UA: UKRAINE ANALYTICA

BRUSSELS SECURITY ALLIES SUMMIT ANP UKRAINE BALTICS PARTNERSHIP THREATS SECURITY MEMBERSHIP UKRAINE DILEMMA TRUST FUNDS SECURITY TREATIES REFORMS

NATO

INITIATIVES TRANSFORMATION ANP TREATS UKRAINE COOPERATION TRANSATLANTIC READINESS MEMBERSHIP DEPLOYMENT EASTERN FLANK

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UA: UKRAINE ANALYTICA

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NATO Transformation

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NATO Assistant Secretary General for Public Diplomacy

What Are the Top Priorities of NATO Transformation after the Brussels Summit?

At the NATO Brussels Summit this July, the Allies took important decisions to strengthen NATO's deterrence and defence, to step up the fight against terrorism, and to ensure fairer burden sharing among all Allies. These decisions were in line with previous NATO summits – Wales in 2014 and Warsaw in 2016 – where the Alliance addressed the needs to meet the new security challenges of today, in particular the revisionist Russia in the East and instability emanating from the South.

What it means in concrete terms is raising the readiness of our forces, increasing our ability to move them across the Atlantic and within Europe, modernizing our command structure, and setting up a new cyber operations centre and counter-hybrid support teams.

But it is also about strengthening our neighbourhood – projecting stability beyond our borders: by sustaining our financial support to the Afghan National Security Forces and our training mission in Afghanistan; launching a training mission in Iraq; providing more support to countries like Jordan and Tunisia, strengthening their ability to fight terrorism. Of course, continue assisting our close partners such as Ukraine and Georgia and closely cooperating with Finland and Sweden.

Keeping NATO's door open to new members is an additional important decision – last year Montenegro became the 29th member; this summer the Allies invited Skopje to start the accession talks and confirmed the 2008 Bucharest Summit decision that Ukraine and Georgia will become members one day.

The summit has shown that, as the world changes, Europe and North America stand together and act together in NATO.

> *raising the readiness of our forces, increasing our ability to move them across the Atlantic and within Europe, modernizing our command structure, and setting up a new cyber operations centre*

Were the Annexation of Crimea and Events in and around Donbas a Trigger for NATO Transformation?

NATO has been transforming since the end of the Cold War. Following Russia's aggressive actions against Ukraine and the illegal and illegitimate annexation of Crimea, NATO undertook the biggest adaptation of its collective defence since the end of the Cold War. NATO had no plans to deploy forces in the Eastern part of the Alliance before Russia's illegal and illegitimate annexation of Crimea.

NATO has responded in a measured, defensive, and proportionate way to Russia's use of military force against its neighbours.

The Readiness Action Plan was launched at the NATO Summit in Wales in 2014 as a major driver for change in the Alliance's deterrence and defence posture. It was initiated to ensure the Alliance is ready to respond swiftly and firmly to new security challenges from the East and from the South. Building up on this initiative, at the Warsaw Summit, further measures were adopted – such as NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence, with rotational deployments of four battle-groups to Poland and the three Baltic States, and Tailor Forward Presence in the South-east of our Allied territory, including increasing naval presence and military exercises in the Black Sea. At the Brussels Summit this year, NATO leaders agreed on a NATO Readiness Initiative, the so-called "Four Thirties". The Allies committed, by 2020, to having 30 mechanised battalions, 30 air squadrons, and 30 combat vessels, ready to use within 30 days or less. These forces can be made available to NATO for rapid reinforcement during a crisis.

> *NATO has invested more than two decades in building strong partnerships. One of the main pillars defined in NATO's Strategic Concept is Cooperative Security*

Our readiness is also demonstrated through increase in the number of our military exercises. In October, NATO conducted its biggest military exercise since the end of the Cold War – Trident Juncture in Norway with 50,000 troops. It was an immense logistical undertaking: moving 65 ships, 250 aircrafts, and 10,000 vehicles from as far as California or Turkey to Norway. The exercise was a demonstration of NATO's adaption and resolve.

Is it Time to Review NATO's Approach to Partnerships?

NATO has invested more than two decades in building strong partnerships. One of the main pillars defined in NATO's Strategic Concept is Cooperative Security. This important pillar remains as important as ever – in view of the complexity of security threats our Allies and partners are faced with.

We have several partnership frameworks, including the Partnership for Peace, the Mediterranean Dialogue, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, and our Partners across the Globe. In addition, we have a number of special partnerships, for example the Distinctive Partnership with Ukraine.

We cooperate with our partner countries through a mix of policies, programmes, action plans, and other arrangements. Many tools are focused on the important priorities of interoperability and building capabilities, and supporting defence and security-related reform.

Many of our partners have contributed to NATO's missions and operations; they stood shoulder to shoulder with Allied troops in Afghanistan, KFOR, or our anti-piracy operation off the Horn of Africa. Ukraine has been an outstanding contributor to NATO operations and has contributed at some point to all NATO operations – from the Balkans to Afghanistan – and we are very much grateful for that.

Of particular importance is our partnership with the European Union. In the margins of the Brussels Summit, the NATO Secretary General and the Presidents of the European Council and the European Commission signed a new declaration on NATO-EU cooperation, demonstrating our desire to deepen cooperation. Over the past two years, NATO and the EU have achieved an unprecedented level of cooperation.

We work together on maritime security, countering hybrid threats, and responding to the refugee and migrant crisis. We also exchange real-time warnings on cyber-attacks and participate more in each other's exercises. Moreover, we are now stepping up our cooperation on cyber defence, military mobility, and in countering hybrid threats.

How Prepared Is NATO For the New Threats and Challenges, or Is It Still the Time of Learning Lessons of the Past?

Just as modernizing to face conventional military threats, NATO needs to be prepared to face the non-conventional asymmetric threats as well. Faced with hybrid threats and disinformation, NATO Allies are adapting to be able to defend and deter against them equally. These range from the proliferation of weapons of mass distraction to cyber and energy security challenges.

In the last few years, NATO Allies took important decisions to strengthen NATO capabilities in countering hybrid threats – strengthening its cyber defence capabilities, the resilience of its networks and infrastructure, and sharpening early warning systems.

NATO also supports the Allies in areas such as civil preparedness and chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) incident response; critical infrastructure protection; strategic communications; protection of civilians; cyber defence; energy security; and counter-terrorism.

Last but not least, NATO has significantly increased its cooperation with partners, including Ukraine where we have been sharing experiences through the recently established NATO-Ukraine Hybrid Warfare Platform.

NATO and Ukraine: Is it Time the Distinctive Partnership to Be Upgraded?

Ukraine is one of NATO's oldest and most important partners. Our relations date back to the early 1990s, when newly independent Ukraine joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (1991) and the Partnership for Peace Programme (1994). Relations were strengthened with the signing of the 1997 Charter on a Distinctive Partnership, which established the NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC) to take cooperation forward. In 2008, the NATO-Ukraine Commission agreed to launch Ukraine's Annual National Programme (ANP) to underpin Ukraine's efforts to take forward the reforms aimed at implementing Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations.

Since 2009, the ANP remains the main instrument for Ukraine to advance the reforms. Reforms continued to be necessary when Ukraine decided to take its Euro-Atlantic aspirations off the agenda in 2010, and all the more so as Ukraine now pursues its goal to meet NATO standards by 2020 with NATO support and advice. It is up to Ukraine to use the full potential of the ANP.

Our cooperation has been significantly stepped up after Russia's aggressive actions against Ukraine in 2014. NATO and its Allies have significantly increased their practical support to Ukraine. In addition, the Allies have again and again reconfirmed their support to Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty and pledged not to ever recognise the illegal and illegitimate annexation of Crimea.

The Alliance also continues to provide political and practical support to Ukraine through more than 40 tailored support measures contained in the Comprehensive Assistance Package (CAP), adopted by the

Allies at the Warsaw Summit back in 2016. It includes a range of Trust Funds, capacity-building programmes, and advisory support. Also, many NATO Allies are providing strong support in a bilateral way. The support provided to Ukraine is unprecedented. NATO activities in Ukraine cover a very wide range of areas. Much has been achieved, but we need to further intensify our efforts, in view of the challenges we are all facing.

Ambassador Tacan Ildem was appointed Assistant Secretary General for Public Diplomacy in March 2016. He advises the Secretary General on public diplomacy issues and directs the Public Diplomacy Division (PDD). Ambassador Ildem is a senior Turkish diplomat. Since the start of his career in 1978, he has held positions involving multilateral and bilateral affairs. Before assuming his current responsibilities, Ambassador Ildem served as Permanent Representative of Turkey to the OSCE in Vienna from 2011 until 2016.

FUTURE OF NATO IN LIGHT OF TRANSATLANTIC CRISIS

Karyna Rohulia
Institute of International Relations
Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

Today, relations between the US and major European powers are still strained, and their hottest points are currently attributed to the "inadequate Trump policy". It is not so obvious as it seems, because even during the presidency of Obama one could overview the disagreements between the partners. These were covert disagreements, which the parties tried not to show. Now Washington wants to set its own terms, thus demonstrating all the problems the parties have. The main question is how flexible the partners could be in order not only to save the unity, but to show the desire to strengthen NATO alliance and respond to the existing challenges.

Transatlantic Cooperation: What Is Next?

Current trends and events indicate that the world order is changing. The balance of power among states, their tactics and strategies, and the rules of the game are also changing. The rules, regulations, and institutions that have governed for centuries the interstate relations and relationships among major international actors have faced challenges such as reduced role of the US leadership, more assertive China, political populism, and technological changes.[1] Thus, the issue of the new world order remains open and the results of existing races for geopolitical advantages will become important elements in the formation of new rules of the game.

Contemporary events indicate the growing crises in the transatlantic relationship. Although a lot of experts relate this to the ascension to power of the Trump administration, the discrepancies between the partners have appeared a long time ago. Obama's policy was more liberal towards the EU member states and NATO partners, but during his presidency, the Europeans have expressed objections. Indeed, problems in the transatlantic relationship arose long before Trump became the president of the United States.

Democratic Europe, where peace and prosperity have dominated over the last 70 years, where liberal and democratic values are the cornerstone of any process, has recently faced populist nationalist movements as a result of a significant

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[1]   A. Ward, *Chatham House Expert Perspectives 2018 Risks and Opportunities in International Affairs*, 19 June 2018 [https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/publications/research/2018-06-19-chatham-house-expert-perspectives-2018-final2.pdf access: 07 December 2018].

increase of refugee flows from the Middle East and Africa. For the first time since the Second World War, representatives of the right-wing parties received a significant number of seats in the German Bundestag. Authoritarianism has replaced democracy, or threatens to, in such European states as Hungary and Poland. Democracy and liberal values have been endangered in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Right-wing nationalists came to power in Italy and foreign-political rhetoric is moving rapidly away from benefiting European unity, on the basis of which the EU was created.[2] At the same time, Great Britain, which played a significant role in European politics during and after the Cold War, has stepped down and positions itself as a passive observer of the European agenda. The probability that dark times will come to Europe is now even greater than it was during the Cold War. This probability is even bigger if Europeans fail to maintain unity, and their common goal will no longer be equally important for each member state of the EU.

> **Disunity within the EU on a number of important issues such as finance, migrants, populism, and energy does not allow member states to rely on each other, so the transatlantic security vector is extremely important to this end**

Quite a different situation can be observed within the framework of the American foreign agenda. Today Trump is trying not only to change and reorganise relations with partners and rivals, but also to change the model of the world order: getting from the point where the US was the dominant power in the democratic world and coming to the point where the United States becomes a standalone player, no longer responsible for those with whom it stood side by side before.

These are the conditions of today's transatlantic relations. On the one hand, each centre of power is plunged into its own problems, and on the other, it tries to drag the blanket on itself. However, the current course and deterioration of the US-European relations have a rather well defined basis. First of all, we are talking about Trump's zero-sum foreign policy paradigm, which aims at both – a lack of loss and a lack of win for the other party. This paradigm is clearly traced in the Trump economic policy, but it has a significant impact on foreign policy. Another important aspect is economic protectionism as a priority for implementation of the election promises of returning production to the United States, in particular in the context of attempts to adjust the trade balance in favour of the United States. There are also the first attempts to resume dialogue with Russia, as evidenced by the recent Helsinki summit, which is strategically important for the United States in the context of China's containment.

