences with them, I have no doubt that they will continue to grow as valuable citizens of the world. The future of the Turkish Republic is the responsibility of our young students and as such, I am filled with hope. The Debate Club is a group of overenthusiastic students. All the members of this club feel that they can get along with politics and they –by all means- try to learn more. The school authorities think very highly of the objectives of this club.



Getting together on Wednesdays and Sundays, we, the members of the Debate Club, try to lobby among ourselves to bring up new ideas to the attention of the others. We have fruitful debates most of the time, not to say that we waste no time on arguments like whose flag is better, but it can sincerely be said that the six-hour periods we have once a week, make us live the most enjoyable events of our lives.

By attending conferences, writing resolutions and working with a team of such enthusiasm; it makes us, day by day, more aware that we are the privileged students of our school. We get to learn about life itself, if you want to know the truth.



This year we attended the Model European Parliament (MEP) in Budapest (Hungary) and Warsaw (Poland); Model United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (MUNESCO) at BUPS and also Spring Day in Europe at T.E.D Ankara College High School.

While getting prepared for such conferences, we debate a variety of issues ranging from "the US Elections" to "The European Constitution". For each debate, we are assigned a country and we try to reflect the perspective of the country we are representing on that issue.

One of the outcomes of our work in the Debate Club is the confidence we now have of ourselves, especially in discussions relating to world affairs.

We have become more articulate and more knowing. We will all be using what we have acquired throughout our lives. This, we owe to the Debate Club.

Our dearest teacher Mrs. Bürçek Dinçler and our lovely chaperon Zeynep Ulus, have taught us a lot. A year ago, none of us knew what "world heritage" or "xenophobia" meant. Nobody cared if "freedom fighters" were the same with "terrorists". With their enduring capability to teach and patience, we have managed to understand even politics and diplomacy.

In the conferences we have attended, we met millions of other students, all competitive but also as friendly as one can imagine and we found out a lot about ourselves - we got to face our own selves.



MUNESCO

The Model United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization 2005, hosted by Bilkent University Preparatory School in Ankara, between the 24^{th} of March and 27^{th} of March 2005, is a conference that follows the Model United Nations format to make the youth more familiar with intellectual topics and international problems about education, culture and scientific development.

In a four-day period of time, students discuss the topical issues they are assigned in their committees. Committees try to come up with a resolution each, proposing solutions to the problems brought up in their questions



It was the first time that a MUNESCO conference took place in Turkey, and our school was invited along with schools like Robert College and Tarsus American College. We participated in the conference with 16 students. There were two delegations representing the Russian Federation and Central African Republic.

The nine delegates representing the Russian Federation were Çise Mıdoğlu (ambassador), Mehmet Semih Sancar, Sarp Ulaş Ocak, Hande Mutlu, Orçun Can, Alican Ertaş, Dilşah Teker and Dilek Keyf.

The seven delegates representing Central African Republic were Zeynep Sena Döver (ambassador), Sercan Topçu, Alican Ergür, Menekşe Koca, Nil Acar, Ece Ayda Aygün and Ekin Beyzadeoğlu.

<u>Day 1:</u> The opening ceremony took place. All the ambassadors took the floor to deliver their speeches to the assembly.

It was a bit strange for us to hear that there was such thing as a "right to reply", though. We did not know that people could actually get up right after a speech and tell whatever it was that they had in mind. But in that way, we have managed to attend the General Assembly more. It was not only by the speeches we were to deliver but also with the points of information and the rights to reply that we have risen for that we did take part in the discussions.





In her opening speech, Çise stated that the Russian Federation had always been ready to serve technically, socially and financially to its region and beyond.

"As the Russian Federation, we shall seek no excuse or apology for the manipulation of natural resources, financial reserves and political potentials of a specific group, community or country."

In her opening speech, Sena outlined the problems many Africans faced such as malnutrition, contagious diseases and the lack of easily accessible education. She concluded by calling upon all Member States to co-operate in finding solutions to such problems under the roof of MUNESCO for a more prosperous and peaceful world. Day 2: The second day was reserved for formal lobbying. Each delegate tried to merge his / her resolution with other delegates' resolutions during the committee meetings.

Most of the delegates in our delegations managed to become main-submitters, which meant that they were chosen by the people they merged with to be the main defenders of their resolutions.

