



SLOVAK NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY IS OUTDATED AND NEEDS A CHANGE

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The National Security Strategy ought to be the main and the most important expression for the basic principles, interests and goals of the security policy of the state. Slovakia has prepared two such documents until now. The first one adopted in 2001 and the second one in 2005. Both of them were quite modern and well prepared in their time. Currently valid Strategy was adopted almost a decade ago. Regardless the quality of the document much has changed since that time including the principal factors which influence our security. Hence, after almost a decade, it is necessary to create a new National Security Strategy.

The Strategy from 2005 resulted from completely different not just international, but also domestic background. The intervention wave culminating a decade ago involved the military operations in the Middle East together with the transformation attempts in the region. In that period of time, the Slovak armed forces were established with a special focus on expeditionary operations within the wide range of alliance groups. However the expenses for the defense and security were not the ideal 2% of GDP, they were still much closer to this level in comparison with the currently miserable situation. Nowadays the reality is completely different: the Western world including its leader the United States, is militarily and politically moving away from the individual states. To be more precise, not just from countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan, but also from the whole Middle East. There is no willingness to invest material and political energy together with resources to the relevant international participation, neither to the military interventions. The Slovak armed forces have started to lose their capabilities rapidly and however in the international missions they get by without any difficulties, we can conclude a significant lack of modernization inside their unity structure. Today, the expenses invested in the defense and security circulate around 1% and the level of 1, 7-1, 8 % of the GDP reached in the last decade, seems to be an utopist dream. In spite of this fact, the most important changes have occurred this year with the Russian invasion to Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea. With regards to this issue, the basic pillars and preconditions of our security have changed. Instead of

becoming a NATO member, Russia turned into a rival, military challenge, state which does not respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity and does not exclude military operations on the European territory. Therefore the situation requires serious changes in the attitudes of the European states, the whole Alliance and the USA included.

Let's turn to the specific issues, which should be changed by the National Security Strategy. The 2005 document is based on the principle that Slovakia does not feel any instant military threat caused by any other state. However the Russian forces do not occupy our borders, the strategic reality is completely different from the one in 2005. The related changes were already described. Despite the eminently unchanged security interests of the Slovak Republic, the security background for those interests has to be ensured. A decade ago, the most discussed global threats such as terrorism, the spread of the weapons of mass destruction and failing states are not the greatest issues anymore. The biggest threats for our security now stand for more classic military and also more regionally concentrated conflicts. We turned back from the 'non-conventional threats' to the traditional military ones, represented by Russian armed forces and political will to insert them in our security region. In comparison with the global and hardly identified geographical level, the greatest threats are spread across the Central and Eastern Europe. This, of course, does not mean that we are not (for instance) threatened by the extension of the Islamic terroristic groups in the Middle East. Right the opposite, we want to share the strengthen security with our allies. Additionally the threat of the radicalization of western Islamic communities and their involvement in the conflicts in the Middle East has been reinforced, but something more conven-

tional and politically risky has emerged as well. The Strategy from 2005 has been already working with the new security challenges such as the cyber security. Currently this factor lies within a much broader spectrum and it is not just the matter of individuals or organized groups, but it is also used as a mean of state-headed cyber operations. Another example might be the energy security and the potential mistreatment of our region's dependency on Russian political tension. The new dimension was attached to the Russian potential in affecting the key internal political and strategic decisions of the NATO and EU Member States caused by different means, from economic extortion through political contacts up to very effective media operations. Last but not least mentioned operations pose a challenge acting as conventional military threat or so called 'little green men'. The new National Security Strategy has to be mostly concerned with the classic conventional military threats and the methods of its expansion, which endanger our region, not excluding the political, economic and media tensions we have to deal with as well.

By evaluating the specific part of the 'Security Policy of the Slovak Republic' from 2005 we can conclude its relative utility; however we still struggle with the (in)efficient security system. The 'traditional means' of the security policy of the Slovak Republic has not changed and therefore the capability of the Foreign Service and the armed forces is being reduced with reference to the fulfillment of their main objective. At the expense of the description in the chapter 'The Security of the Citizen and the State' concerning the combat of terrorism and proliferation of the weapons of mass destruction, it is necessary to dedicate ourselves to the main strategic premise: the security of the Slovak Republic and Central Europe is inseparably related

to the security and sovereignty of Ukraine. It is crucial to define the steps which could be undertaken individually or together with the NATO and EU partners and in this manner put them into charge concerning the protection of the strategic and security interests.

We bear in mind the validity of the characteristics of the NATO as our main guarantor of security, and take into consideration the declaration confirming the Slovak persistent transatlantic solidarity and inseparable security between the allies. There is no need to change the principles as given, but essentially implement them into the highest political manner. Simultaneously the perception of the expanding Alliance providing the guarantee for the stability and security of the whole Euro Atlantic area has to be kept. These principles should serve as a perfect ideal for our highest political representatives. Slovakia has to be one of the main leaders in NATO discussions about strengthening the involvement of the Alliance in our neighborhoods especially with regards to Ukraine and South Caucasus. Similarly we have to enforce and support all the attempts to enhance the

sustained presence of the Alliance in our region. Concerning our Eastern neighbor, it would be efficient enough to observe what we declared in 2005 in the National Security Strategy: 'The Slovak Republic supports Ukraine as an independent and sovereign state in its current borders , development of the pluralist democracy, political and economic stability and also in the precondition of the regional security.' With relation to Russia, the importance lies in finding an efficient means to resist the Russian tensions directed to the West on an alliance basis, instead of underscoring the strategic partnership.

In conclusion, the new strategy could be created just to declare the update of the political security document, what is honestly absolutely pointless. We have to realize the importance and seriousness of such document. It is necessary for the government and key political parties to get familiar with the strategic steps in order to convey the message of the standards declared on domestic but also international level. The lower budget for the defense is a very negative issue, but to circumvent the acknowledged principles is even worse.

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