At the same time, there are a number of provisions on which the parties are unable to reach an agreement, in both political and economic spheres, as well as in a number of related areas.

This also applies to commitments and contributions to the North Atlantic Alliance, which is directly related to the difference

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[2]   R. Kagan, *NATO's Global Peace Is Unraveling and We Can't See It*, Brookings Institution, 15 July 2018 [https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2018/07/15/natos-global-peace-is-unraveling-and-we-cant-see-it/?fbclid=IwAR3v89qH4UMey14CKrcJzQ0imRtDLcP8KvNhGBI0Z9zuwzz-VbuvZWHMBHs access: 07 December 2018].

in views on European security. The other aspect is that Trump manipulates the defence spending issue to reduce the US trade deficit.

The economic aspects relate to the Trump administration's vision of the world economic system, in which multilateralism must dominate. In addition, significant differences are observed both in relation to climate policies of the parties and within the framework of the implementation of the Middle East policies, especially under conditions when Trump officially implements the US policy of recognising Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, as well as withdrawal from a nuclear deal with Iran.

Disunity within the EU on a number of important issues such as finance, migrants, populism, and energy does not allow member states to rely on each other, so the transatlantic security vector is extremely important to this end. Transatlantic unity is necessary for the Europeans, because it is the basis of stability, which was laid after the World War II and is an integral part of European security and European integration, especially in the face of growing threats from Russia.

Thus, a weak European position in the world will make it easier for other players to play disagreements and enjoy the benefits of European fragmentation, to set the EU member states against each other, and to watch how the European continent turns once more into a playground for influential games – quite similar to the Cold War, but much smaller, with a lot of players and little alliances. That is the reason for Europe's consolidation against external threats, and Trump's manoeuvres do not matter much in this context.

Transatlanticism Is about NATO, but to What Extent?

Today the NATO members from both sides of the Atlantic try to draw the Alliance into a political discourse that is quite negative. NATO is about security and defence, not about tariffs and quota. Of course, globalisation brings adjustments, but it would be incorrect to assume that the North Atlantic Alliance has lost its significance.

> *NATO without politics would not have been so effective both in former Yugoslavia and in the struggle against Russian hybrid aggression against the European democracies*

The events of past years are a vivid testimony to the fact that NATO has been in good shape. The Suez Crisis, Vietnam, the deployment of missiles in Europe in the end of the 1970s, Afghanistan, the Kuwait crisis, the collapse of Yugoslavia – this list is not endless, but in difficult years of confrontation with the USSR or activities without a UN mandate, NATO member states have always shown a high degree of resilience, even when some of them were not truly involved in specific military operations.

From this point of view, it can be stated that NATO without politics would not have been so effective both in former Yugoslavia and in the struggle against Russian hybrid aggression against the European democracies. But with the Trump administration in power, bilateral political discussions began to replace the transatlantic political discourse. If it is all

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3   D. Trump, Twitter, 11 July 2018
[https://twitter.com/realdonaldtrump/status/1017093020783710209?lang=bg access: 07 December 2018].

about low defence spending of the European NATO members, then this is not a problem of the last two years. European states have always funded defence less, although predominantly they were more interested in it due to the territorial proximity to the source of threat. This tendency prevails today.

Strategically, Trump's logic is defined by his political motivation to deal with purely American affairs. The inquiries as to why the US should pay billions of dollars to finance Europe's security while Germany pays money for Russian gas.[3] However, such a strategy cannot succeed for two reasons. First, Trump tries to discredit not just Europe but the Alliance as a whole, which was clearly demonstrated during the Brussels Summit 2018, when Trump's actions showed that he did not want to negotiate, first of all on account of defence spending. Secondly, such a policy of discrediting does not play into the hands of European leaders, who ultimately lose their public support.

Nevertheless, most hypotheses in this context are formed in terms of historical retrospective. And the issue of defence spending is not an exception. The year 1949 marked the first active phase of the Cold War, and it was not a European war. By creating NATO, the United States sought to consolidate much of the space in this geopolitical struggle with the Soviet Union. It was no less Washington's political interest than a European one. Another point, the operations in Libya and Afghanistan, financed by European money, are also the political interest of the White House with the support of some European countries. Trump neglects these important moments, or it may be more correct to say that such a thought has never crossed his mind.

Reviewing Trump's political actions over the past two years, it can be concluded that quite often Trump acts like a businessman, not a politician, even on security issues related to NATO. For Trump, the short-term deal is more valuable than an alliance based on shared values and goals. Thus, Trump criticises not only the North Atlantic Treaty, but also those ones that do not suit him as a businessman.

However, even under the current conditions, two years prior to the Trump era, at a NATO summit in 2014, the Alliance member states undertook the strategic decision to increase their defence spending to 2% of GDP by 2024 given the economic stability. European partners are specifically interested in improving stability and make significant contributions to the transatlantic security.

Firstly, it is about the fight against terrorism and instability. The EU mission in Mali, the Central African Republic, and in the Mediterranean Sea is a major effort to prevent the spread of extremism and terrorism in these regions, and they are within mutual security interests of the United States and Europe. Given the fact that the interests of the United States and Europe coincide in regard to the politically stable Balkans, the EU plays a significant role in regional security through missions to Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The second major EU contribution to transatlantic security is the European Defence Action Plan and Permanent Structured Cooperation, which can enhance defence capabilities. The EU-coordinated plans to increase defence capabilities will enable more coordinated action with NATO structures, while relying on domestic resources, avoiding "significant contributions" from the US budget.

Due to Trump's subjectivity in foreign policy and the efforts of European partners to maintain unity in transatlantic relations, it can be concluded that the North Atlantic Alliance is an integral part of the broad range of relationships, namely transatlantic.

The Joint Hybrid Battlefront

The difference in political views among the Alliance members determines the future of the organisation as a whole, but it also depends on the ability and willingness to negotiate. To date, such a desire has been demonstrated, and the results of the agreements have been implemented.

Having a closer look at the underlying moments on which NATO members are concentrated in the face of a common threat is important. Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) is taken as an example.

The methods chosen by Russia in its unconventional war against European democracies are essentially hybrid, and their key function is to carry out a destructive role within specific states. In this way Russia is trying to undermine not only the European, but also transatlantic security. Russian propaganda and disinformation are the basis by which it tries to create a "parallel reality". Undermining of cyber security and elections meddling are integral elements of this strategy.

The latest developments, linked to the aggression of the Russian Federation in Donbas and the illegal annexation of Crimea, Russian interference in elections in European countries and the United States, Salisbury poisoning, and a number of other events led to a complete overhaul of European and transatlantic security preferences. Given the current events that occur not only in CEE but also in Western Europe, it can be mentioned that Kremlin is interested in creating new conflict zones in Central and Eastern Europe. In such a way, Russia is trying to regain control over the post-Soviet space, as well as a part of Europe that had been controlled by the Soviet Union, to restore the status of a "superpower".

International organisations such as the European Union and NATO should be referred to as important international actors, involved in shaping the security situation in Central and Eastern Europe, and also directly affecting its dynamics.

Given the expansion of the North Atlantic Alliance to the East after the end of the Cold War, Russia felt the threat to its security because the territories that were controlled by Moscow in the Soviet era became an integral part of NATO. It can be argued that NATO's second expansion since the end of the Cold War in Central and Eastern Europe – on the Eastern Flank – took place precisely in the context of Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Indirectly it is related to the security of Ukraine, because the security of the transatlantic region closely correlates with it. On the other hand, NATO is strengthening its Eastern flank in the context of aggressive action on the territories close to its borders.

As a result of this policy, the defence spending of NATO member countries is gradually increasing to 2% of GDP. This is not closely related to Trump's policy, since discussions of this issue started in 2014-2015. In the context of such geopolitical confrontation, NATO has stopped any cooperation with the Russian Federation, leaving only a "window for dialogue".

Another issue that became very important after the onset of aggression is the protection of critical infrastructure and cyber-sphere. Due to the activity of the Russian Federation in the cyberspace, cyber security was officially recognised as the fifth area of operations after the NATO Summit in Warsaw (Poland) in 2016. In order to strengthen security in Central and Eastern Europe, the Alliance is relying on deterrence of Russian aggression, especially through cooperation with the EU and Ukraine.

Taking into account the situation in Ukraine, caused by Russian armed and hybrid aggression, Ukraine is considered as a possible security provider for Central

and Eastern Europe, a key component and a major player in European security, a new Eastern European pillar for transatlantic security.[4] Such conclusions are based on its role as the Eastern outpost in counteracting new challenges and threats with a key role in deterring Russia's aggressive policy. From this perspective, one could explain NATO's high attention to Ukraine; joint trainings, trust funds, increased funding of numerous projects are the evidence of NATO coordinated and joint work on the front-line against Russian hybrid aggression.

Conclusions

Transatlantic relations are not ideal today and have a number of sharp angles, but in the face of external threats, both sides of the Atlantic are ready to work together. It can be concluded that this is not just another family quarrel between the United States and Europe; it is a fundamental change in the rules of the game in the new geopolitical reality.

In essence, the future of transatlantic relations will determine NATO's future. To date, both elements lack unity, but with the transformation of the world order, the essence of the relationship is changing as well. Long ago, member states united on the basis of common values. Today, when the same values are of a different weight for the partners and unresolved issues give reason to forget about these values, a joint threat becomes a converging element. In the case of NATO, as long as there is a common threat, there will still be a common motivation for partners to be members of the transatlantic alliance. Significant changes in the rules of the game in the new geopolitical reality that is being formed are on the way. This will be the main challenge for NATO in the coming years.

Karyna Rohulia is a second-year student of master's programme in the Institute of International Relations at Taras Schevchenko National University of Kyiv; her major is international relations. Karyna worked as Junior Fellow on the "Association for You" project. Currently, she works as an MFA expert. Her fields of interest include hybrid warfare, transatlantic relations, and Ukraine-EU relations.

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4   *Regional Security in Eastern Europe: Place and Engagement of Ukraine*, Centre for Global Studies Strategy XXI, 28 November 2017 [https://geostrategy.org.ua/images/Policy-Paper_EE_Eng.pdf access: 16 December 2018].

THE EU-NATO COOPERATION: PERSPECTIVES FOR MORE AUTONOMOUS EUROPE?

Dr Margarita Mironova

Institute of International Relations,
Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (Ukraine)

The recent intensification of EU-NATO dialogue alongside with the major strategic and operational changes within the Common Security and Defence Policy have reopened discussions about the future European security architecture. What is the role of both organisations and what configuration of their relations would be optimal? Will the EU ambition for strategic autonomy make a positive contribution also to NATO or will it lead to further decoupling and fragmentation of the transatlantic bond? The article examines both the challenges and main achievements of EU-NATO relations with focus on the most promising areas of cooperation.

Introduction

The post-Crimean transformation in the international and regional security milieu has had fundamental implications for the security and defence policy of the EU and NATO member states. After 2014, European security has been under threat of both Russia's revisionist agenda and security challenges in the arc of instability in the Greater Middle East region. The strategic context of the Cold War period is again highly demanded; the focus has shifted to the balance of power and "hard security" issues. This situation is not a surprise for NATO, as deterrence and defence were the core tasks of the North Atlantic Alliance for many decades, but it is rather new for the EU. The EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) established at the end of the 1990s was a reply to the EU inefficiency in resolving conflicts in the Western Balkans and was mainly concentrated on crisis management.

A wide range of steps were taken in the period between the NATO summit in Wales in September 2014 and the latest NATO summit in Brussels in July 2018. NATO activities are now focused on both reassuring the Eastern allies by the launch of the Readiness Action Plan and the Enhanced Forward Presence as well as improving its operational capabilities and reform of NATO command structure. However, in the light of new threats it seems important to adapt NATO's strategic foundations. The current Strategic Concept was approved at the Lisbon summit in 2010 and does not reflect the recent changes in the global environment.