Day 3: On the third day, the resolutions that had been prepared in each of the committees were voted upon. One was to be chosen to represent the committee at the General Assembly.

In the evening, Bürçek Hoca and Zeynep took us out to dinner to celebrate our success. It was a good opportunity to boost up our morales and confidence before the General Assembly.

<u>Day 4:</u> On the fourth day, the General Assembly was held. The previously chosen resolutions for each committee were discussed and voted upon. Our delegations were of the most active ones, since we contributed with comments, speeches and questions all through the assembly. Some of the resolutions passed and some did not.

With the Closing Ceremony that took place in the end, the first MUNESCO session in Turkey was officially closed.





MUNESCC

SPRING DAY

"Spring Day in Europe" gives the European youth an opportunity to understand and to be involved in the European Union institutions and agenda. For this occasion, the Debate Club decided to simulate a Model European Parliament Session in our school, on 8th of April.

Constitution didn't form a threat. She stated that the EU treaties were unified in the European Constitution, and that the Constitution was a step towards a unified Europe; "a single powerful voice of different minds"



The first session sought an answer to the question "Does the European Constitution form a threat to the national democracy and political independence of Member States?" Firstly Luxembourg (Çise), as the term president, took the floor, emphasizing that the number of seats in the European Parliament were specified in the treaties and were not to be changed if the populations shrank or grew. She added that problems may rise because of the fact that their State would become a minority in the European Parliament. A question about "the representation of minorities in the National Assemblies" and "the shrinking of the population of Europe" was raised.

Çise summarized their policy by saying: "We wish to stay what we are, we wish to stay independent".

United Kingdom (Nil) insisted that the European Union was not a federal state and would never intend to be. A question from the delegate of Slovakia (Dünya) surprised the audience as much as it surprised Nil. The question was about the war in Iraq and Nil underlined the fact that it was a war for peace. She now says that at that time she understood how difficult it was to be a politician.

Romania (Orçun), Bulgaria (Dilşah), Cyprus (Semih) and Germany (İdil) also took the floor. Dilşah stated that the Constitution would not form a threat whereas Semih insisted that it did. Germany was one of the Member States suggesting that the



*Ece Ayda Aygün, French delegate

The second session was on the question "Should the European Constitution include an official reference to Christianity?" The first speaker was France(Ece). France as a strong defender of secularism opposed to any reference in the Constitution; reminding that EU was based on the principles of equality, democracy and pluralism.

Other delegates also got involved with the debate by their questions and comments. Belgium (Ekin), for instance, stated "There's no need to further acknowledge Christianity's role when we are revising the role of institutions, treaties and states within the EU." On the other hand Poland (Alican) was very strict about their wish to have a reference. Dünya, as a response, stated that the Union should be in a religious unity, along with being a political and an economic union.

Turkey (Sena), a country with a predominant Muslim population, was strictly against any reference to Christianity. Sena, during her speech, underlined the fact that "EU is not a Christian Club" and added: "Europe has to be secular for it really to be unified."



It is surprising that a year could pass so quickly. "Spring Day in Europe" was our last big conference. We enjoyed it very much and we feel the privilege of being a part of it.

"When I heard the voice of our chair Zeynep calling upon the delegate of the United Kingdom to make a speech, I got up, without hesitation... I was more confident than I had expected to be... "It must be the arrogance of UK" I thought. The only thing I disliked about myself was that I was not able to make a British accent. Well, except for that, I felt completely British."

Nil Acar, the UKish delegate



*Zeynep Ulus, president of the GA Pınar Çağlayan, vice-president of the GA

"It was a chance for me to implement my previous knowledge and to defend my country's view."

Sena Döver, the Turkish delegate

"I think the two sessions of the Spring Day were of the best debates that we have ever had. All of my teammates were great! I am looking forward to the next Spring Day and I know it will be as successful as this one, maybe even more."

Alican Ergür, the Polish delegate

Although I kept complaining about most of the stuff that was done at the spring day, now that it has come to an end, I realize how much I've had fun through the experience. Well, for me, what matters most of the time is if I have learned anything new during my experiences; and I can assure you that I have learned a lot in this one. What I liked most was that I seem to have learned how to hide my feelings and pretend to be calm at all times.

Çise Mıdoğlu, the Luxembourgish delegate

Model European Parliament (MEP) was founded in 1994 in order to give the Young Europeans from the European Union Member States and candidate countries, the opportunity to discuss the topical issues while raising the awareness of a European identity.

There are four MEP meetings at high school level in a year; two of these are held in spring and the other two in autumn. TED Ankara College Foundation High School had the important mission of representing the Republic of Turkey for the very first time in Model European Parliament sessions.

Countries attend the MEP with delegations of 4-6 delegates and each delegate is assigned to a committee where he/she gets to debate the issue of that committee with his/her fellow delegates. Each committee is to come up with a resolution which will be debated in the General Assembly.

The MEP sessions take about 8 days and in this period of time, all participants deal with the art of diplomacy. While getting the chance to know the hosting country better, they build new friendships.



On the first day, the opening ceremony is held and the head of delegation addresses the General Assembly with an opening speech. The second is the day of team building, also known as the "informal lobbying", where the committees spend the whole day together and get to know each other better. On the third and the fourth days, committee meetings are held and after the committee meetings another day is given for formal lobbying. At the end, the General Assembly gathers for two days to debate and vote on the resolutions of the committees.

Two different delegations at two different sessions have experienced this tough schedule of the Model European Parliament.

MEP 2004 in Warsaw

The members of the Turkish Delegation were: Pınar Çağlayan (Head of Delegation), Çise Mıdoğlu, İdil Daloğlu, Sercan Topçu and Emre Aslan.



Pinar, as the Head of Delegation, was to give an opening speech in the GA. In her speech she covered the significance of the geopolitical situation of Turkey, Turkey's reforms in the fields of economy and social life, the uniqueness of Turkey by it being the only secular and predominantly Muslim country. She also stated Turkey's hopes and expectations on International Terrorism and the Cyprus conflict.

After she had concluded her speech by stating "The very objective of Turkey has always been meeting the standards of the contemporary civilization. This is why Turkey feels close to Europe. This is why Turkey is still a developing country." the majority of the assembly agreed that her speech was by far the most impressive one.

successful both in the Çise was very committee meetings and the General Assembly. As we skim through her diary entries, we see that she was actually surprised bv the friendly attitude of her committee friends and that she loved spirit within the the committee. As read further, we we get to share her excitement in the General Assembly which took place in the actual Polish Parliament building. At the end of the day she gives the following advice to the Turkish Nation: "...as a nation, we have to work harder than anyone else to get the status we deserve."

İdil was one of the most hardworking delegates, her committee friends say. In fact she had offered the highest number of operative clauses in her committee. In the evaluation form from the MEP in Warsaw, the committee president states: "Idil was actively involved in the discussion, especially in writing introductory and operative clauses...Her English skills are very high." It seems that Idil has gained more skills, as she concludes her diary as "This was an experience I will never live again and I have gained a lot from it!"

Sercan was undoubtedly the most active delegate in the group. He was pretty successful in the committee meetings because he was able to convince practically anyone. He would tell you of fairy tales and princesses and you would find yourself signing the amendment sheet he's waving at you!

"Emre is the quiet type" you would probably say when you first saw him. He was so calm and rational that you would be surprised, in fact. But it is not the case that he bores you or anything; it is just the opposite. He's probably the only person who can make people laugh so hard and for so long with some simple joke.

MEP 2004 in Budapest

The members of the Turkish Delegation were: Mehmet Semih Sancar (Head of Delegation), Zeynep Sena Döver, Müge Yilmaz and Alican Ergür.

Semih, as the Head of Delegation, was to address the General Assembly in the opening ceremony; he mainly covered the questions that the international community had in mind. Although he enjoyed the





committee meetings very much, he was quite bewildered by a number of things in the General Assembly. He did his best to correct some mistakes deriving from the prejudices about Turkey.

Sena was assigned to the committee discussing the question "What strategy should the E.U adopt considering Turkey's desire to join the E.U.?" and as one can imagine, it was the hardest committee to be in for a Turkish Delegate bearing in mind the fact that this session took place right before 17th December, 2004. As expected, she was able to cope with the stressful atmosphere of the committee meetings. She had the chance to defend Turkey's interests and flourish Turkey's image in the General Assembly by giving a very impressive speech. Thanks to her efforts on behalf of the Turkish Republic...

Müge was assigned the task of representing the resolution of her committee in the General Assembly due to her hardworking and friendly profile. Her self-confidence and constant smile proved her to be one of our team's best lobbying delegates. She was directed at hundreds of questions about Turkey and she answered all of them with a big friendly smile.