Meanwhile, the EU has transformed significantly following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009 with its collective self-defence clause. The further development of the CSDP, its military and civilian capabilities, implementation of the "battlegroup" concept, and the European

Defence Agency aimed at strengthening EU defence industry marked a definite shift away from the "civilian power" approach. In July 2016, the EU approved a new document, "A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy", which calls for "strategic autonomy"[1] of the EU. Since then the EU and its member states have undertaken steps to implement this principle, which led to the establishment of the European Defence Fund (EDF) and

> ❝ ***2016 became a year of the EU-NATO partnership revision***

the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD) to support the synchronisation of national defence planning cycles. In late 2017, 25 of the 28 member states launched the Permanent Structured Cooperation on Defence (PESCO) with more binding commitments. By now, a set of 34 projects has been established with a broad range of issues, such as EU Training Mission Competence Centre, Cyber Rapid Response Teams, or a project on Military Mobility.

Reinvigorating the EU-NATO Partnership

2016 became a year of the EU-NATO partnership revision. During NATO's Warsaw Summit in 2016, NATO and EU top officials – Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, President of the European Council Donald Tusk, and President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker – signed a Joint Declaration

between the two organisations with the call "to give new impetus and new substance to the NATO-EU strategic partnership". The declaration identified a list of priority areas of cooperation such as countering hybrid threats or enhancing cyber security.

However, the recent developments reflect the previous EU-NATO achievements and setbacks. Their cooperation lasts over 15 years and covers a wide range of issues, including crisis management, capability development, maritime security, etc. The political framework for NATO-EU cooperation was defined in December 2002, when both organisations signed the Declaration on European Security and Defence Policy, which characterised the NATO-EU relationship as a strategic partnership and granted the EU "the assured access to NATO's planning capabilities".[3] The 2003 "Berlin Plus" arrangements outlined the legal and institutional framework allowing the EU to carry out military missions using NATO's assets, planning and operational capabilities.

But serious political obstacles occurred with the EU enlargement in 2004. Cyprus put brakes on Turkey's accession negotiations and blocked its cooperation with the European Defence Agency. Turkey blocked the participation of the Republic of Cyprus in formal EU-NATO meetings and the exchange of security information between organisations. Unfortunately, the Berlin Plus arrangements have been used only for two operations: Operation Concordia in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), which ended in September 2003,

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[1] *Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy,* EU, Brussels, June 2016 [https://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/top_stories/pdf/eugs_review_web.pdf].

[2] *Joint Declaration by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation*, EU, 08 July 2016 [https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/21481/nato-eu-declaration-8-july-en-final.pdf].

[3] *EU-NATO Declaration on ESDP*, NATO, 16 December 2002 [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_19544.htm].

and EUFOR Operation Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a current operation deployed since 2004. As a result of these mutual blockades, the EU-NATO cooperation agenda was significantly limited.

Nevertheless, informal agreements and ad hoc cooperation continued. Despite the absence of any formal bilateral agreement, the organisations were actively engaged in crisis management, e.g. in Afghanistan and Kosovo. Such informal ad hoc interaction and parallel activities appeared to be the most efficient model for cooperation. Both EU missions were civilian and their activities complemented NATO military activities. The EU Police mission in Afghanistan aimed at consulting the Afghan government in institutional building and law enforcement was conducted in parallel with NATO's International Security Assistance Force mission (ISAF). The EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) was established to support NATO's mission (KFOR) in reforming security sector.

The NATO-EU Warsaw declaration of 2016 identified seven priority areas of cooperation (hybrid threats, operational cooperation, cyber security, defence capabilities, defence industry and research, coordination on exercises, defence and security capacity-building) with two sets of implementation actions. The first set of 42 actions was published in December 2016 and the second set of 32 actions was approved in a year.

Top Priorities of the Euro-Atlantic Agenda

Countering hybrid threats is one of the top priorities of the EU-NATO cooperation agenda. Both organisations have already established inter-institutional contacts aimed at studying hybrid threats and sharing relevant information, e.g. cooperation between the EU Hybrid Fusion Cell, the NATO Hybrid Analysis Branch, and NATO Strategic Communications Centres of Excellence in Baltic States. The cooperation has been further institutionalised by the establishment of the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats in Helsinki in 2017. This case is rather interesting, as the centre is not an EU or NATO institution, but an international body established and financed by the participating states – members of the two institutions. The tasks of the Helsinki Centre are broader than those of NATO Centres of Excellence: In addition to training, exercises, and analysis, the Helsinki Centre has to provide policy consultation.[4] As the activities of the Centre are not limited by the formal EU-NATO agreements, it will be more flexible and effective in building networks between the two institutions and member states.

> **For the past decade, the EU and NATO have developed new forms of operational cooperation in the maritime domain**

NATO-EU coordination on cyber security was established in 2013 when the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence established a liaison with the European Defence Agency to exchange information and avoid research duplication. There is a practice of organising joint cyber exercises including Cyber Coalition and Cyber Europe, which are regarded as a platform for elaborating a joint approach on predicting and responding to cyber threats.

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[4]   *K. Raik, P. Järvenpää, A New Era of EU-NATO Cooperation: How to Make the Best of a Marriage of Necessity*, International Centre for Defence and Security, May 2017.

The next priority area is coordination of operational tasks, including maritime missions. For the past decade, the EU and NATO have developed new forms of operational cooperation in the maritime domain. In December 2008, the EU operation EUNAVFOR Atalanta began supporting NATO Operation Ocean Shield aimed at countering Somalia-based pirate activities near the Horn of Africa and in the Western part of the Indian Ocean. Since 2015, the two organisations have been jointly engaged in tackling the migration crisis and cooperating in the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas. NATO provides the EU-led Operation Sophia with logistical support; informal civil-military information-sharing mechanisms were established between NATO and Frontex. Both organisations are using actively the mechanisms of the Shared Awareness and Deconfliction Initiative (SHADE) – an international platform aimed at combating piracy and people smuggling.[5]

A very ambitious idea is to expand the bilateral cooperation to other regions, e.g. the Baltic and Arctic regions and the Black Sea. So far, due to the lack of political will little has been done even on individual level of each of the organisations, although NATO activities are more sizeable. Since 2014 the North Atlantic Alliance is trying to adapt its focus on Russian actions in the Baltic region, like the NATO Baltic Air Policing mission. However, there are difficulties in elaborating the strategy for the Black Sea, mainly because of disagreements of Bulgaria and Turkey. In this regard, a rather challengeable proposal is to open a NATO-certified Centre of Excellence on Black Sea

Security in Georgia[6] despite no precedent of similar centres in non-NATO countries. Such EU-NATO coordination is strongly needed as a joint reply to deterioration of the situation in the Azov Sea and Russia's aggression in the Kerch Strait in November 2018.

Since the Warsaw Summit, the progress has also been achieved in the field of coordinating NATO-EU joint capability development with special attention to the following principal areas: threat perception, defence investment structures, and institutional frameworks for joint command and control of forces for exercises and operations. Interoperability is the basic principle of cooperation, mainly in the sectors of defence planning, defence spending and investment. Two organisations have managed to elaborate the interaction mechanisms between the NATO Defence Planning Process and the EU Capability Development Plan; the EU Coordinated Annual Review of Defence (CARD) serves as a complement to the NATO annual plans project. The EU has also developed its concept of the "battlegroups" in close cooperation with NATO and in accordance with its military standards and procedures.

However, the main challenge is to avoid technical duplication and parallel projects. As it is mentioned in the report of NATO Parliamentary Assembly, the best way out can be the use of the so-called regional "hubs" or groups of NATO and EU states:[7] Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFCO), Central European Defence Cooperation (CEDC), the Visegrad and Weimar Groups. Such structures of tactical and operational

5   *Third Progress Report on the Implementation of the Common Set of Proposals Endorsed by EU and NATO Councils on 6 December 2016 and 5 December 2017*, NATO, 08 June 2018 [https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2018_06/20180608_180608-3rd-Joint-progress-report-EU-NATO-eng.pdf].

6   L. Coffey, *Brussels NATO Summit 2018: Renewed Focus on the Black Sea Needed*, the Heritage Foundation, 25 June 2018 [https://www.heritage.org/sites/default/files/2018-06/IB4872_2.pdf].

7   *NATO-EU Cooperation after Warsaw*, Defence and Security Committee, NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Brussels, 07 October 2018.

military cooperation as the Franco-British Combined Joined Expeditionary Forces (CJEF) or the British-led Joint Expeditionary Forces with Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Denmark, Norway, and the Netherlands can also be used. The two organisations have to discuss the advantages of using PESCO mechanisms in their interaction.

"The 3 Ds": Resurgence of Concerns

The original Berlin Plus agreements produced a compromise in debates over the EU and NATO future configuration. NATO remained the keystone of European security architecture while the EU security and defence initiative mainly concentrated on "soft security" issues and was regarded as complementary. By proposing "strategic autonomy", the EU raised the level of ambitions and made a step up from the commitments fixed in the early 2000s. The ongoing Brexit negotiations and enhanced institutional developments within the CSDP, such as PESCO and European Defence Fund, have renewed the discussion regarding the European Defence Union. The controversial calls for creating a "true European army" were made by the EU top officials, such as statements of President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker and President of France Emmanuel Macron.

The debates, meanwhile, have also raised old fears and concerns of some critics, mainly in the US. The situation is similar to that of the end of the 1990s when the EU Common Security and Defence Policy was at its start. In 1998 then Secretary of State Madeleine Albright during a NATO ministerial meeting expressed American concerns regarding future European capabilities, the so-called "three D": decoupling, discrimination, and

duplication. In practice, it meant that the US concerns were as follows:

- No disintegration, but indivisibility of the transatlantic bond: New European initiatives had to complement NATO with its principles of Atlantic solidarity;

- Non-discrimination of those allies outside the EU: Non-EU allies should not be excluded from participating in the EU initiatives;

- No duplication of NATO-EU capabilities and resources: The newly created structures would not challenge NATO's efficiency.

Recent trends have revitalised the old political discourse. Yet, the paradox of the ongoing decoupling of transatlantic bonds is that it is now less affected by the EU initiatives but by the US rethinking of its grand strategy and the role of Europe in it. Europe's move to the strategic autonomy is only one of the consequences of the divide. Even more, its necessity is justified by the changing US approach with its pivot to Asia and recent renationalisation of foreign policy. There is an influential group of political thinkers in the US who do believe it is time for Washington to terminate its military engagement in Europe and membership in NATO.[8]

Nonetheless, it is not a mainstream idea in the US by far and the fears of decoupling are exaggerated. Despite the British decision to leave the EU, there is still a large group of the EU member states strongly committed to Atlantic solidarity. Moreover, the primacy of NATO has never been argued even by the advocates of European strategic autonomy and NATO is still considered the foundation of collective defence for its members.[9]

8   J. Mearsheimer, S. Walt, *The Case for Offshore Balancing. A Superior US Grand Strategy*, "Foreign Affairs", Vol.95 (4), July/August 2016.

9   See: *Treaty of Lisbon Amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty Establishing the European Community*, Article 42 (7), 13 December 2007; *A Global Strategy for the EU Foreign and Security Policy*, June 2016.

Non-discrimination concerns should also be examined thoroughly. Despite the existing mechanisms of non-EU allies' participation in the CSDP, such countries as Norway, Canada, and Turkey are still expressing concerns of not being directly involved in the EU decision-making process and political consultations. The case of Turkey is the most complicated one with regard to the Turkish-Cyprus conflict and de-facto suspended accession. The remarkable fact is that Turkey is NATO's second biggest army and the leading non-EU contributor to the CSDP operations. The non-discrimination issue requires further discussions at the highest political level, specifically the development of possible criteria and mechanisms to ensure the non-EU states' participation in new initiatives such as PESCO or European Defence Fund. Unclear is the level of UK engagement after Brexit, being currently the largest defence contributor in the EU.

> **what fuels more debates is the question of NATO's primacy and competition related to the EU's growing ambitions**

But what fuels more debates is the question of NATO's primacy and competition related to the EU's growing ambitions. The way out of such competition could be the "division of labour" option. This idea dates back to the first EU missions in the Western Balkans having recourse to NATO assets and capabilities; it can be defined both in geographical and functional terms. The contradicting approach of geographical division of labour with the EU focusing on its neighbourhood (Western Balkans, Africa) and NATO/US having global responsibility is, mostly, supported in the USA. The Europeans are critical of it as unproductive, limiting the EU long-term global role.

The functional division of labour, meaning the use of different but complementary strategies and instruments, is taking place. Having different nature and capabilities, the two organisations usually apply different resources. NATO is focused on "hard security", operations with high-intensity combat, and quick deployment, while the EU has mainly "soft security" tools at its disposal and is concentrated on peacekeeping, humanitarian missions, and post-conflict stabilisation. Despite the fact that the CSDP was created with both soft/civilian and hard/military components, most of its 34 operations had civilian crisis management tasks and only 11 of them were military missions. To fill this gap, the EU Battlegroups concept was elaborated in 2007, but it is still on paper. None of the groups has ever been deployed because of the lack of political will to conduct military interventions.

The functional division of labour may have its positive effect, as none of the organisations is able to tackle the recent threats and challenges on its own. The NATO strategy relying upon military deterrence is not so efficient in coping with non-military/hybrid threats such as migration crisis, border management, or transnational crime. But it is only NATO that is able to answer to the new threats posed by Russia's revisionism and aggression against Ukraine by deploying conventional deterrence presence in the Baltic states and Poland.

The EU Strategic Autonomy: Implications for NATO-EU Relations

What are the perspectives of the EU strategic autonomy mentioned in the EU Global Strategy? The core problem lies in different interpretations of this term by both the advocates and critics of idea. The most pretentious approach, which means being capable to defend the EU territory without NATO support, is still the least achievable. The best demonstration of this obvious fact is the comparison of the EU and NATO

member states' defence expenditures. Even though the total EU defence expenditures have increased significantly up to 214 billion Euros last year, it is only 1.4% of GDP. Only four of the 28 EU member states, all of them being "double members", spent on defence more than 2% of GDP[10], which is NATO minimum requirement.

A bigger challenge for both NATO and EU is the efficiency of the expenditures, as up to 30% of the defence budgets per country may account for social payments such as military pensions. Defence-related research and development is a negligible part of military budgets in all countries except France and the UK. According to the 2018 EU Capability Plan, the EU still lacks key military capabilities such as intelligence and satellites, enhanced logistics, military mobility, air-to-air refuelling, strategic air transport, ballistic missile defence, etc. – areas where dependence on NATO/US capabilities remains crucial.

A less demanding but prevalent understanding of the EU strategic autonomy is to increase reliance on EU capabilities and to be able to undertake military operations on its own, if necessary. The CSDP will definitely be developed as a compromise between the member states willing to enhance defence cooperation and those devoted to Atlantic solidarity. Having in mind the Irish case of ratifying the Lisbon Treaty, one should take seriously the position of neutral/non-bloc states. The participation of neutral states in the CSDP dilutes the collective self-defence clause of the Lisbon Treaty and makes the EU non-competitive compared with NATO. The current threat perception in Europe, especially for Eastern European allies, revolves around Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty and relevant US inputs.

The fears of the EU developing as an alternative to NATO seem groundless, although it does not solve the problem of duplication. The EU and NATO in their further dialogue should concentrate on greater synergy. The challenge is that the CSDP is a complex multi-level network of initiatives and institutions, with different engagement level and obligations of EU member states, the best example of it being PESCO initiative. So the NATO-EU dialogue should also be based on the principles of flexibility, differentiation, and multi-speed approach. To summarise, the rationale of inter-institutional cooperation is obvious: Euro-Atlantic partners are facing similar threats while having limited resources, so only complementary, coherent, and well-coordinated cooperation will strengthen NATO and EU credibility.

Margarita Mironova, *PhD, associate professor at the Institute of International Relations of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv. The main research focus is European integration, EU foreign policy, and transatlantic relations.*

[10] *Defence Data Portal*, European Defence Agency [https://www.eda.europa.eu/info-hub/defence-data-portal].

[11] *Capability Development Plan: Factsheet*, European Defence Agency, 28 June 2018 [https://www.eda.europa.eu/docs/default-source/eda-factsheets/2018-06-28-factsheet_cdpb020b03fa4d264cfa776ff000087ef0f].

NATO'S BRUSSELS SUMMIT AND UKRAINE'S ASPIRATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP: THE ALLIANCE'S NEW AGENDA

Dr Mykola Kapitonenko
UA: Ukraine Analytica

The article reviews results of the 2018 NATO summit in Brussels with a specific focus on the burden sharing debate. It also examines new priorities in the Alliance's strategic planning. Further, perspectives of Ukraine's closer cooperation with NATO are examined, given the dynamics of the conflict in the east of Ukraine and the intended process of making amendments into the Constitution of Ukraine over NATO membership intentions.

Introduction

At times of turbulence, NATO faces new challenges way too often. Regular summits address the most urgent of them, sending signals to member states and partners. In 2018, the summit in Brussels was reflecting the Alliance's most important needs, aspirations, and controversies. With transatlantic relations in crisis and the world order in destruction, NATO needs some checking and setting the agenda.

> **While many have been expecting further uncertainty or even deterioration of transatlantic relations, the meeting brought about the Alliance's enhanced credibility**

Once again, NATO finds itself in a new geopolitical setting. Just as it survived after the Cold War, the Alliance has gradually been examining new ways of adapting to the world order, which arrived with the annexation of Crimea by Russia and subsequent geopolitical developments. It is turning out that even today's multilevel crisis of international security, multiplied by pragmatism of the US president is not enough to make NATO a thing of the past.

The Brussels Summit and the Burden Sharing Issue

In July 2018, a NATO summit took place in Brussels. While many have been expecting further uncertainty or even deterioration of transatlantic relations, the meeting brought about the Alliance's enhanced credibility. Strategic interests of the US and Europe still require unity, and the parties were able to demonstrate it. Although some differences in views on how the Alliance should operate were displayed, common interest prevails. NATO's ability to generate advantages for all members persists. American military guarantees in exchange for geopolitical influence – such a formula has been valid in 1949, and it is still valid today. The US

still wants influence in Europe and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons; and NATO suits best these two goals. Europeans enjoy security for relatively small money, and that also suits them well.

Discussions at the summit have been focused on burden sharing and defence capabilities. The former issue has been on the agenda for quite a long time, almost since the end of the Cold War. It has been reinforced recently after the Wales summit of NATO in 2014, at which all member states agreed to have defence spending increased to 2% of the GDP. Today eight member states are up to this level, which is a significant progress compared to the levels of spending in 2014. Nevertheless, Washington keeps pressing the issue.

The logic of Trump's administration seems simple: The US protects Europe mostly at own expense, and Europeans should keep up in order to keep the deal fair. The US spends about 685 billion USD for defence, which is about 3.6% of the country's GDP, the highest share among all NATO members[1]. The United Kingdom ranks second in both absolute and relative terms with 55 billion USD – about 2.1% of GDP – of military expenses. France and Germany spend much – about 45 billion USD each – but not enough in Trump's view, well under 2% of their GDP. The US defence budget is more than 70% of overall NATO allies' military spending. And that is what the US administration mostly means when it raises the issue of burden sharing.

However, comparing military budgets may be misleading. National armies of NATO member states operate not so much to protect each other, but for other purposes. The US, for instance, has a considerable amount of military spending to finance ongoing operations around the globe or military presence in various regions, among which Europe is not the most resource consuming. Likewise, European member states have security agendas of their own and plan military budgets accordingly. NATO is a collective defence structure, which hardly means the members spend money only for the purpose of defending each other. Thus, comparing military expenditures is not exactly the way to argue about free riding in the Alliance.

At the same time, free riding is certainly there. The Alliance generates common good, with partners unequally participating in the process. Afterwards this common good, namely security, is open for every member, no matter how much or little it has contributed. The free-rider effect is very attractive for both members and countries willing to join the Alliance, e.g. Ukraine and Georgia.

The issue of NATO military spending can also be looked at from a different perspective. Instead of comparing overall military expenditures, one may look at cost share arrangements for member states in NATO common budget and programs. This is money specifically provided for the functioning of the Alliance and is a better indicator of how much each country spends for common defence. The budget consists of civil and military component, with the former equalling 246 million Euro, and the latter about 1.3 billion Euro for 2018[2]. This money, considerably smaller than the national defence budget of large member states, is provided by members according to an agreed cost-sharing formula. The US share for 2018-2019 is about 22%, which leaves much less space for the free-rider rhetoric.

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1   *Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries (2011-2018), NATO Press Release*, 11 July 2018
     [https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2018_07/20180709_180710-pr2018-91-en.pdf].

2   *Funding NATO*, NATO [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_67655.htm].

According to the decisions of the 2014 Wales summit, member states will be aiming at reaching a 2% of GPD line of military spending by 2024, but they do not have to. Under these conditions the US administration continues to pressure European allies, and the burden sharing issue once again was addressed at the Brussels summit.

This time the issue of burden sharing has been somehow connected to Germany. Spending just 1.2% of its GDP for defence, the Europe's economic giant becomes a natural target for Trump's criticism over who has to pay more for protection. Moreover, in Trump's view, Germany not only pays little for its own protection, but "is paying Russia billions of dollars for gas and energy."[3] Germany is supporting the Nord Stream-2 project – construction of a pipeline 1,200 km long, which would supply natural gas from Russia to Germany under the Baltic Sea at a capacity of 55 billion cubic metres annually. Members of the EU are split over the project. Countries such as Germany, Austria, France, or the Netherlands would benefit and are supporting the project. Poland, Romania, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are against. Some countries would win by increasing their roles as energy hubs, while transit countries may lose because of diminished gas transit. The project has raised security considerations as well, especially among Eastern Europeans, given Russia's aggressive foreign policy.

The US has been heavily criticizing the project. Russia's share of natural gas market in Europe is already big, and Washington does not want it to go bigger. Given the stance of bilateral Russian-American relations, the US does not want improvement of Russia's positions in Europe and would like to preserve the

unity of the anti-Russian front of sanctions. In Trump's view, trading with Russia while enjoying protection at America's expense is not good. Critical remarks about Germany's policy have been made at the Brussels summit by the US president, and they have been accompanied by requests of a fairer burden sharing. In his rhetoric, Trump went as far as suggesting a possibility of unilateral US steps, a phrase, which opened wide space for speculations.

The Alliance's main value is not a sum of military potentials of member states, but the credibility of security guarantees for all. From this point of view, mutual trust is more important than several additional GDP points spent for defence. This is partly the answer to the question why small Republic of Macedonia has been invited to join NATO, while big Ukraine with experience of military fighting has been not. President Trump's rhetoric about the possibility of unilateral actions undermines NATO's credibility and diminishes the Alliance's main political asset. Even if none of NATO's potential rivals doubts Article 5, a decrease of mutual trust, which is inevitable after such declarations, creates space for risky decisions and temptations to test the Alliance's cohesion. Would receiving additional billions for Europeans' defence budget be enough to compensate for the loss of credibility?

The summit reinforced NATO's deterrence of international terrorism and raised readiness of NATO forces, including modernization of command structure. New emphasis has been put on cyberspace and fight against hybrid threats. Dealing with Russia remained the same: defending allies and being open for a dialogue with Kremlin. In MENA, NATO launched a new training mission in Iraq and provided more assistance to Tunisia and Jordan. The mission in Afghanistan received

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3   Donald J. Trump, Twitter, 11 July 2018 [https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1017093020783710209].

financing for another seven years. Republic of Macedonia has been invited for accession talks.

Ukraine-NATO: Getting Back to Membership Aspirations at Times of Conflict

Once again, Ukraine is willing to join NATO. Under the president's initiative, the parliament started the process of amending the Constitution, which would fix the country's desire to join the EU and NATO. However, membership is a distant perspective so far. A fog of war in the east of the country makes chances for membership even slighter. A decade ago, Ukraine was denied the Membership Action Plan (MAP) at the NATO Summit in Bucharest despite strong support from Washington. Since then the situation has hardly changed for the better.