Alican was perhaps the most enthusiastic of the four. He tried to participate in every discussion that was raised up in the General Assembly with his comments and questions. Alican was also well known among MEPers for his innate informal lobbying talent.

ARTICLE



ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE EUROPEAN UNION...

My committee in MEP Budapest 2004 session discussed the strategies EU should adopt regarding Turkey's desire to join the Union. Every discussion that set out to find tangible and feasible solutions ended up by a mere abstract term: time. Both sides need time, it was

concluded. But what are the problems that lead us nowhere except this conclusion?

European Union has primarily internal concerns. After the fourth enlargement in May 2004, Member States doubt that another enlargement is possible before the Union is strong on its feet again.

Another internal concern is about the economy; Member States are having difficulty in adapting to their new currency, Euro, and all agree that they are not yet ready for Turkey's possible economic migrants. The balance of powers within the parliament is yet another problem for the Member States. UK and France say that it would be wrong that a newly accepted country should have so much power over the Union by its vast representational advantage.

They all focus on one solution for these problems: time.

The other subheading is concerns about Turkey. The European Union is surprised of the miraculous reforms Turkey has been going through; such a leap forward was not expected in such a short time, they say. Attempts to strengthen the regulation of human's rights, to maintain social equity and to balance the economic income distribution by reforming laws are congratulated. However, the common belief is that thorough implementation will need time.

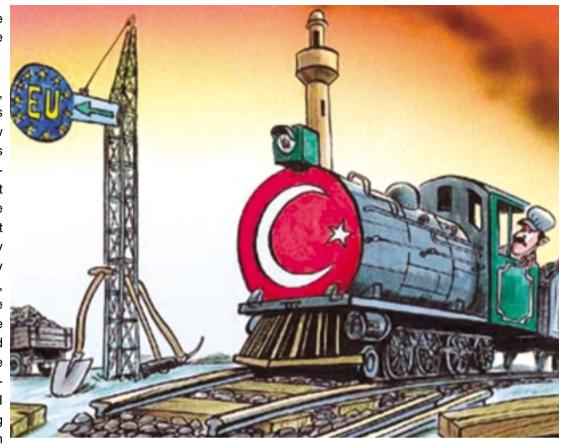
Jane Moriarty, delegate of Ireland in MEP Budapest 2004 session, says "(...) changes were brought to legislation but people are still waiting for more secure implementation."

The common regret is that the prejudices rooting from stereotypes and lack of information about Turkey lead the way in common sense about accession. "In Dutch, we have a saying: Unknown makes unloved. That is probably the problem we have to solve," states Tim Meijers, vice president of the MEP Budapest 2004 session. Martin Akar, German committee president, adds: "The overall problem about Turkey's accession to EU is



(...) the fear about the unknown and the unexpected."

It. unfortunately, seems that Europeans who claim to know Turkey and Turks misconcepconsider tions as facts. Most Europeans' knowledge of Turkey are somewhat limited by the Turks they know. These are usually economic refugees, who tend to alienate themselves from the society they live in and try to live as if they are in their homeland villages. Tim agrees: "I think people are mixing up two things: Turks in



Turkey and Turks in Holland. Turkey is developing very quickly but these people in Holland aren't."

Religious and cultural differences pose another problem, Hungary says. Although they strongly defend that EU is not a Christian Club, EU citizens emphasize that common culture is a strong binding force between states. The European youth, however, point out that the motto of the Union itself is "United in diversity."

Jane supports: "Different cultures would enrich rather than threaten the European culture." Matej Holc, Slovenian delegate in MEP Budapest 2004 session, thinks alike: "(....) both sides will have to learn to disprove stereotypes, and I have learned from my own experience that personal contact is the best way to do so."

Despite the weight on their shoulders in MEP, to repeat out loud what the current politicians and diplomats in the countries they represent defend; European youth show that their own ideas will make a change in the future.

The "mere solution" was not a one to be belittled after all; time is necessary for these young brains to find themselves in high positions where they get to decide. Luckily, the European youth is more into politics than ever before. When it is the case that their ideas at this young age are suit to be "models" to the current diplomats, one wonders how their system and legislation will be in the future. Yes, both sides need time for change in mentality and more tolerance. More time for the dynamic and the young thought to replace the tired and archaic thought.