The world is no longer the same as it was in 2008. The world order has been undermined. International institutions are weakened. Hard power trumps soft one. State borders are no longer fully respected. One may endlessly argue about what was the starting point of these dramatic changes, but those were Kremlin's decisions in 2014, which made some of the key post-Cold War arrangements obsolete. Four years after, countries do not trust each other and are engaged in much stronger negative thinking than before.

It is even more so when it comes to Eastern Europe. Once a relatively stable region, it is now a home to a war in Ukraine. Tensions between NATO and Russia increased to the levels unseen since the end of the Cold War. That is affecting the states of the region. Nationalism is on the rise, while democracy is in retreat. A backdrop for improving security institutions is quite unfavourable.

These changes in the international security environment are not good news for Ukraine. As the threat of Russian revisionism is so strong, NATO members will be unwilling to take additional risks resulting from any further rapprochement with Ukraine. They will be even more unwilling to extend any security guarantees over Ukraine.

The conflict in Eastern Ukraine is far from settlement. With the death toll exceeding ten thousand, the struggle between the Ukrainian government and the Russia-backed separatists is not only about Ukraine's integrity. It is about the future of European security.

Some call it "frozen", expanding the title of a series of protracted post-Soviet conflicts in Moldova, Georgia, and Nagorno-Karabakh, unified by Kremlin's strong involvement. At the same time some argue, there is no frozen conflict in Ukraine, but a Russian invasion.

No matter how it is called, the conflict is de facto frozen in two ways. First, there is no possible compromise in sight. Russia wants Ukraine under control and keeps Donbas hostage. Ukraine wants its territories, including occupied Crimea, back. Ukraine also wants freedom in setting its foreign policy agenda, something Russia cannot accept. Since the conflict started, there was not any movement towards any zone of possible agreement. Second, as Kremlin makes use of the conflict for protecting its perceived national interests, escalation is always possible. Conflicts of this type are highly instrumental and may escalate at any moment Moscow finds appropriate. Parties are entrapped in what is known as the security dilemma. Worst expectations are shaping policies, while lack of trust feeds uncertainty. Cooperative strategies are dominated by competitive or openly hostile.

Both Ukraine and Russia have got used to live, albeit quite poorly, with a lasting military conflict. Decision-makers in Kyiv and Moscow accepted its high price, and even learned how to extract certain political benefits. Can the same be said about Europe?

Unlike Ukraine and – to a lesser extent – Russia, Europe does not bear direct costs from the conflict, which, by the way, only in 2016 dropped down from a "war" to a "minor armed conflict" according to SIPRI database[4]. However, a conflict of that type and size also means Europe is no longer safe. That hardly implies Russian tanks in European capitals. Russia's opportunities to wage a major classic interstate war are much exaggerated. Moreover, there are no goals on Russia's wish list to be attained by applying military force on a large scale. European security will be further undermined in a quite different way.

> **they are focusing on making NATO more reliable, and that looks like a good strategy. Nevertheless, it also looks as though a crucial part of NATO's reliability has little to do with bringing Ukraine closer to the Alliance**

Russia's decision to occupy Crimea went against the fundamentals of the world order. Major international "rules of the game" did not survive this geopolitical earthquake. As a result, the level of mutual trust has significantly dropped. Europe is no longer a place where the power of interdependence is widely believed to outweigh security calculations. That leads to a growing suspicion among states and a rising importance of relative-gains calculations in foreign policy decision-making. In other words, countries will be less inclined to long-term security commitments and more sceptical about perspectives of a lasting institutionalized cooperation. That affects the perspective of Ukraine's movement towards NATO membership.

Deficit of democracy is another issue. A long-term trend of decrease in number and quality of democratic regimes in the region started well before 2014, but it is gaining momentum. Frozen conflicts and authoritarian tendencies go together well.

Restoration of a full-scale geopolitical rivalry is another danger Europe may face. A frozen conflict on Ukrainian territory creates uncertainty for Kremlin as to what it can or cannot achieve in a new European turmoil. Bets are raised, while time is hardly on Moscow's side. That combination may stimulate risk-taking decisions, the very expectation of those doing much harm to European security.

Ukraine's desire for NATO membership will enjoy less support and face stronger opposition. In 2008, President Bush was advocating for the MAP for Ukraine. In 2018, President Trump is sceptical about NATO's global role and does not seem to be willing to multiply American international security guarantees. European NATO allies may be more wary of the threat from Russia, but they do not seem to be looking for a solution in bringing Ukraine into NATO. Instead, they are focusing on making NATO more reliable, and that looks like a good strategy. Nevertheless, it also looks as though a crucial part of NATO's reliability has little to do with bringing Ukraine closer to the Alliance.

In Ukraine, it has been widely believed that experience and determination gained during the confrontation with Russia would be a valuable asset for NATO enough to get the MAP at the very least. But that is hardly the case. The Europeans bet on NATO's reliability, not on numbers of total weaponry. Ukraine may add to the latter, but it can hardly increase the former.

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4   SIPRI Database, 2016 [https://www.sipri.org/yearbook/2016].

While the world has changed too much, Ukraine has not changed enough. Underperforming democracy and corruption still influence the political system significantly. Determination and public opinion in favour of NATO cannot substitute for reforms. In the bottom line, Ukraine gets back to the idea of NATO membership today with the same set of internal weaknesses, but in a much more turbulent international environment than ten years ago, changing significantly only in the military sphere. What are the reasons to expect a more favourable response?

Conclusion

For many in Kyiv getting the membership perspective is symbolic. However, too much symbolism turns the issue into an election slogan. Ukraine probably needs a more pragmatic approach. For instance, getting the MAP, which is perceived by many in Kyiv as the final step before membership, does not mean becoming NATO member in a year or two: For Montenegro it took eight years between getting the MAP and becoming a NATO member, while the FYROM has been carrying out the MAP since 1999. Likewise, it is not only through the MAP that a partner country can build up its relations with the Alliance: Georgia has already surpassed in many ways the level of the MAP without ever having it. The essence of cooperation is more important than the title.

Ten years ago, Ukraine needed political signals, but today it needs security guarantees. The bad news is that these guarantees are more expensive and harder to get than a decade ago. The good news is that there is still a way to do that: through determination and effectiveness in reforming the country.

The NATO summit was not about Ukraine, but it is important for Ukraine. Its focus on defence capabilities, structural modernization, and burden sharing signals adaptation of the Alliance to new security arrangements. The world is becoming more pragmatic and more demanding for hard power assets. NATO has to respond, just as every particular member state does.

Can closer cooperation with Ukraine be a part of the Alliance's adaptation to new realities? Partly the answer is in the hands of Ukraine itself. Becoming more democratic and more efficient would be the best response.

Mykola Kapitonenko, PhD, is a Co-editor-in-chief at UA: Ukraine Analytica and an Associate Professor at the Institute of International Relations of Kyiv National Taras Shevchenko University. He is also a Director to the Centre of International Studies, an NGO, specializing at regional security studies and foreign policy of Ukraine. He has also been invited as a visiting professor to the University of Iowa, and was teaching at the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine. Mykola's main research focus is in conflict studies and Ukrainian foreign policy. He has been managing a number of analytical projects, and he is an author of a textbook on international conflict studies, a monograph on power factor in international politics, and more than 60 articles on various foreign policy and security issues. Dr Kapitonenko had advised members of Parliament of Ukraine and Government on foreign policy issues and being a regular commenter on TV.

ANNUAL NATIONAL PROGRAMMES AS AN INSTRUMENT OF EURO-ATLANTIC INTEGRATION OF UKRAINE

Dr Ihor Todorov
Uzhhorod National University (Ukraine)

Ukraine's aspiration for Euro-Atlantic integration through developing and implementing NATO-Ukraine Annual National Programs is analysed in this article. The paper overviews the structure of the Annual National Program (ANP), which coincides with the typical Membership Action Plan. The priority task of the ANP today is to preserve international consensus in supporting Ukraine in the face of Russian aggression. It is stated that the ANP meets the standards of the NATO Membership Action Plan in its content; yet, there is a fundamental difference in the degree of responsibility.

For Ukraine, the question of Euro-Atlantic choice is not rhetorical. National history provides many vivid examples, which convincingly testify that since ancient times, by its historical, cultural, and mental roots, Ukraine has always belonged to the European civilisation. Lessons of history and the aspiration of Ukraine to regain its identity as a full-fledged European state primarily guided the country's political leadership while defining the strategic goal of Ukraine's foreign policy – to access the Euro-Atlantic structures.

On the Way to Annual National Programs

Immediately after the NATO Prague Summit (2002), the implementation of the NATO-Ukraine Action Plan and the annual Target Plans under this Action Plan were launched.

Since 2005, the so-called intensified dialogue on membership has officially begun between Ukraine and NATO. It was expected that this format of relations could naturally be completed during the Riga Summit of NATO in 2006 with granting Ukraine the right to implement the Membership Action Plan (MAP). However, due to domestic political factors (coming to power of Viktor Yanukovych's government) and pressure from Russia, the Euro-Atlantic integration was hindered, the MAP was not provided, and the relationship had to continue "through practical cooperation to carry out far-reaching reforms in the country."[1]

A letter to the NATO secretary general, signed by President V. Yushchenko, Prime Minister Y. Tymoshenko, and Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine A. Yatsenyuk concerning Ukraine's joining the MAP in

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[1] *Riga Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Riga on 29 November 2006*, NATO, 2006 [http://www.nato.int/cps/ en/natolive/official_texts_37920.htm].

early 2008, seemed to change the situation. However, neither at the NATO Bucharest Summit (April 2008) nor during the meeting of the Ukraine-NATO Commission in the framework of the North Atlantic Council Meeting at the level of foreign ministers in December 2008 was the decision for Ukraine to join the implementation of the MAP adopted. This was due to the lack of consensus among NATO member states primarily due to the stance of France and Germany. Their position was probably influenced by President Putin, who claimed that Ukraine was a complicated state formation, and if the NATO issues and other problems were introduced there, this could put its statehood on the brink of existence.[2] However, during the NATO Bucharest Summit, Ukraine was assured that it would be granted membership in NATO,[3] and during the December 2008 meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission it was emphasised that "in order to assist Ukraine in advancing its reforms an Annual National Program (ANP) will be developed, which will be annually reviewed by the Allies".[4]

Implementation of Annual National Programs

The decision of the 2008 NATO Bucharest Summit, on the one hand, gave a clear signal from NATO regarding Ukraine's future membership, yet on the other hand, postponed this opportunity indefinitely.[5] In this context, the development and

> **Ukraine's implementation of the Annual National Programs is a unique practice in NATO's bilateral relations**

implementation of the Annual National Programs were a significant step giving practical value to this cooperation. Without obtaining the official status of a candidate country, which aspires to implement the MAP, Ukraine was given the opportunity to take the necessary practical measures aimed at obtaining membership.

Ukraine's implementation of the Annual National Programs is a unique practice in NATO's bilateral relations. The President of Ukraine approves the ANP and takes measures to implement it. In their content, all Annual NATO-Ukraine National Programs are in full compliance with NATO Membership Action Plan standards. However, there is a fundamental difference, in particular, with regard to the responsibility of the applicant and the Alliance for implementation.

Public administration and non-governmental organisations are engaged in carrying out the ANP. According to the results of the ANP implementation, the Alliance prepares an evaluation and recommendations that are taken into account while preparing the ANP for the next year.

2   *Виступ Володимира Путіна на саміті в Бухаресті 4 квітня 2008 року (Speech by Vladimir Putin at the Bucharest summit on 04 April 2008)*, "UNIAN", 2008 [https://www.unian.ua/politics/110949-vistup-volodimira-putina-na-samiti-nato-buharest-4-kvitnya-2008-roku.html].

3   *Bucharest Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Bucharest on 03 April 2008*, NATO, 2008 [https://www.nato.int/cps/us/natohq/official_texts_8443.htm].

4   *Chairman's Statement: Meeting of the NATO–Ukraine Commission at the Level of Foreign Ministers Held at NATO Headquarters, Brussels*, NATO, 03 December 2008 [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_46249.htm].

5   *Bucharest Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Bucharest on 03 April 2008*, NATO, 2008 [https://www.nato.int/cps/us/natohq/official_texts_8443.htm].

Under the presidency of V. Yanukovych, the long-term political line aimed at gaining membership in NATO was changed. Instead, on the legislative level, a conception of the so-called "non-alignment" was introduced.[6] However, the contents of the ANP remained to be aimed at Ukraine's achieving NATO standards in the civilian and defence sectors. Yet in 2010-2013, the planning, implementation, and reporting regarding the ANP were a pure formality.

The Revolution of Dignity gave hope for a positive change. But it was only in December 2016 when the Provision on the development of Annual National Programs (ANP) under the auspices of the NATO-Ukraine Commission and evaluation of their implementation was approved.

Contents of Annual National Programs

The significance of the ANPs could be illustrated by the last available program. At the end of March 2018, President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko approved the Annual National Program under the auspices of the Ukraine-NATO Commission for 2018 (ANP-2018). The ANP-2018 should ensure the fulfilment of the priority tasks aimed at Ukraine's accession to NATO. As was mentioned above, the ANP-2018 is a systemic strategic document that defines not only the priorities for 2018 but also the medium-term goals to be achieved by 2020.

Traditionally, the Annual National Program is structured similarly to the typical Membership Action Plan. It consists of five sections: political and economic, defence / military, resource, security, and legal issues.[7]

The first section is the largest in scope and includes practically all directions of Ukraine's reforming and modernizing. It is about key socio-political and legal reforms, namely, decentralization, ballot access reform, prevention of and fight against corruption, fighting money laundering, judicial system reform, court system, prosecutor's office, penitentiary system, probation system, developing the system of legal assistance, the reform of the public administration system, and the development of e-governance, freedom of speech, and information policy. Particular attention is paid to the issues of ensuring national unity and support of national minorities, the rights and freedoms of internally displaced persons (IDPs). It also discusses key economic reforms (fiscal reform, tax system reform, deregulation and creation of a favourable business climate, energy sector reform, and energy security).

The second section of the ANP-2018, "Defence/Military Issues", primarily is devoted to reform of the security and defence sector of Ukraine. It includes implementation of democratic civilian control over the security and defence sector of Ukraine, creation of a system of government guarantee of defence products' quality, ensuring equal gender rights and opportunities in the security and defence sector of Ukraine, and the social protection of servicemen and their family members.

Under the conditions of Russian invasion, the reform of the Armed Forces of Ukraine is

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[6] *Закон України Про засади внутрішньої і зовнішньої політики (The Law of Ukraine On the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy)*, "Відомості Верховної Ради України", 2010, № 40, ст.527.

[7] *Про затвердження Річної національної програми під егідою Комісії Україна – НАТО на 2018 рік (On Approval of the Annual National Program under the auspices of the Ukraine-NATO Commission for 2018)*, Указ Президента України №89/2018, Офіційне інтернет-представництво Президента України, 2018 [http://www.president.gov.ua/documents/892018-23882].

of utmost importance. This challenging task implies improving the systems of military management and communication, reforming the logistical and medical systems of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, achieving technical compatibility of armaments, military and special equipment, and improving the efficiency of personnel management.

Important components of the reform of the security and defence sector of Ukraine are the development of the National Guard, the National Police, the National Border Guard Service, the National Migration Service, the unified state system of civil protection of Ukraine. The reform of the Security Service of Ukraine and intelligence agencies, the development of the State Service for Special Communications and Protection, the development of the State Special Transport Service, the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine, the defence-industrial complex, and the protection of critical infrastructure are of fundamental importance.

The section on resource issues covers issues of reforming the defence planning system, budget planning, logistics systems in the security and defence sector of Ukraine, and integration into NATO logistics systems.

The fourth section, on security issues, includes the implementation of administrative arrangements for protecting restricted information between the Government of Ukraine and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. It also covers developing of a national system for protecting NATO information with restricted access, improving the regulatory framework for the system of restricted information protection, developing the system of cryptographic and technical protection of information, exchange of intelligence information, cyber security, cooperation in the areas of air traffic management and air space security, navigation and security organisation, and ship and port infrastructure protection.

In the last chapter on legal issues, the main priority, in deepening Ukraine-NATO cooperation with the aim of acquiring membership, is to harmonize Ukrainian legislation with the legislation of NATO member states in the field of security and defence, and to develop effective legal mechanisms for ensuring Ukraine's sectoral cooperation with the North Atlantic Alliance.

The cooperation of Ukraine with NATO in the field of strategic communications is of particular importance. The main objectives of the partnership in this area are to develop the capacities of state authorities in this area and all its components at the strategic and operational levels through advisory and practical support; to support Ukraine's cooperation with experts with relevant experience in the field of strategic communications; to promote strategic communication culture at the institutional level in Ukraine, to establish closer cooperation with non-governmental organisations and to promote their capacity to engage in strategic communications in the interests of Ukraine; to achieve and maintain the highest standards of accuracy and ethics to ensure trust to the state communicative policy.

Undoubtedly, activities aimed at preserving international consensus in supporting Ukraine, continuing sanctions' pressure on the Russian Federation to end the armed aggression against Ukraine, and liberation of temporarily occupied territories in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, and the city of Sevastopol will remain a priority.

It is especially worth stressing that the ANP-2018 does not contain direct references to the need for the so-called "Minsk agreements". At the same time, it emphasises the need to consolidate political support of Ukraine by international partners in fighting the armed aggression of the Russian Federation and in restoring the territorial integrity of Ukraine.

The ANP-2018 emphasises the necessity to strengthen the consensus of the Free World regarding the need to preserve special economic and other restrictive measures (sanctions) against individuals and legal entities of the Russian Federation introduced in connection with Russian aggression, gross violations of fundamental human rights and freedoms in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine. It is a matter of principle to ensure the priority of the issue of ending the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine on the agenda of the UN, OSCE, Council of Europe, and other international organisations. Consequently, it is vital to restore the territorial integrity of Ukraine and reintegrate the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine. However, the aim to ensure the deployment of a UN peacekeeping mission on the territory of certain regions of Donetsk and Luhansk regions looks like a utopia.

> **The ANP-2018 emphasises the necessity to strengthen the consensus of the Free World regarding the need to preserve special economic and other restrictive measures (sanctions) against individuals and legal entities of the Russian Federation introduced in connection with Russian aggression**

While implementing the Conception on Improving Public Information on Euro-Atlantic Integration for 2017-2020, approved by the Decree of the President of Ukraine in February 2017, the focus will be on the measures to create conditions for raising Ukrainian citizens' awareness of and trust in the course towards acquiring Ukraine's membership in NATO, ensuring the citizens' stable support for the public policy in the field of Euro-Atlantic integration.[8] The ANP-2018 explicitly indicated the necessity to implement the corresponding action plan.

The main objective of the plan is to increase the level of Ukrainian citizens' support for the state policy in the field of Euro-Atlantic integration and the level of trust in NATO as an institution that plays a key role in strengthening international security. However, the experience of the first months of 2018 testified to the neglect of relevant decisions by some executive authorities. It puts forward the need to strengthen the responsibility for implementing the state course on Euro-Atlantic integration.

Conclusion

Summing up, the ANP-2018, as well as the previous Annual National Programs, meets the standards of the NATO Membership Action Plan. However, there remains a fundamental difference, especially with regard to liability. A Membership Action Plan (MAP) imposes mutual responsibilities on the applicant country and the Alliance and has the nature of an international treaty. The ANP is a Ukrainian legal act agreed with NATO.

The political decision on Ukraine's membership in NATO was approved by the Alliance in 2008. Granting a MAP is not a reward but a mandatory next step to work on Ukraine's compliance with NATO standards.

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8 *Розпорядження Кабінету Міністрів України від 14 лютого 2018 р. № 109-р Про затвердження плану заходів щодо реалізації Концепції вдосконалення інформування громадськості з питань євроатлантичної інтеграції України на 2018 рік (The Order of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated February 14, 2018, No. 109-r On Approval of the Plan of Measures to Implement the Concept for Improving Public Information on Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic Integration for 2018)*, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2018 [https://www.kmu.gov.ua/ua/npas/pro-zatverdzhennya-planu-zahodiv-shodo-realizaciyi-koncepciyi-vdoskonalennya-informuvannya-gromadskosti-z-pitan-yevroatlantichnoyi-integraciyi-ukrayini-na-2018-rik].

To make this step, it is necessary not only to write the relevant items in the ANP-2018, but also to implement them carefully. That is, the Alliance needs to see and assess the real political will on the part of the Ukrainian authorities and society to achieve full Euro-Atlantic integration. In this context, the Annual National Program should not have been called "under the auspices of the NATO-Ukraine Commission", but the Annual National Program on Preparing for NATO Membership (as it was already in 2009-2010).

Consequently, almost ten years of experience in implementing the NATO-Ukraine Annual National Programs show that with a political will and responsibility of both the authorities of Ukraine and the Alliance, the ANPs are capable of acting as an effective mechanism for the Euro-Atlantic integration of this country. However, the effectiveness of the ANP implementation should be demonstrated by all the Ukrainian society.

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*Ihor **Todorov***, *Dr.hab. (History), professor of the Department of International Studies and Public Communications, Uzhhorod National University, director of the Information Centre for the European Union, deputy head of the Coordinating Board of Public League "Ukraine-NATO", author of 500 publications.*

THE NEW UKRAINE-NATO ANNUAL NATIONAL PROGRAMME: CHANGE OF ESSENCE RATHER THAN FORM

Inna Potapova
The Government Office for the Coordination of European
and Euro-Atlantic Integration

In 2019, Ukraine will get an absolutely new in its essence Ukraine-NATO Annual National Programme. The ANP is a mechanism for real convergence of Ukraine with NATO, without waiting for political will regarding the future membership of Ukraine in the Alliance. It was the first time when the general principles of strategic planning were employed: specificity, feasibility, attainability, timing, and continuity. It was also defined that the ANP is not about bilateral cooperation with NATO, but is a fully functional programme of all required domestic reforms for gaining membership in the Alliance.

Introduction

The Ukraine-NATO Annual National Programme (hereinafter – ANP) has been developed for almost the last 10 years. However, within this time, there was a certain period when the document was not given attention – this is the period of so-called "stagnation" of Euro-Atlantic integration, the time of the presidency of V. Yanukovych.

In 2010-2014, the cooperation vector with NATO was not just slowed down; it was missing from the priorities of Ukraine's foreign policy. Moreover, the approval of non-block status strengthened this within the legislative framework. For sure, back then there was no discussion regarding ANP development. As NATO membership was not a goal for the state highest leadership of that time, consequently there was no appropriate attention given to a meaningful content of the ANP. As a result, it turned out that the Programme became more similar to a certain list of bilateral events of not active cooperation with the Alliance, without long-term plans.

After the Revolution of Dignity, the situation has changed dramatically. The course of Ukraine towards NATO resumed legislatively; the Euro-Atlantic vector became one of the main priorities of the state, which is closely connected to reforms of Ukraine in general. Ukraine confidently demonstrated and continues to show its clear position – our goal is to gain membership in NATO.

Each year, the ANP has consistently been improved, taking into account NATO recommendations, the current situation in the country, and a thorough analysis of the mistakes made during the development and implementation of previous Programmes.

A significant event within this line of effort was the establishment in the government of the post of the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration.

This decision has substantially intensified the Euro-Atlantic vector and the process of development and improvement of the ANP in general.

A significant positive boost was also the restoration of the work of the Commission on Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine as an auxiliary authority under the President of Ukraine, which includes 32 representatives of the state authorities and agencies, those that are the most actively involved in the development and implementation of the ANP. The commission has been fundamentally reformed and renewed in light of changes in foreign policy priorities. The Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration was appointed to act as a head of the Commission. Besides, national coordinators in various fields, in accordance with the subjects of the ANP chapters, were identified among the commission members. The work of the Commission greatly facilitated inter-agency coordination in the field of Euro-Atlantic integration.