RESOURCES FOR THE WORLD AFFAIRS

http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/issues/bilateral/countries/turkey/index _en.htm

http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20050220.wcy pru0220/BNStory/International/

http://www.boogieonline.com/revolution/multi/war/chechnya.html

http://www.topix.net/world

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orange_revolution

http://www.mosnews.com/mn-files/school.shtml

http://www.wjla.com/headlines/0405/217851.html

http://www.indymedia.ie/newswire.php?story_id=69439

http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2005/04/19/world/main689498.shtml

http://www.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/meast/11/10/arafat.obit/

WORLD AFFAIRS

'04 SEPTEMBER

The Beslan School Attack – September, 1: On Wednesday, September 1, a group of armed men and women seized school number 1 in the town of Beslan in North Osetia. After a shootout, they forced the children and teachers inside, announcing that they were being held hostage.

The gunmen ordered the children and staff into he school's gymnasium. At first, it was reported that nearly 50 children have managed to escape. Later, this figure was changed to 15. At least nine parents were wounded in the shooting and two people were killed.



Vladimir Putin

rushed to Moscow from his residence in the North Caucasus resort of Sochi and held a meeting.

The president Vladimir Putin

The gunmen released a

series of demands. They called for talks with the president of North

Ossetia, Aleksander Dzasokhov, Ingushetia's president Murat Zyazikov and renowned doctor Leonid Roshal. They demanded the release of jailed fighters and the withdrawal of Russian troops from Chechnya.

Russia declared September 5 and September 7, days of nationwide mourning. Mashadov's spokesman declared that the Chechen leader had nothing to do with the attack.

Is this simply a "massacre against civillians", an act to comdemn? Is this just another reason for us to continue with our ways of dominating lands and killing more people to stop terrorism? No. What makes us pacifists is that we look deep into the reasons, what makes us different from terrorists is that we not only capture the guilty but we try to stop he acts. To ease the pain and to eradicate the reasons for their happening.

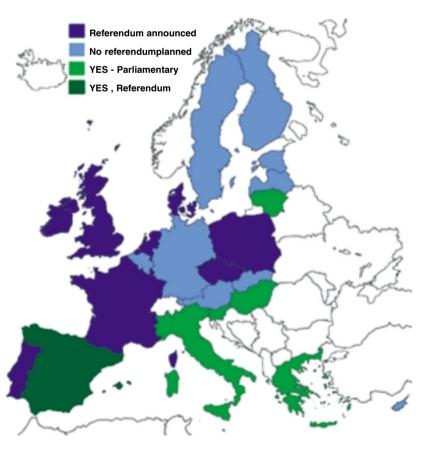
"For me, the reason for such acts is the incorrect understanding of the word peace. It is such a word that every person can load his / her own meaning in it. "(Sercan)

'04 OCTOBER

The Signing of the European Constitution -

October, 29: The Constitution, having been agreed by heads of government from the 25 member states. was signed at a ceremony in Rome 29th October on 2004. Before it enters into force, however, it must be ratified by each state. This process is likely to take around two years to complete.

- <u>Spain</u> (20 February 2005; result was in favour)
- France (early 2005)
- Netherlands (1 June 2005)
- Luxembourg (10 July 2005)
- Ireland (late 2005)
- <u>Poland</u> (late 2005)
- Portugal (late 2005)
- Denmark (early 2006)
- Czech Republic (2006)
- United Kingdom (2006)



Ratification takes different forms in each country, depending on the traditions, constitutional arrangements, and political processes of the country in question.

So far, ten of the 25 states have announced their intention to hold a referendum on the subject. In some cases the result will be legally binding; in others it will be consultative:

A consultative referendum in Belgium was ruled out by the Belgian parliament, because political parties were concerned that the far-right Vlaams Belang party would use the referendum to campaign against the admission of Turkey to the EU.

'04 NOVEMBER

<u>Yasser Arafat Dies – November, 11:</u> Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat, 75, the leader who desired a homeland for his people but was seen, by many Israelis, as a ruthless terrorist and a roadblock to peace, died early Thursday in Paris.

- Israel, in retaliation for increased terrorist attacks on Israeli civilian targets, severely restricted Arafat's movements, confining him to his West Bank compound in Ramallah in December 2001.
- In 2003, under pressure from the United States and members of his own Cabinet, Arafat appointed Abbas to the new position of prime minister, a move designed to decentralize power.