The New Ukraine-NATO Annual National Programme

The year 2018 has brought a substantial breakthrough in the process of Annual National Programme development. Finally, a clear and consistent understanding was reached as to what the document should look like to prepare Ukraine for membership in NATO. This was preceded by the persistent and purposeful work of all interested government authorities and agencies in close cooperation with foreign advisers and experts from the NATO member states, in coordination with the NATO Department of the Government Office for the Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration.

Consistently the corresponding action algorithm was developed. Two main directions were identified, which the central executive authorities and other government authorities and agencies took for moving forward in parallel within the process of updating the ANP.

The first direction is the writing of new Provisions on the ANP development, implementation, and monitoring of the results. The Government Office for the Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration was responsible for this along with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine and foreign advisers.

> *The year 2018 has brought a substantial breakthrough in the process of Annual National Programme development. Finally, a clear and consistent understanding was reached as to what the document should look like to prepare Ukraine for membership in NATO*

The second, equally important, is the training of all government employees who are involved in the writing and implementation of the ANP, teaching them new methods in close cooperation with the Ukraine-NATO Professional Development Programme.

Since the beginning of 2018, an annual modular course has been launched, which took place almost every month, and the first six months were devoted exclusively to the new methods of writing the Annual National Programme. More than 100 representatives of state authorities and agencies who are on a continuous basis directly involved in the Euro-Atlantic dimension of their agencies took part in the course. The course is called "Champions-100".

As a result of the training, state authorities and agencies made quality proposals to the draft Ukraine-NATO 2019 Annual National Programme. However, more importantly,

many agencies and authorities have made changes in understanding and perception of the nature and goal of the ANP in general.

As it was already mentioned, new provisions on the annual national programmes were in the process of simultaneous development in order to be introduced for consideration by the head of state. After continuous consultations in the process of writing the highest quality and acceptable document, the provisions were approved by the Decree of the President of Ukraine dated 02 October 2018, No. 298.

One of the main ideas of these provisions is that the ANP is not only about bilateral cooperation with NATO anymore. The ANP is a comprehensive programme of all necessary domestic reforms, required for gaining NATO membership.

> ❝ *One of the main ideas of these provisions is that the ANP is not only about bilateral cooperation with NATO anymore. The ANP is a comprehensive programme of all necessary domestic reforms, required for gaining NATO membership*

Often society has questions about Ukraine getting the Membership Action Plan (MAP). It is believed that this is the only way we can achieve our goal. However, even NATO has repeatedly emphasized the need to use all mechanisms for positive and urgent changes in the state. Getting the MAP by Ukraine is exceptionally a political issue of leadership of the state and nations of the Alliance. And while the discussion of this is under way, the state authorities actively use all the possibilities, tools, and mechanisms for real approximation of Ukraine to NATO. The Annual National Programme is just that very mechanism. That is why the approach to its development has been radically changed.

How different is the new approach to the ANP? First and foremost, the main principles of strategic planning that are used in NATO member states were employed: specificity, feasibility, attainability, timing, and continuity.

Following these principles, a clear and understandable logical chain of strategic goals, objectives, priorities for the current year and measures to achieve them is built. At the development stage, this minimizes the possibility of introducing into the ANP of measures inconsistent and directly unrelated to the corresponding objectives. In other words, the new ANP almost does not have "substitution of concepts" and "process for the sake of the process", but maximum specificity and sequence.

For the first time, efficiency indicators and performance indicators have been added to the Annual National Programme. First of all, it helped to shape the tasks and activities specifically aimed at the result while simultaneously forecasting its impact on the activity of the state. The already mentioned annex is scheduled to be filled in once a year in December, which will allow tracking the progress of each reform or, on the contrary, to identify gaps and mistakes. This is the main value of this document. Besides, the information provided will enable the public to get quality and accessible information about the progress of Ukraine in the Euro-Atlantic direction.

It was also important to change the time frame for the development of the Ukraine-NATO Annual National Programme. From now on, the Programme will start development in March-April due to the need to harmonize with the budget planning process. This condition was made deliberately in view of the importance of timely planning by the state authorities of the appropriate funds for the implementation of their proposed measures. Of course, the ANP is implemented through NATO's advisory,

technical, and financial support. However, the ANP is a national programme and, consequently, first of all, is implemented at own expense.

The deadline for submitting government proposals to the draft programme have also changed. Now it is May 30, not August 15, as it was before. This will give the opportunity and additional time for more thorough processing of the consolidated draft ANP before it is sent for consideration by the NATO Secretariat and the Commission for Coordination of Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine by October 15.

Upon receipt of their recommendations, which should be taken into account as much as possible, the draft ANP is sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine for finalization within the framework of its competence and ensuring a coordination process with all interested central executive authorities and other state agencies. An unprecedented number of agencies participate in the process – almost 80 were involved in the development of the draft ANP-2019. Then, the draft ANP is approved by the government and submitted for the revision by the President of Ukraine along with the relevant Decree of the Head of State by January 31 of the planned year.

Coordination System

Particular attention should be paid to the coordination system in the process of development and implementation of the NATO-Ukraine Annual National Programme. As it was already mentioned, in accordance with the new Provisions on ANP, the control and coordination of activities of central executive authorities and other state agencies are entrusted to the Commission for Coordination of Euro-Atlantic Integration

of Ukraine. In addition, the Commission ensures that the existing goals indicated in the ANP are reviewed in the light of the current situation in the country and, if necessary, makes the necessary adjustments.

The coordination role in the ANP development process is entrusted to the Government Office for the Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration. In this context, an interdepartmental working group on the development of Annual National Programmes was established, chaired by the head of the NATO office of the Government Office for the Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration. The working group operates within the Commission and includes 72 representatives of almost all interested state agencies.

The ANP draft, taking into account new requirements, is developed in the Government Office by the working group. In fact, the working group has become an effective platform for consultation and resolution of inconsistencies in the process of drafting of a new ANP.

The result of the work, which lasted throughout 2018, can be objectively evaluated after receiving the first reports on the implementation of the updated ANP. They will show whether everything was done right in the development of the Programme, whether the new methodologies work, and whether the ANP requires further improvements and if so where exactly.

Inna Potapova *is the government expert of the Government Office for the Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.*

NATO'S ENHANCED FORWARD PRESENCE: CHANGING THE ESCALATION DOMINANCE CALCULUS IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION

Dr András Rácz
Pázmány Péter Catholic University in Budapest, (Hungary)

The article is assessing how NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence in the Baltic states and Poland has altered the strategic balance in the Baltic Sea region. Before 2016, Russia enjoyed clear escalation dominance there. However, the deployment of multinational, combat-ready NATO forces with the logic that any attack on them would induce a collective NATO response has changed this calculus. Since then, the burden is on Russia, whether the three Baltic states are worthy enough for Moscow to take up a major war against NATO.

The present analysis[1] intends to assess how the Enhanced Forward Presence of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has changed the escalation dilemma in the Baltic Sea region. Escalation itself in the military context could be interpreted as "an increase in the intensity or scope of conflict that crosses threshold(s) considered significant by one or more of the participants".[2] The qualitative change of the conflict, i.e. the crossing of thresholds, is a key element in the escalation discourse. Escalation dominance means, using Herman Kahn's classical definition[3], that one side has the ability to escalate the conflict in such ways that are either expensive or disadvantageous to the adversary.

It is also important to note that although escalation is often perceived as an interactive process between two or more actors, in fact escalation might also be unilateral. One side may decide that deliberately crossing an important threshold may grant sufficient benefits, including even victory, particularly if the adversary is taken by surprise, or is in a politically, militarily, economically, or socially unbalanced position, when the escalation occurs. Such an option might be particularly tempting, if the attackers could calculate that a symmetrical answer is unavailable for the other side due to the shortage of necessary capabilities or to the lack of political will.

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[2]   F.E. Morgan et al., *Dangerous Thresholds: Managing Escalation in the 21st Century*, RAND Corporation: Santa Monica, 2008, p.8, [https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG614.pdf access: 20 December 2018].

[3]   H. Kahn, *On Escalation: Metaphors and Scenarios*, Transaction Publishers: Washington, 2009.

The Post-Crimea Situation in the Baltic Sea Region

This was exactly the type of scenario that was the main source of concern in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania from 2014 on. In the spring and summer of 2014, thus following the Russian invasion of the Crimean peninsula and the breakout of hostilities in Eastern Ukraine, there were widespread fears in the Baltic states about the danger of a Russian attack similar in nature to the ones conducted against Ukraine.

Hypothetical scenarios included mobilization of the Russian-speaking population of Estonia and Latvia along a pro-Russian secessionist agenda, supported by Russia's special forces infiltrating the two countries. Parallel to generating domestic instability, Russia would have been likely to line up massive conventional forces along the borders of the Baltic states, most probably under the pretext of a similar snap exercise that was seen along Ukraine's Eastern border during the invasion of Crimea. Such a move would have had considerable deterrent effect on the Baltic governments, namely that any action taken against the pro-Russian rebels would have provided Moscow with a pretext for a massive conventional attack, for example by claiming the right to defend Russian compatriots.

In 2014-2015, there were no NATO forces stationed in the Baltic states, except the minuscule Baltic Air Policing mission, which usually consisted of four fighter jets at the same time, as well as some 50-100 support personnel deployed. Hence, in the initial few days of any Russian destabilization effort or a military attack, the three Baltic governments could not have relied on any other defence than their own small armed forces.

Under such circumstances, according to many analyses prepared at that time, Russian armed forces would have needed approximately 60 hours[4] to occupy all three Baltic States after launching an open, full-scale attack, supported by the already strong pro-Russian local insurgency. Although advancing Russian troops would have suffered considerable losses from the desperate resistance of the regular armed forces of the Baltic states and would have needed to face a lasting irregular partisan-type of resistance, neither of these would have changed the outcome: the quick occupation of all three Baltic countries.

Thereafter, it was highly likely that after securing control over the occupied Baltic states, Russia would not have continued the attack against Poland. Instead, most probably Moscow would have declared its intention not to advance further and suggest a ceasefire, but at the same time would have threatened NATO that Russia's reply to any counter-attack effort would include one or more nuclear strikes. This latter element would have been clearly in line with the long-lasting concept of Russian military thinking on the role of nuclear weapons as a tool of de-escalation.[5]

A Tough Choice for NATO

Hence, in case of a Russian attack against any of the Baltic States, NATO would have needed to face a cruel dilemma of whether it is worth risking an all-out nuclear war against Russia for the sake of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. One option would have been

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4   D.A. Shlapak, M.W. Johnson, *Reinforcing Deterrence on NATO's Eastern Flank. Wargaming the Defense of the Baltics*, RAND Corporation: Santa Monica, 2016, [https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1200/RR1253/RAND_RR1253.pdf access: 20 December 2018].

5   M. Kroenig, *A Strategy for Deterring Russian Nuclear De-Escalation Strikes*, Atlantic Council: Washington, April 2018, [https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/images/Nuclear_Strategy_WEB.pdf access: 20 December 2018].

to launch a counterattack regardless, thus risk that Russia keeps its word and delivers a nuclear strike. Though by the conventional logic of nuclear confrontation, this initial strike would have been limited in size, it is still highly unlikely that consensus could have been reached among NATO countries in favour of a counterattack under such conditions – and definitely not fast enough to help the attacked Baltic states.

> **❝ in case of a Russian attack against any of the Baltic States, NATO would have needed to face a cruel dilemma of whether it is worth risking an all-out nuclear war against Russia for the sake of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania**

The second option would have been to accept the fait accompli, and abandon the defence of the Baltic states, for the sake of avoiding the danger of a NATO-Russia armed conflict that could have gone nuclear. However, this option would have fatally eroded the credibility of Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, that is granting collective defence, thus constituting the most fundamental component of NATO. By demonstrating in practice that the collective defence guarantee of NATO was vague and useless, Russia would have been able to inflict serious damage on the Alliance, and probably also to put an end to the NATO approximation ambitions of a number of post-Soviet and Western Balkan countries, namely of Ukraine, Georgia, Macedonia, and back then also Montenegro. Besides, such a defeat of NATO would have probably decided

also the question of Sweden's and Finland's possible NATO accession for good.

There was also a third option, namely NATO escalating itself, following basically the same logic that was used in the Cold War, i.e. threatening by escalation in order to avoid defeat. From the perspective of the escalation, the problem NATO would have had to face was the following: Once Russia has overrun the three Baltic states and has unilaterally stopped fighting thereafter, the political and military burden would have been on NATO's shoulders to increase the tensions again and launch an attack on the Russian forces deployed to the Baltic states, risking an all-out war, including possible nuclear strikes.

As the rapid overrun of the Baltic states would not have caused major direct military losses to any other NATO countries, it was also highly uncertain whether the Alliance would have had the necessary coherence for an Article 5 type answer. First, as some NATO countries have been openly and harshly critical of the sanctions introduced against Russia, concerns were reportedly high that the same countries could be reluctant to support a collective NATO response to a Russian military attack of limited size, i.e. to an attack that would have affected "only" the Baltic states.

Public opinion was not encouraging either. In spring 2015, Pew Research Center conducted a detailed survey that produced highly concerning results: To the question whether their countries should defend an attacked NATO ally, only a median of 51 per cent of respondents said yes.[7] The highest ratio was achieved by the U.S. and Canadian populations, where 56 and 53 per

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[6]   Interview with a competent NATO official, Latvia, autumn 2015.
[7]   J. Dempsey, *NATO's European Allies Won't Fight for Article 5*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 15 June 2015 [http://carnegieeurope.eu/strategiceurope/?fa=60389 access: 20 December 2018].

cent agreed, respectively. In Europe, British respondents scored the highest, with 49% in favour of using military force to defend a NATO ally, closely followed by Poland, where the result was 48%. However, in Germany only 38% agreed that Berlin should use military force to protect its NATO allies.

Under such circumstances, it was not surprising that concerns were high about both NATO's willingness and ability to defend the Baltic states. Hence, had Russia opted for a unilateral escalation, Moscow would have probably enjoyed clear escalation dominance over NATO.

NATO's Steps to Change the Escalation Calculus

Realization of the fundamental vulnerability of the Baltic states to a Russian attack urged the Alliance to take several steps to tackle the problem. Already at the Wales Summit held in September 2014, NATO made a commitment[8] to strengthen collective defence and implement reassurance measures towards its Eastern members. Reassurance measures included continuous, though limited air, sea, and land presence in the Eastern part of NATO – meaning in practice the Baltic states, as well as Poland and Romania – on a rotational basis, preparing for the rapid deployment of larger forces, establishing a Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF). It was also agreed about a gradual increase of defence spending to 2 per cent of the GDP of NATO member countries. Commitments were made to strengthen the command and control structures on the Eastern flank, along with necessary logistics and infrastructure, besides launching a massive series of exercises preparing for collective defence scenarios. However, no major combat-ready, defensive forces were deployed to the Baltic states.

Measures adopted in Wales were aimed mostly at shortening NATO's reaction time had a crisis erupted in the Eastern part of the Alliance. However, these steps were yet unable to address the fundamental strategic problem, to be exact Russia's clear escalation dominance in the Baltic Sea region mentioned above.

> **Measures adopted in Wales were aimed mostly at shortening NATO's reaction time had a crisis erupted in the Eastern part of the Alliance**

Had Moscow decided on an open, full-scale invasion of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, NATO would have still been unable to defend its Eastern members due to concerns related to reaction time and to the actual deployability of military capabilities. The minor units, deployment of which was decided upon in Wales, would have been clearly unable to either stop a Russian invasion or even win time sufficient for deployment of the larger NATO forces. Moreover, it was also questionable whether the presence of minor reassurance components would have been able to significantly strengthen the political coherence of the Alliance behind a possible Article 5 commitment.

The Tripwire of Enhanced Forward Presence

Fundamental change was brought by the Warsaw NATO Summit, held in July 2016, where it was decided that the Alliance would deploy multinational, combat-ready forces to the three Baltic states, as well as to Poland.[9]

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8 *Wales Summit Declaration*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 05 September 2014
   [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm access: 20 December 2018].

Regarding the size of the forces to be deployed, a substantial analysis prepared by the RAND Corporation in 2014-2015 and published in 2016 argued for the need of deploying seven brigades, including three armoured brigades, as well as the necessary air and maritime components.[10] his force would have been able to prevent a rapid Russian victory over the Baltic states, though would not have been enough for mounting a lasting and successful defence, let alone defeating the attacking Russian forces. The main objective would have been to win enough time for the arrival of NATO reinforcements. RAND argued that such a deployment would have changed Russia's strategic calculus by annulling the perspective of a quick victory and replacing it with the shadow of a lasting, prolonged war.

> **Measures adopted in Wales were aimed mostly at shortening NATO's reaction time had a crisis erupted in the Eastern part of the Alliance**

NATO, however, opted for a different route. In Warsaw it was decided that altogether four multinational, combat-ready battalions would get deployed to the Eastern flank, one to every Baltic state, and a fourth one to Poland . Every battalion consists of a lead

nation, always a major military power of NATO, as well as of several other countries contributing. The battalion deployed to Estonia is led by the United Kingdom; the one operating in Latvia has Canada as the lead nation, while the battalion in Lithuania is led by Germany. Meanwhile, the United States is the leading force of the fourth battalion, deployed to Poland.

This was the first-ever case that combat-ready, multinational NATO forces were deployed to all three Baltic countries.[12] Though the participation of individual countries in these battalions, as well as the presence of particular national detachments in them are both rotationary, the Enhanced Forward Presence as a whole is intended to be lasting. The deployment reversed the previously ongoing trend of decreasing British and Canadian presence on the European continent[13]; besides, it constitutes the return of Germany to the European theatre as a strong military power.

From the strategic perspective, the main novelty of the Enhanced Forward Presence is its core purpose, often described as a tripwire logic. The four battalions are not deployed to the Baltic states and Poland in order to hold up advancing Russian troops. Even the seven brigades suggested by RAND would not be able to do it. Instead, the four NATO battalions are deployed in order to

9   *Warsaw Summit Key Decisions. Fact sheet*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, February 2017 [https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2017_02/20170206_1702-factsheet-warsaw-summit-key-en.pdf access: 20 December 2018].

10   D.A. Shlapak, M.W. Johnson, *Reinforcing Deterrence on NATO's Eastern Flank. Wargaming the Defense of the Baltics*, RAND Corporation: Santa Monica 2016, [https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1200/RR1253/RAND_RR1253.pdf access: 20 December 2018].

11   *Boosting NATO's Presence in the East and the Southeast*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 10 September 2018 [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_136388.htm access: 20 December 2018].

12   J. Lüik, H. Praks, *Boosting the Deterrent Effect of Allied Enhanced Forward Presence*, Policy Paper, International Centre for Defence Studies: Tallinn, May 2017 [https://icds.ee/wp-content/uploads/2017/ICDS_Policy_Paper_Boosting_the_Deterrent_Effect_of_Allied_eFP.pdf access: 20 December 2018].

13   J.R. Deni, *NATO's Presence in the East: Necessary but Still Not Sufficient*, "War on the Rocks" blog, 27 June 2018 [https://warontherocks.com/2018/06/natos-presence-in-the-east-necessary-but-still-not-sufficient/ access: 20 December 2018].

make sure that a Russian attack immediately and undoubtedly induces a collective, Article 5 type answer from the Alliance. The reason is that the multinational composition of these battalions and particularly the involvement of important NATO military powers as lead nations guarantee that no Russian attack would be possible without putting considerable British, German, Canadian, and the U.S. forces in harm's way. In other words, if Russia attacks the Baltic states or Poland, it cannot avoid fighting, defeating, and, probably, destroying these four battalions. However, inflicting major losses on the U.S., British, German, and Canadian forces, as well as on a number of other NATO allies would work as a tripwire, i.e. would lead to a faster and more unified military response of the Alliance.

Part of NATO's motivation was also that deploying forces of such size as RAND suggested could have been perceived by Russia as a threat. Seven brigades, three of which are armoured, and even the others that are highly mobile, supported by the necessary artillery, air, and naval components could theoretically pose a significant threat to Russia's western regions, and possibly even to St. Petersburg. However, the four battalions altogether constitute no meaningful threat at all, and Russia is well aware of it.[14]

Nevertheless, one needs to be aware of the fact that even the Enhanced Forward Presence would not be sufficient for actually defending the Baltic states. In case of a Russian attack, all three Baltic states would get occupied, at least for a while, so NATO's realistic objective is not the defence of the Baltic states from a Russian attack, but a liberation of them thereafter.

> **The Enhanced Forward Presence and the tripwire logic behind its deployment from 2016 on have considerably weakened the escalation dominance Russia had earlier enjoyed**

Substantial hardships need to be addressed in the Enhanced Forward Presence also in terms of interoperability, shortage of certain capabilities, and duplication of others.[15] There are also concerns about whether the whole tripwire would actually work, i.e. whether the losses sustained by certain major NATO countries would be really sufficient for generating a robust Article 5 answer.[16]

Conclusions

The Enhanced Forward Presence and the tripwire logic behind its deployment from 2016 on have considerably weakened the escalation dominance Russia had earlier enjoyed. Before the Warsaw Summit decisions, in case of a rapid and decisive Russian attack on the Baltic states the burden would have been on NATO's shoulders to escalate further and risk an all-out, possibly nuclear war – or to not escalate and admit defeat, risking the overall loss of credibility of the Alliance. Meanwhile, NATO did not have the same escalation ability

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[14] P.K. Baev, *The Military Dimension of Russia's Connection with Europe,* "European Security", Vol. 27, 2018 [https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09662839.2017.1399876?needAccess:=true&instName=SOAS access: 20 December 2018]; interview with a Russian expert, Moscow, April 2018.

[15] J.R. Deni, *NATO's Presence in the East: Necessary but Still Not Sufficient*, "War on the Rocks" blog, 27 June 2018 [https://warontherocks.com/2018/06/natos-presence-in-the-east-necessary-but-still-not-sufficient/ access: 20 December 2018].

[16] D.P. Chamberlain, *NATO's Baltic Tripwire Forces Won't Stop Russia*, "The National Interest", 21 July 2016 [https://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-skeptics/natos-baltic-tripwire-forces-wont-stop-russia-17074?nopaging=1/ access: 20 December 2018].

against Russia in the Baltic Sea region, due to the lack of both capabilities and willingness.

The deployment of four multinational battalions to the Baltic States has changed this escalation calculus. By strengthening its military capabilities on the Eastern flank and increasing the probability of the collective, Article 5 response to a Russian attack, NATO turned the escalation problem around. For Moscow, it is not possible any more to change the status quo quickly and particularly not without directly attacking the U.S., British, German, and a number of other non-Baltic NATO forces. In other words, before the Enhanced Forward Presence, NATO had to confront the dilemma of whether it was able and willing to risk an all-out war against Russia for Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Since 2016, however, it is Russia that has to face the same question, i.e. whether it is worth risking a major, lasting war against NATO for the three Baltic states.

Of course, Russia still has the theoretical possibility of escalating by attacking the Baltic states and the NATO forces there, while the Alliance is still unable to do the same against Russia, as the four battalions are evidently not sufficient for any such adventures. Hence, a significant asymmetry still prevails in the escalation potentials of Russia and NATO in the Baltic Sea region.

However, since the Enhanced Forward Presence has become operational, Russia's escalation dominance is largely over. Moscow cannot escalate any more without taking up much higher risks and potential costs than it would have had to take up before 2016. Theoretically, Moscow might still opt for an all-out attack against the Baltic states by calculating that the internal incoherence as well as slow reaction could prevent the Alliance from giving a meaningful, collective response. However, in practice it is highly unlikely that under such circumstances Kremlin would risk a major war against NATO.

András Rácz defended his Ph.D. in Modern History in 2008 at the Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, Hungary. In 2014-2016, he was a senior research fellow of the Finnish Institute of International Affairs in Helsinki. Since his return to Hungary, he has been an associate professor at the Institute of International Relations and Political Sciences of the Pázmány Péter Catholic University and non-resident research fellow of the Estonian Foreign Policy Institute operating in Tallinn. His fields of expertise are the security and defence policy issues of the post-Soviet region, as well as relations of Russia and Central Europe.

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