Arafat had been sick with an unknown illness that had been variously described as the flu, a stomach virus or gallstones. He flew to Paris on October 29th, seeking medical treatment and was hospitalized with what Palestinian officials said was a blood disorder. He had been on а respirator since slipping into a coma on November 3rd.

Arafat's family had wanted him buried in Jerusalem, but the Israeli government forbade that.

"Jerusalem is the city where Jewish kings are buried, and not Arab terrorists," Israeli Justice Minister Yosef Lapid said last week.

Erakat vowed that the grave in Ramallah would be temporary. "One day, we will have our own independent state with east Jerusalem as its capital,"

Erakat called it "heartbreaking" that Arafat died

before achieving his goal of an independent Palestinian state, "and the Israeli occupation of our land has not finished yet." But he said Arafat managed to preserve Palestinian national identity during decades without statehood.

His death left no clear and immediate successor in Palestinian politics.

<u>Ukraine – The Orange Revolution:</u> The orange revolution was a series of protests that took place throughout Ukraine in response to claims of corruption and fraud during the Presidental Election of November

21, 2004. According to the results of the election held on October 31, 2004; no candidate carried the absolute majority of the vote cast. This was a case where a run-off between the two top candidates was required by the law. The winner of the run-off was to become the countries third president.

The action, also called The Chestnut Revolution due to the abundance of chestnut trees in Kiev,



Orange was adopted by the protesters as the official colour of the movement because it was the predominant colour in Viktor Yuschenko's election campaign.

appeared in the form of nationwide protests, sit-ins and planned general strikes. These were all organized by the supporters of Yuschenko.

A second run-off election was ordered by the Supreme Court for December 26, 2004. The official results of the second run-off were problem-free, legally valid and in Yuschenko's favor. With his inaguration on January 23, 2005; the Orange Revolution reached its peaceful conclusion.

'04 DECEMBER

The EU summit - **December**, **17**: The decision on 17th December 2004 by the European Council has called on the Commission to "present a proposal for a framework for negotiations". The summit was also important for the fact that the membership negotiations were scheduled to be opened on 3rd October 2005.

- Turkey has been an associate member of the EU since 1963 (the signing of the Ankara agreement) and she has been an official candidate since 1999.
- The EU and Turkey are linked by a Customs Union agreement, which came in force on 31 December 1995.



The European Council recalled its previous conclusions regarding Turkey, in which, it agreed that Turkey was a candidate state destined to join the Union on the basis of the same criteria as applied to the other candidate states.

"The European Union summit on December 16-17 ushered in a new era for Turkey and brought to an end what was in essence an endless process of 'negotiations about negotiations'. The next nine months will inevitably be filled with endless discussion and speculation in Turkey as well as the European countries of all aspects and implications of the new phase in the relationship." (Bülent Ali Rıza & Seda Çiftçi)

'05 JANUARY

Iraqi elections - January, 30: The multi party elections in Iraq took place on the 30th of January and the United Iraqi Alliance, having had the 48% of the votes, won.

Although the results clearly meant a Shia victory, the Kurds also have earned a number of seats in the national parliament.

- Iraq has a national parliament of 275 seats.
- There are currently 15.2 million electives, 14 million of which are in Iraq and 1.2 million elsewhere.

It was seen that a big number of citizens had not participated in the elections. This has raised objections from some countries, especially Turkey.

The European Union, on the other hand, has

declared its appreciation of the fact that a political progress in Iraq has begun.

'05 MARCH

<u>Aslan Mashadov was killed – March, 8:</u> The Chechen leader Aslan Mashadov was killed on 8th of March, 2005, the Russian authorities say.

Chechnya: "Russia has always been an empire, ruling over vast territories of many different ethnic and tribal groups. The Soviet Union represented the peak of the Russian Empire and when it collapsed, the empire shattered into pieces. Ethnic groups re-established old ties, old claims and old hatreds."

The region known as Chechnya, homeland to the Chechens (a predominantly Sunni Muslim group) was a land of this sort, a land where the old hatreds arose. There has always been struggle. On behalf of both the Russian authorities and the rebels fighting for separation. It is not a matter of who is right and who is wrong anymore but a matter of who will give up this fight of incredible intolerance.

France is known to be one of the most severe critics in Europe of Russia's war against the Chechen separatists.

"We possess much more powerful means of destruction than we have so far used. They should be quite simply eliminated. There is no other solution." Head of the Russian Air Force, General Anatoly Kornukov (December 1999)

"we are doing everything to differentiate between those who honestly got confused, who fought for independence and separation from Russia; and those who are –without any doubt– terrorists and criminals" Vladimir Putin

Is this a crime against humanity? Some dirty and colonial war? Putin apparently thinks no.

"Correct me if I am wrong but ex-prime minister of UK Margaret Thatcher told me once that a man who comes out into the street to kill other people must himself be killed. No one has a moral right to tell us to talk to child killers"

<u>Mashadov:</u> Mashadov was born in Kazakhstan in 1951. His family was sent to exile in 1944. He came back to his country in 1957, when he was six. He served for some time in the soviet army.

- The first chechen war was fought between 1994 and 1996. In late 1994, the Chechens announced their secession from Russia.
- Russian troops evacuated Chechnya by the end of 1996.
- In September 1999, the neighboring province of Dagestan rebelled against Russian rule with significant support from Chechnya.
- As the fighting in Dagestan progressed, Russia began bombing targets in Chechnya. On October 1, Russia troops began invading and taking Chechen towns.
- By December 1999, the conflict had raised international tensions. Russia's response was essentially "mind your own business, and remember we have nukes."
- On January 17th, 2000, Afghanistan became the first country to recognize Chechnya as an independent nation and to say "It is the obligation of all Muslims" to do the same.

In the following years, he fought for the independence of Chechnya, he became one of the most important leaders of the Chechens in their fight against the Russian authorities.



In 1997, he became the head of government in Chechnya.

Aslan MASHADOV

It was speculated that he had to do with the Beslan attack

The terrorists claimed they had taken the order from Mashadov and he, then, was proclaimed a "terrorist". His proposal for a thirty-minute meeting with the Russian leader had not been accepted.

"there will not be any talks with the chechen leaders. People who call for talks with chechen leaders have no conscience" Vladimir Putin

'05 APRIL

Pope John Paul II Passed Away – April, 2: Pope John Paul II died on April 2nd 2005, at 09:37 p.m. The news was immediately announced to huge crowds gathered in St Peter's square.

The 84-year-old Pontiff had headed the Roman catholic church for 26 years. He will probably be remembered for his role in the collapse of communism in Europe and his defense of the traditional vatican doctrines as a leader of the worlds 1.1 billion catholics.

On the second day of the election, which took place with the participation of 115 cardinals from 52 countries,



78-year-old German Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger was declared as the new pope.

"There is one thing for sure; the more broad-visioned a person is, the more beneficial the process he carries will be as well

Joseph Ratzinger

as more satisfactorily will he lead the way for the others." (Sercan)

But is the new pope so broad-minded?

It is known that Ratzinger has stated in 2004, referring to Turkey's unification with EU as a big mistake, that Europe is a cultural unity and not a geographical one. He further argued that Turkey has, throughout history, represented a completely different continent.

In 1941, Ratzinger (14) and his brother, Georg, enrolled in the Hitler Youth when that became mandatory for all boys. He says soon afterwards, he was allowed to drop out because of his intention to study for the priesthood.

Presidential Elections In Cyprus – April, 17: Mehmet Ali Talat, presently Prime Minister and Republican Turkish Party leader, is the new president. Talat wants to see the island reunited and calls on the Turkish Republic to join the European Union.

Mr President Mehmet Ali Talat won 55.6% of the vote, well ahead of his nearest rival, Dervis Eroglu, who won just 22.7%

<u>Syrian Troops Left Lebanon – April, 26:</u> On April 26th, the Syrian troops formally left Lebanon. This ended

Syria's political and economic domination over the land, that had lasted for 29 years.

Unfortunately, a lack of trust in Lebanon's central government followed from the removal of the troops.

- Syria entered Lebanon in 1976 as part of an Arab peacekeeping force shortly after the Lebanese civil war broke out.
- As part of the 1989 Taif agreement ending the war, Syria was to withdraw from Lebanon in two stages over two years.
- Last September, the United Nations passed resolution 1559 calling for, among other things, Syria's immediate withdrawal.

"I respect the Syrians for having left without any conflict with us," said Tanious Abu Hamad, the mayor of the town of Saghbin in the Bekaa Valley. "But now it all comes down to us. Our problems are now our own."

